

ODD MAN RUSH

KRISTEN GRANATA

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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

This is my first FFM book.

This is also my first time writing about two women. One would think it's no big deal since I'm married to a woman in real life, but that almost makes it feel like an even bigger deal. There aren't enough FFM books out there—or FF books, for that matter. Representation and diversity are extremely important to me as an author. I wrote this story from my heart, from my personal lens of a bisexual woman, and then sent it off to sensitivity readers. I want real-life people to be able to see themselves in my stories, and I want to help change the double-standard that surrounds “why choose” books.

This book contains a religious parent who has a difficult time accepting the fact that his daughter is in love with both a man and a woman, and he throws around some unkind words that might be triggering to some, but is also the reality for many people. There are also discussions of the discriminatory world of sports. Please know that I've taken the utmost care in writing all of these scenes.

This story is about a woman coming to terms with who she is and what she wants, and being brave enough to go for it—regardless of what it looks like to the rest of the world. It's about accepting who you truly are, and fighting for the kind of life you want. It's about love, and the variety it comes in.

If you read through a lens of judgment and bigotry, then this is not the book for you.

This is a standalone book that follows characters from *Heart Trick*. You don't have to read that story first in order to follow along with this one, but I hope you love the grumpy goalie enough to check it out!

*To anyone who has fallen in love with someone who didn't fit the mold
society created. Love is love.*

THE PAST

KOURTNEY

SENIOR YEAR of High School

“Don’t break the zipper, Kourt!”

“Your ginormous tits are breaking the zipper, not me.” I grunt as I prop my foot on the dresser for leverage. “Suck it in.”

“If I suck it in any more, I’m going to turn myself inside out.” Celeste winces. “Fuck, I knew I shouldn’t have trusted that size conversion chart on Amazon.”

I blow a strand of hair out of my face as I yank on the zipper again. “You also should’ve tried it on *before* the day of the prom.”

“I forgot, okay?”

“I think it’s stuck.” I step back and throw my hands in the air. “I can’t do this. I don’t want to break the zipper.”

Celeste stomp across my bedroom and yanks open the door. “Jay, get up here. We need your assistance.”

“Wait.” I tear the comforter off my bed and wrap it around my body. “I don’t want him to see me yet.”

Celeste rolls her eyes. “It’s prom, not your wedding day.”

“But I wanted to have my *She’s All That* moment. You know, when she

walks downstairs in slow motion and he's waiting for her at the bottom, and then he looks up at her and is stunned by how beautiful she looks."

Celeste waves her hand. "Fine. You stay inside the blanket, and I'll have Freddie Prinze Jr. here go back downstairs after he zips me up so you can have your moment."

Jason taps his knuckles against the door. "What's going on in here?"

My heart flutters as he steps into the room, and I suck in a sharp breath. "Wow."

He grins as he adjusts his tie, a pale-green to match my dress. "Not too bad, huh?"

"You look amazing." My cheeks heat, and I wish I wasn't inside a down comforter because it's suddenly very hot in here.

Jason arches a dark brow as his emerald eyes meet mine. "What's with the blanket?"

"I'm not ready for you to see me yet." I tip my chin toward Celeste. "She needs help."

Celeste gestures to her dress. "I need you to use your muscles to zip up this dress."

"But you can't rip it, because then the dress will be ruined," I add.

"Let me guess." He spins Celeste around by her shoulders so she's facing the mirror. "You waited until the last minute to try on your dress."

She hikes a shoulder. "I forgot."

His eyes narrow. "You forgot, or you put it off because you didn't want to come to prom in the first place, so you ignored it until you couldn't ignore it anymore?"

Celeste glares at him in the mirror. "Look, I told you I didn't want to go to prom. This is so stupid, everyone getting all dressed up to party with the people they literally ignore in the hallway every single day, acting like we're all going to be so upset when high school is over."

Sadness trickles into my heart like a slow leak. "I'll be sad when it's over."

We won't be together—the three—of us anymore.”

Jason glances at me over his shoulder. “Hey, don't think about that right now, baby.”

Jason got into the University of Michigan on a hockey scholarship, while Celeste and I will be attending Rutgers here in New Jersey. Ten hours is just far enough to force a wedge between a young couple in love. Add in a grueling hockey schedule and horny college girls, and I'm not naïve enough to believe that Jason and I will have a future after high school is over. Breaking up is inevitable. We might as well do it on good terms.

“No more sad faces. We're going to forget about graduation for a little while, and we're going to have fun tonight.” Jason digs his finger into Celeste's rib. “Even you. You got me?”

She scrunches her nose. “You're so bossy.”

Jason pulls on her zipper, bunching the material together at the top. “You look beautiful, by the way.”

Redness crawls into her cheeks. “I look like a busted can of biscuits.”

“I like biscuits.”

She laughs and clutches her stomach. “Don't make me laugh, or I'll pop a stitch.”

I glance at the time on my alarm clock. “What time did you tell your mother to meet us here?”

Celeste sighs and drops her gaze to the dresser. “Thirty minutes ago. Guess I'm not getting my corsage.”

“She's probably just running late,” I tell her, even though we both know her mother likely forgot about prom night altogether.

In one swift tug, Jason somehow gets Celeste's zipper to close without breaking it. “There you go. Problem solved.”

“You're a lifesaver, Jay. This is why we keep you around.” Celeste twirls in front of the mirror. “Now go wait at the bottom of the stairs, and make sure you look like a literal angel is floating down those steps when Kourtney

comes out. Otherwise, I'm going to kick you in the dick."

He chuckles as she shoves him into the hallway. "Why do you always resort to violence?"

She slams the door in his face, and spins around to face me. "Let's take a few selfies before we go downstairs."

We put the finishing touches on our makeup, and have a mini-photoshoot in my bedroom.

My eyes trail down the slinky red material hugging Celeste's curves. "A busted can of biscuits has never looked this good."

She smiles as she smooths a rogue strand of my hair back into place. "You ready for your big night?"

"It's *our* big night." I lace our fingers together. "I know you're only doing this for me, but I'm really glad you're coming."

She shrugs. "Anything for you, little mouse."

My heart races in my chest as I gaze up into her blue eyes. She gave me that nickname the first day we met during freshman year. We were paired together in chemistry class when Mr. Barrister banned her from using the Bunsen burner after she set a strand of her own hair on fire. I was the shy, quiet girl and she was the unafraid loudmouth. We were opposites in every way, yet somehow it felt like she completed parts of me that were missing. I think that's what a best friend does. She makes you feel whole. She makes you feel comfortable being yourself. She holds up a mirror and shows you who you are, and who you want to be. And you can't picture your life without her.

Celeste fidgets under my stare. "What?"

"You look so incredibly beautiful."

She huffs out a laugh, deflecting my compliment like she always does. "Yeah, too bad nobody's waiting at the bottom of the stairs for me to have my movie moment."

Several people at our school, male and female, asked Celeste to be their

date to the prom. She turned everyone down, and told them she wasn't going. I knew I'd be able to convince her to come with me and Jason, and I'm selfishly glad she doesn't have a date. Tonight is a special night, and I want it to be just the three of us, like it always is.

I squeeze her hand. "You have me."

"You have Jason."

"We have each other."

She holds my gaze, and the world around us fades away. Once we leave for college, a new chapter of our lives will begin. It's scary and exciting all at once. And I'll have my best friend by my side through it all.

Everything is about to change for us.

"Girls, the limo is here!"

"Shit. Coming, Mom!" I grab my clutch off the dresser and square my shoulders in front of the bedroom door. "I'll go first."

I step into the hallway and grip onto the railing as I make my way downstairs. Our parents *ooh* and *ahh* as they snap pictures, but the only person I notice in the room is Jason.

Those captivating eyes of his are locked on me as he takes in my form-fitting dress. I could be wearing a potato sack, and he'd still look at me the same way. He always makes me feel like the most beautiful girl in the room, giving me his undivided attention.

My heart aches in my chest. He's the kindest, gentlest, most caring person I've ever known, and I'm going to miss him so much when we part ways for college.

He sweeps me into his arms when I reach the bottom step, and spins me around in a circle. "You look stunning."

I wrap my arms around his neck and press my lips against his. "I love you so much."

"I love you." He sets me on the ground and brushes his nose against mine. "No matter the distance."

Guilt pricks my gut. Jason has made it clear that he wants to try the long-distance thing, but I've told him where I stand. I don't want either one of us to have to go through that kind of pain and heartache, missing each other's calls, getting jealous when we see pictures posted at parties on social media, drunk dialing each other and getting into fights. I don't want to be *that* couple.

I push the thought out of my mind, and try to stay in the moment.

We turn our attention to the stairs again as Celeste comes out of the bedroom.

If they call blondes *bombshells* then Celeste is a firecracker, surrounded by an explosion of thick, reddish-orange hair. She's tall but appears even taller whenever she struts around with her head held high, making eye-contact with anyone in her path, flashing them her mega-watt smile.

Something in my heart twinges as I watch her come down each step, and it feels a lot like the way it does when I look at Jason. It's a deep yearning, a need that I can't quite explain. I suppose that's what love is. Your insides twist and you can't put it into words, because any word you come up with would just cheapen it.

There's nothing that can describe the way I feel for these two.

Celeste flips her hair over her shoulder in a dramatic finish when she gets to the bottom landing. "Okay, I know I thought your movie moment was overrated, but I kind of enjoyed that."

I laugh and wrap my arms around her, squeezing her tight. "Told you."

My mom dabs the corner of her eye. "Look at you. My girls are all grown up."

Jason's mother hands her a tissue. "*Panemorfi*."

Celeste leans in and whispers, "What does that mean?"

"It means *beautiful*." I grin. "Jason says it to me when we're making love."

"Of course he does." She shakes her head. "I've gotta find myself a Greek

boy.”

Jason slips on my corsage while our parents take pictures. Then he disappears into the kitchen.

I reach out and take Celeste’s purse from her. “Let me hold this for you.”

“Why?”

Jason returns, holding a plastic container in his hand. He stops in front of Celeste and pops open the top, revealing a cluster of small red roses surrounded by a spray of baby’s breath.

Celeste’s eyes fly up to his. “What is this?”

“This is your corsage.” He slips it onto her wrist. “I wasn’t sure your mother would come through, so I got a backup just in case.”

Pride swells in my chest. Jason isn’t just my boyfriend. He’s Celeste’s best friend too, and it makes me happy to see the way he cares for her—the same way I care for her. Her parents have always treated her like she’s a nuisance, like she doesn’t matter. Jason and I are her real family.

Celeste’s bottom lip trembles. “Y-you didn’t have to do this.”

“I wanted to.” He leans down and presses a kiss to her cheek. “Now both of my girls are ready to go.”

I smile as I link elbows with each of them. “Let’s go to prom.”

KOURTNEY

FRESHMAN YEAR of College

“We should sell feet pics on the internet.”

An incredulous laugh rips from my throat. “That’s disgusting.”

Celeste blows out a stream of smoke between her lips before passing me the joint. “How is that disgusting?” She lifts her feet in the air and wiggles her toes. “Look how cute they are.”

I take a long drag. “How much money could we possibly make from that?”

Surely not enough to start our own business and pay off our student loans.

Celeste reaches over me and plucks her phone off the nightstand. “Let’s find out.”

I rest my head on her shoulder and watch as her thumbs dance across the screen. Dozens of websites dedicated to feet porn pop up on her browser within seconds.

My eyebrows jump. “Shit, this is an actual a thing.”

“Told you.” Celeste clicks on the first link and browses the website. “It says you get to choose the price for your pictures. The more followers you get, the higher you can set the amount.”

I wrinkle my nose. “Would you really do that—post pictures of your feet, knowing some dude is jerking off on the other side of the screen?”

“It’s not just dudes.” Celeste snatches the joint from my fingertips for another toke. “Everyone has a fetish. Some people like feet.”

“I don’t think *everyone* has a fetish.”

“We all like something. Come on. When you watch porn, what do you like watching?”

I chew my bottom lip. “I don’t know. It’s just regular porn. I don’t like anything weird.”

“But who says what’s weird? That’s like using the word *normal*. It doesn’t exist.” She shrugs. “Who are we to judge what gets people off?”

She’s right. I hate the way I sound. Like my conservative parents.

I huff out a laugh. “Okay, fine. Feet pics it is.”

“There’s my girl.” Celeste grins. “Think about it: You’re not showing your face; you’d make more off one picture than you would working for minimum wage; and you’d set your own hours so nothing would interfere with school.”

“Those are some good points.” I close my eyes, relishing in the high. “Miss Spalding, how did you become so rich? Oh, I snapped some hot pics of my dogs and posted them on the internet.”

Celeste chuckles. “I mean, it doesn’t have to be feet either. There are people making bank on websites like this.”

“Doing what, exactly?”

“Whatever they want.” Celeste stubs out the joint in the ashtray. “You can show as much or as little as you’re comfortable with.”

Unease settles in my gut at the thought of taking my clothes off in front of a computer screen.

But at the same time, something else trickles through my veins.

Excitement? Curiosity?

“I wouldn’t want anyone to see my face.” I cover my face with my hands.

“Oh god, imagine if one of our professors were on there?”

“You could wear a mask, or keep the camera angled away from your face. I’ve seen it done.” Celeste nudges my leg with her knee. “Think about how much we could make if we did it together. People would eat that shit up.”

A small giggle bubbles up in my chest. “Men do love the girl-on-girl action.”

“Not just men. We’d have such a wide audience.”

I hum as I stretch my arms over my head, the hem of my shirt riding up over my navel. “Imagine being able to pay off all our student loans as soon as we graduate.”

“Imagine being able to buy a house.”

“Imagine being able to start our own business.”

Celeste skims her fingers over my bare stomach, trailing along the waistband of my shorts. “Imagine being able to make money just from getting yourself off.”

My thighs clench together at the thought of it.

Of Celeste touching me.

Of me touching her.

Of people watching us.

Celeste lets out a low chuckle. “You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

A mixture of anticipation and fear slosh together in my stomach.

I would.

Celeste and I have been best friends for years, but I’ve recognized something more brewing under the surface for a while now. I couldn’t define or explain it at first. I was in love with Jason, yet felt jealous whenever Celeste dated other girls; when I saw them holding her hand, making her laugh, kissing her. I told myself I was being ridiculous, that I only felt threatened because someone else was taking away my best friend. It went beyond that though, and somewhere deep down inside me, I knew it. But my feelings confused me. I chalked it up to being curious about the same sex,

and shoved it as far down as I could. It's not like we could've been together, the way Jason and I were. My parents would've freaked.

But since we've been in college, I can feel the firm boundaries I've set around us slipping away. Maybe it's the anonymity of being in a new town away from everyone I know. Maybe I'm feeling lonely because I miss Jason. Or maybe I'm finally ready to admit how I feel about Celeste.

Whatever the reason, tonight I'm ready.

It's scary as hell, and I don't know what I'm doing...but I know I want *her* and that's enough to finally go for it.

I reach up and cup her face, pulling her mouth down to mine.

"What are you doing?" she asks, pulling back only slightly.

"What I've wanted to do for a long time."

Her eyes drop to my lips before flicking back up to meet my gaze. "You have?"

I nod, swallowing past the lump of emotion balled in my throat. "You have too, haven't you?"

She closes her eyes and rests her forehead against mine. "You have no idea."

My heart thunders in my chest. "Then kiss me."

Celeste presses a feather-light kiss to my lips, and electricity shoots throughout my entire body. "Are you sure you're ready for this?"

I cover her hand with mine, and move it over my pounding heart. "I've never done this before, so you might have to show me a few things. But I want this with you."

Celeste smiles. "My brave little mouse."

Seconds pass, the air crackling around us.

And then her mouth crashes into mine.

I weave my hands into her hair and part my lips, opening for her so our tongues can wind around one another. Celeste cradles my face in her hands, and tilts my head to hold me where she wants me, moaning into my mouth as

she deepens our kiss.

It's consuming, like a flood rushing over us and pulling us under. And I let it. I succumb to the desires I've hidden, and let the water take me.

Celeste's fingertips dance along my midriff, skating back and forth and sending goosebumps flying over my skin. I need more. Need her to stop holding back.

"Touch me, Celeste," I murmur against her lips. "Please."

Her palm slides under my T-shirt, ascending up my ribcage. "Say it again."

"Touch me. I want you."

She hums as she bites my bottom lip, sliding her hand up until she cups my bare breast. "The things I've wanted to do to this perfect body."

"Yes." My voice is a whispered plea. "I want it too."

She pushes up my shirt and dips her head to wrap her tongue around my nipple. She locks eyes with me as she drags her tongue to my other breast, licking and sucking until I'm a writhing mess.

"Is this really what you want?" Her confident façade fades the longer I gaze into her piercing blue eyes. "I'm not some experiment, or a rebound."

"You know you're none of those things to me."

She has to know. She has to feel what I feel.

I take her hand and guide it down my chest, leading her past my stomach, and over my shorts. "I want to be yours." I roll my hips against our hands. "I want you to be mine."

"I've always been yours, little mouse."

Then she claims my lips, and any reservations she had seem to melt away. She slips her hand inside my shorts, letting her fingers smooth over my clit.

Celeste lets out a breath. "You're wet for me."

"Of course I am." I let my knees fall open. "I'm always wet when I touch myself thinking about you."

Her eyebrows hit her hairline. "Have you?"

I lick my lips and nod as she rubs her fingers against me. “You turn me on, Celeste. I’ve fantasized about you for so many nights.”

She lets out a strained groan. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Because I was scared.”

“Of me?”

I shake my head. “I was afraid that once we started, I wouldn’t be able to stop.”

“Who says we have to stop?” She slips one finger inside of me. “We can do whatever we want. It’s just me and you, Kourt.”

I pull her mouth down to mine, kissing her hard and pouring everything I never said into her, everything I could never admit out loud.

“Imagine the camera on us right now.” Celeste curls her finger, pumping it in and out of me while rubbing my clit with her thumb. “Imagine people on the other side of the screen watching me play with this pretty pussy of yours, watching you writhe and break apart as you come all over my hand.”

I picture it as Celeste talks, and it brings me closer to the edge. My hips move of their own volition, my body at her mercy.

In this moment, I convince myself that nothing else matters. Not my parents, not the world, not the preconceived notions I’ve had my whole life.

Being with Celeste awakens something in me.

And after this moment, I’ll never be the same again.

CELESTE

SENIOR YEAR of College

“I got the job.”

“Oh my god.” Kourtney drops her backpack on the floor and rushes toward me. “Congratulations. That’s incredible news.”

I press a quick kiss to her lips. “There’s, uh...there’s a catch though.”

“Okay...”

“It’s in Seattle.”

It’s a dream job—PR agent for some hockey star Trenton Ward. Sure, Seattle is on the complete opposite side of the country, but even if Kourtney and I have to do long distance for a few months until I get settled and find a place for us to live, we have options.

There isn’t a future that doesn’t involve her.

My life changed the moment Kourtney became my partner in chemistry class in high school. She was adorable with big brown doe eyes and long chestnut hair that she liked to hide behind. I formed a crush on her almost instantly. While I became her best friend, she became much more to me. The closer we got, the deeper I fell.

But I was too chicken shit to tell her how I felt, and she was in love with

that hot jock boyfriend of hers. As much as I envied him, I couldn't help but love the guy too. We did everything together, went everywhere together. I was their third wheel, and I was happy about it because I had two people who wanted me around. They were my best friends, and I convinced myself that that was enough.

My heart carried Kourtney's flag for four long years of unrequited love.

I was surprised that Kourtney wanted to break up with Jason when we left for college. I'd tried to talk her out of it—we both did. She was head over heels for Jason, but she had her mind made up. Kourtney is ruled by fear. She convinces herself of things because she's too scared to believe in any other possibilities.

In college though, that fear evaporated.

She asked me to kiss her and my heart swelled as time stopped around us.

Who knew talking about posting feet pics on the internet would be the catalyst to our epic first night together?

After that, we decided to set up a webcam account where we could livestream our intimate moments together. We set the price and learned quickly that we could set it even higher. People wanted to watch the content we were putting out there, and we took advantage of it.

My shy girl was an exhibitionist.

It's always the quiet ones.

We crossed a line, and for a few years since, we've lived blissfully on the other side of that line.

We're in love.

Kourtney Spalding, my best friend and the love of my life, loves me back.

We're untouchable. We're perfection. We'll be together forever, and now as we graduate college, we can take the next step in our lives together.

Kourtney blinks as if I splashed her with cold water. "You're moving to Seattle?"

"You'd come with me, obviously." I clasp her hands. "We can find an

apartment or a condo to start. We both have a shit-ton of money saved. Plus, my starting salary is going to be off-the-charts. This is huge for me. For us.”

She looks down at our fingers laced together. “Celeste, I can’t just move across the country.”

My eyebrows furrow. “You can find a job there. We can start looking before we go, and—”

“What about my family? I can’t leave them.”

“Kourt, you’re twenty-two. You can go wherever you want. Lots of kids move away from their families.”

She drops my hands and runs hers through her hair. “I still haven’t told them about us.”

“Well, maybe now’s your chance.”

She shakes her head. “I...I can’t.”

I’d be lying if I said it doesn’t hurt that she keeps us a secret from her family, but I refuse to rush her. Coming out is a personal thing, and I want her to feel ready.

“They’ll love you no matter what,” I reassure her. “Your parents are great. And we don’t have to tell them right away.”

“That’s not the point.” She steps back, putting distance between us. “I don’t want to move so far away. I like living here on the East Coast.”

I step forward, needing to feel her reassuring warmth. “I know it’s scary. I’m scared too. But we’d have each other. Isn’t that enough?”

The way Kourtney swallows and pauses is the moment I know.

It’s not enough.

I’m not enough.

She isn’t coming with me.

My face crumples and my chest deflates. All the excitement I had moments ago dissipate.

And then Kourtney’s walls go up. “Celeste, this thing between us...it was fun while it lasted. But—”

“Don’t.” My voice shakes as I lift my index finger. “Don’t downplay what we have.”

“I’m not downplaying anything. I’m just saying, we can’t be by each other’s sides through everything. We’re going to go our own ways eventually. I’m going to get married. Maybe you will too. We’re going to want to start families.”

I cough out an incredulous laugh. “I thought I’d marry *you*, Kourtney. I thought that’s what we wanted. And never once have you talked about wanting to have children.”

She throws her hands in the air. “I don’t know what I want. We’re too young for something like this.”

“Something like this? *This* is love.” I stab my chest with my finger. “I love you. I would give anything for you. If you asked me to move across the world, I’d pack my bags in a heartbeat. If you said you wanted to get married, I’d take us to City Hall right now.” My bottom lip trembles. “If you want babies, we can do that too. We don’t have to figure it all out right now, but we can figure it out together. I thought...I thought you were in this with me.”

Tears roll down her cheeks, and though she shakes her head, the look in her eyes tells me she *is* in it with me.

But fear is a strong motherfucker, and it’ll rob you of all the things you’ve ever dreamed of if you let it.

When you’re gay, the world tells you that you’re wrong. You’re brainwashed from the moment you’re born, whether it be from your family, or society, or the government. And those are some hard chains to break.

“You did the same thing to Jason when he left for college, you know.” It’s the only thing left I can throw at her. “You always run away when things get too real.”

“That’s not true.” She can barely get the words out because she knows it’s a lie.

My chest feels like my heart was torn out of it, leaving nothing but a

gaping, empty hole.

It'll be there forever. The eternal reminder of what I've lost.

So, I'll leave for Seattle, and Kourtney will stay in New Jersey in her safe little bubble.

And I'll leave my heart here with her. I don't need it anymore.

It's more trouble than it's worth.

JASON

ONE YEAR Later

After tossing and turning for hours, I settle against the headboard and unlock my phone.

As tired as I am after tonight's game, I feel restless. Plus, hotel mattresses are stiff and uncomfortable. It's one of the downfalls of constantly being on the road. I love hockey. It's my dream job. But the schedule is grueling, the season is long, and it gets lonely.

No one tells you how difficult dating is when you're a professional athlete. People assume it's awesome having women throw themselves at you wherever you go, but I'm not interested in sticking my dick in someone just because she's willing. There has to be a connection there, something that goes deeper than surface level attraction, and that's hard to do when I'm always traveling. There's no stability.

Not to mention how much there is to worry about: Getting someone pregnant; underage girls lying about being older; sexually transmitted diseases. The only time I want my name in the headlines is for hockey. So, I click on a livestream app in the hopes of finding a temporary fix for my loneliness.

Sometimes, I let my mind drift and wonder what my life would be like if my high school girlfriend never broke up with me. My heart belonged to her from the moment I met her, and I could see our future together so clearly. But she didn't want to put us through the long-distance relationship, and nothing I said could've changed her mind.

Kourtney's beautiful face flashes in my head, and I can't help the smile that tugs on the corner of my lips. Every day, something always reminds me of her. A song, a movie, something someone says that sparks a memory of a moment we shared. I think about Celeste too, and wonder if they're still as close as they used to be. I'm glad they had each other in college, but it pained me to be separated from them, on the outside looking in on what I could no longer be a part of. The three of us were once attached at the hips. They're weaved into all of my favorite high school memories.

I can picture them now, attending my games, cheering for me, wearing my number on their jerseys, and going out after to celebrate. How much better my life would be if they were still in it.

I heave a sigh and scroll through countless videos of women, looking for someone who makes me hard enough to masturbate to. A thumbnail of a brunette catches my eye, so I click on it to enlarge it to full-screen.

And my heart leaps into my throat.

I blink several times, as if to clear my already-clear vision, because there's no way I'm seeing what I'm seeing.

This can't be her.

Kourtney would never be on one of these sites.

Then again, I haven't seen or spoken to her in five years. A lot can change in that span of time.

With long chestnut hair falling in loose waves over her shoulders, she looks right into the camera with those big brown eyes of hers and smooths her hands over her hips. She's sitting back on her knees on the floor of what looks like a bedroom wearing an oversized button-down shirt that's bunched

up enough to reveal her lush thighs.

I swallow hard, unable to peel my eyes away from the screen in complete and utter disbelief, like if I look away, she'll disappear.

I watch as she pops the buttons on her shirt, one by one, until she opens each side and slides them down her arms, revealing a white lace bra and matching panties.

I watch as she drags her palms over her breasts, giving them a squeeze.

I watch as she runs her fingertips over the straps on her shoulders, teasing the thought of pulling them down.

Then I watch as she unclasps the hook behind her, and lets the bra fall to the floor.

My cock hardens, straining in my boxers like it's reaching for her.

Like it knows where it belongs.

She tugs on her nipples and lets out a soft moan.

And that's when I realize that I'm not the only one watching her like this.

Fuck no.

Possession rips through me like an electric current. I click on the button to request a private room. I have to pay extra for it, but I don't care. The only thing I'm concerned about is getting Kourtney's beautiful naked body away from the eyes of anyone else.

My pulse thumps a furious rhythm, excitement and adrenaline coursing through my veins.

It's Kourtney.

After all these years.

What are the odds I stumbled across her video in the middle of the night?

Once the payment goes through, another window opens and I'm prompted to turn on my mic and camera. My thumb hovers over the button to accept.

What will she say when she realizes it's me?

What if she ends the call and I lose her?

What if she thinks I'm a pervert for requesting a private room with her?
Fuck it. I have to try.

I turn on my video and switch on the lamp on my nightstand so she can see my face.

She's still topless, kneeling on the floor. But now she's wearing a bright smile.

My heart aches in my chest at the sight of her.

"You wanted me all to yourself, huh?" Her voice floats through my phone. "What do you plan on doing now that you've got—" A gasp leaves her throat as she leans closer to her camera. "Oh my god. Jason? What are you doing here?"

"I could ask you the same thing."

Her hands fly up to cover her bare chest as she searches for her shirt. "What the...? How did you...?"

I stifle a laugh as she frantically slips her arms into the sleeves and clutches the shirt to her body like I haven't seen every inch of her before. "Believe me, I'm just as surprised as you are."

She buttons a couple of them and carries her phone to her bed to sit. "Holy shit. It's been forever since I've seen you. How are you?"

"I'm doing well. How are you?"

"I'm good. I'm not a famous hockey player or anything, but..." She laughs as her sentence trails off.

She knows I'm playing professional hockey now.

Pride swells my chest, and I grin. "You have no idea how good it is to hear your laugh."

Pink tinges her cheeks as she tucks a strand of hair behind her ears. "I have to admit, I'm a little embarrassed that you caught me like this."

"Trust me, you have nothing to be embarrassed about." My skin prickles at the thought of her short strip tease. "You're still as beautiful as ever."

She covers her face with her palm. "I always wondered what would

happen if I ever ran into anyone I know on this website. At least you're not my mailman or something."

A low chuckle rumbles in my chest. There are so many questions I want to ask her, mainly what she's doing on a porn site like this.

But I start with, "How have you been? What's going on in your life?"

"After college, I got my own apartment in Jersey City. I'm working for my parents' catering business at the moment."

"How are they doing?"

"They're good." She rolls her eyes on a smile. "Same as always."

"What's Celeste up to? She living in the apartment with you?"

Kourtney's smile falters. "Celeste and I aren't... uh, she moved to Seattle for a job last year."

My eyebrows hit my hairline. "Damn. What's in Seattle?"

"A hockey team, actually."

My head tilts. "Hockey?"

"She's Trenton Ward's PR agent."

"Oh, wow. That's an incredible opportunity for her. He's one of the best players in the league."

"You're doing pretty well yourself from what I've seen." Her smile returns. "I've watched a few of your games."

My lungs constrict. I guess she's thought about me like I've thought about her.

Her eyes bounce between mine. "It's so good to see you, Jason."

The sound of my name on her lips has me struggling for my next breath. "I've missed you."

"Me too." She leans her head back against the pillow. "Tell me about you. How is it being a star athlete?"

"I love it. My career is everything I hoped it'd be."

"I'm so happy for you." She pauses. "What about your life outside of your career? Are you...married? Have any kids?"

I shake my head. “Wouldn’t be on this website if I had a family.”

She lets out a soft laugh. “I had to ask.”

“I’m single. Life on the road isn’t really conducive to having a personal life. What about you?”

She hikes a shoulder and her gaze wanders somewhere off screen. “Single.”

I arch a brow. “Sounds like there’s something more to the story.”

She chews on her thumb nail, finally bringing her eyes back to mine. “I, uh, think you’ll be surprised to hear that story.”

I prop a pillow under my back and rest my arm behind my head. “I’d love to hear it.”

“Celeste and I kind of, um, dated...during college.”

My eyebrows jump, but I try to school my features since she looks so nervous about telling me. I’m surprised, but at the same time, I’m not. There was always a spark between the two of them, something special they shared that went deeper than best friends.

“It just happened. One night, I kissed her, and we were together from that moment on.”

“And then she just up and left for Seattle?”

“Not exactly.” Kourtney looks away again. “I told her to go without me.”

“Ah.” Understanding sets in. “How did she take it?”

“We haven’t spoken since.” She blows a long breath out through her lips. “I just couldn’t imagine telling my parents about us. You know how my father is. I couldn’t be with Celeste like that.”

Kourtney pulls away when she’s scared, and I understand why she’d be afraid of what her religious father would say. Still, I wish she had the courage to push past those fears because they’re holding her back from the rest of her life.

I frown. “That must be so hard for you both. You’ve never been separated like this before.”

“You have no idea.”

“Oh, I think I have an idea.”

Her eyebrows push together. “I’m sorry. I never wanted to hurt you. I just thought I was sparing us from something worse.”

“I know. It’s okay.” I offer her a smile so she stops looking so damn upset because it’s breaking my heart. “Look at us now. We found each other again anyway.”

She laughs. “We did, didn’t we?”

“I’d love it if we could exchange numbers and continue talking.”

“Of course.” She types her number into the chat, and I send her mine. “You know, I feel bad that you had to pay for this private room just to talk to me.”

“I’d pay any amount for just a moment with you, Kourtney.”

She holds my gaze as a smile stretches across her face. “You’re still a smooth talker, I see.”

“Only when I’m talking to you.”

She smirks. “Hey, how’s your mom doing? I miss her famous moussaka.”

Grief fists my heart. “She, uh...she passed away two months ago.”

Kourtney gasps as tears fill her eyes. “Jason, I’m so sorry. What happened?”

“She had a heart attack. I was at an away game when I got the call.”

“That’s awful. She was loved by so many people.”

I nod, my bottom lip trembling at the memory of my sweet mother. “I wish I could’ve gotten more time with her.”

Kourtney dabs at the corner of her eye. “Time is always cut short with the people we love the most.”

“Let’s not waste anymore of our time then.” I clear my throat. “I’m in Boston right now, but I’d love to see you when I get back this weekend.”

She nods. “Absolutely.”

I don’t know what’s happening here, or how we managed to reconnect

like this. But I do know one thing for sure: Fate has brought us back together after all these years, and I'll be damned if I'm going to let Kourtney go again.

She might not know it yet, but I'm going to marry this woman one day.

KOURTNEY

FOUR YEARS Later

“What’s going on inside that beautiful head of yours?”

I smile as I turn from the window and gaze at my husband sitting beside me at the kitchen table. “Lots of things, as usual.”

Jason lifts his mug to his lips. “Are you excited to see Celeste?”

Nerves bubble in my stomach like a boiling pot. “I am. It’s been a long time.”

“Five years will seem like nothing once you’re together again.” He sets down his mug and reaches for a piece of toast. “You should play the lottery. What are the odds your best friend gets relocated to the same city as you?”

Pretty slim.

The hockey player Celeste works for in Seattle got traded to Jersey City. Out of all the teams he could’ve been traded to in the NHL, he got moved here, to play on the same team as my husband—a husband who was once my high school boyfriend that I broke up with during our college years, but reunited with on a webcam website.

My head spins whenever I think about it.

Yeah, maybe I should play the lottery.

I'm not a believer in fate or destiny, but this shit right here is too much of a coincidence to be overlooked. It's like the universe wanted to keep the three of us tethered together.

Jason dips the knife into the tub of butter and then scrapes it over his toast. "I can't wait to see her."

"Oh, yeah?" I can't help the surprise in my voice. He knows everything that happened between me and Celeste in college, yet he seems nothing but excited for her to return to our lives.

"It'll be just like old times, the three amigos again." He shoots me a wink before shoving the bread into his mouth with a loud, crunchy bite. "Plus, she's the reason you and I found each other again on that website, and I want to personally thank her for convincing you to have sex on it so we could eventually be together."

I chuckle. "You're right. If it weren't for her, I would never have even dreamt of being on that site to begin with."

After Celeste left for Seattle, I continued livestreaming solo. It was great money, and sexting with strangers helped me keep my mind off of missing Celeste. I never thought I'd rekindle an old love and find my future husband there, of all places.

"I'll never forget the first time I saw you on that screen. I couldn't believe it was you, after all those years." Jason's hand slides along my thigh under the table. "God, you were sexy. I was glued to my phone, waiting for you to accept my request for a private room with you." He tugs on the belt around my waist and my robe falls open. "The universe brought us back together, and I just knew it was fate. I knew I was going to marry you."

I push out of my chair and drop the robe at my feet, relishing in the way his gaze roams over my bare body. He stands and grips my hips, lifting me up and planting my ass on the table. I spread my legs for him, and slide my fingers over my clit, basking in the sound of the groan that leaves his throat at the sight of me touching myself.

He reaches into his boxers and wraps his hand around his dick, pulling it out so I can watch as he pumps himself in slow, lazy strokes. “This is how it all started. Me watching you, wishing I could have you in real life.”

I reach out and cup his face. “You have me now.”

He leans into my touch. “Forever, *agápi mou*.”

My love.

Jason’s phone buzzes on the table and I glance down at the time displayed on the screen. “We’d better hurry. You’re going to be late.”

He presses the head of his cock to my entrance, coating himself in my arousal. “I’m not rushing this.”

I wrap my legs around him and dig my heels into his ass. Jason thrusts inside me, and we both cry out in relief. The silverware and dishes rattle against the table as he pulls out and plunges back inside me over and over again in a punishing rhythm.

This is always how it is when he travels during the season. We fuck like we can’t get enough of each other, knowing we won’t see each other for a period of time. It gets lonely, but it’s worth it when he comes home and he’s in my arms again.

“*Fuuuck*,” he drags out, gazing down between us. “Look at the way you take me.”

Nothing is hotter than seeing the wild look in his eyes while he’s watching his cock stretch me.

I reach down and rub my clit in circles, knowing it spurs him on. We’re loud and unrestrained, and we hold out for as long as we can until I clench around his cock. The orgasm racks my body, and I grip onto his hair to hold me steady while I ride it out. He comes right after, spilling his warm cum inside me, and then he watches with rapt attention and parted lips as it oozes back out of me.

“Goddamn, Kourt.” He drops his damp forehead against mine, chest heaving as he fights to catch his breath. “*S’agapó*.”

I bring my lips to his. “I love you too, baby.”

He sweeps me into his arms and carries me into the bathroom. He twists the lever in the shower to hot before stepping in with me and closing the glass door behind him.

“Babe, you’re going to be late.”

He sets my feet down onto the tile and cages me against the wall. “Fuck hockey.”

I giggle against his mouth as I reach up onto my toes and wrap my arms around his neck. “You don’t mean that.”

“No, but I’m not ready to leave you yet. I’ve missed you too much.” He bites my bottom lip. “And you’re going to give me one more.”

“You had sex this morning, didn’t you?”

My cheeks burn as I whip Erika with a dish towel. “Lower your voice before my father hears you.”

Erika waves a dismissive hand. “Ah, you’re a twenty-seven-year-old married woman. He knows you’re bumping uglies.”

“Well, he doesn’t have to hear about it.” I bite back a smile and lower my voice. “We did it on the kitchen table and then in the shower.”

“I knew it.” Erika chuckles and snaps the lid on the food container. “You’re walking kind of funny.”

I tilt my head back and laugh. “I am not.”

My father breezes through the kitchen door as if on cue. “Breakfast is served, ladies and gentlemen. I brought bagels.”

I clear my throat. “Uh, Dad...?”

His eyes fall on Erika and he pauses. “I’m sorry. I did it again, didn’t I?”

Erika offers him a patient smile. “It’s okay, Mr. Spalding. Don’t worry about it.”

“No, I’ll get it right. Let’s try that again.” He sets down a white paper bag overflowing with bagels. “Breakfast is served, ladies.”

I reach out and squeeze his shoulder. “Thanks, Dad.”

Erika has been working at our family’s catering business for the last couple of years, but when we hired her, she was a tall black man named Eric. I had to convince my conservative father to keep her as she started to transition. She’s my friend, and she deserves to work here. He’s been making efforts to refer to her with the appropriate pronouns, and even if it’s just to appease me, it makes me happy to know that he’s trying.

“I’ll get it right one day.” He lets out a small chuckle. “Busy day ahead of us.”

“Busy is good.” I pull the zipper around the delivery bag. “We’re almost ready to head out for the first event.”

“How long is Jason in town for?”

“I said goodbye to him this morning. He should be back on Friday.”

He frowns. “Let’s do dinner when he gets back. We haven’t seen him in a while.”

Erika shoots me a wink. “Kourt, that’s so selfish of you to keep him all to yourself when he’s home.”

I kick Erika’s shin under the counter and return my attention to my father. “We’d love to do dinner. I’ll call Mom later to set it up.”

“Sounds good.” He presses a kiss to the top of my head. “Have a good day. I’ll see you later at the Cavanaugh event.”

He turns around to leave but before he reaches the door, it swings open and all of the air leaves my lungs.

“Celeste.” Dad whips his head around to look at me before turning back to her. “What are you doing here?”

“Didn’t your daughter tell you?” She flashes me a smile over my father’s shoulder. “I’m back, bitches.”

“My daughter tells me nothing.” Dad pulls her into a tight hug. “What

happened to Seattle?”

“My client got traded to the Jersey City Goldfinches.”

Dad crosses his arms over his chest, feigning offense as he glares at me. “You knew Celeste was moving back and you didn’t tell me?”

I throw up my hands in innocence. “I only found out two days ago when she texted me.”

And I was just as shocked as Dad is.

Celeste and I haven’t talked much in the five years we’ve been apart. We’ve liked each other’s social media pictures, and shot the annual Happy Birthday text. But our friendship is nowhere near what it used to be. We used to be inseparable. We used to tell each other everything. Then lines were crossed, and she didn’t want anything to do with me after she left.

Until I got a text that said she was coming back to Jersey.

I’ve been on edge for two days. It feels like bees have infiltrated my veins, buzzing along my bloodstream, making my body hum with anticipation.

Maybe Jason’s right. Maybe we can get our friendship back to what it was before I went and fucked everything up.

“Well, I’m thrilled.” Dad smiles wide. “Kourt, bring Celeste to dinner on Friday. Let’s surprise your mother.”

I roll my eyes. “You can’t keep a secret from Mom for two whole days.”

“I will.” He holds up three fingers. “Scout’s honor.”

“Twenty bucks says he breaks and tells her before Friday,” Celeste says.

I arch a brow. “Double or nothing he calls her within the next five minutes.”

“I forgot how much you two love to gang up on me when you’re together.” Dad scoffs, but a smile slips through. “It’s good to have you back, Celeste. I have to run, but we’ll catch up on Friday.”

“Yes, sir.”

Dad leaves, and silence fills the space in his absence.

Celeste's piercing blue eyes lock with mine, and for a split-second, it's just the two of us alone in our off-campus apartment again. My throat thickens and I fight to swallow past the growing lump.

Instead of attempting to say anything, I rush toward her and fling my arms around her.

She staggers backward and chuckles as her arms slide around my shoulders.

I breathe her in and squeeze my eyes shut, hoping to trap the tears behind my lids. She still smells the same, like cinnamon and vanilla mixed together, and the memories come flooding back with the olfactory trigger.

Celeste pulls back way too soon, and holds out her hand to Erika. "Hi, I'm Celeste."

Erika steps forward and shakes her hand. "It's nice to meet you. I'm Erika."

"I like your hair."

"Thanks." Erika twirls a bright-orange curl at the end of one of her braids. "I like your tits."

Celeste sticks out her chest. "Thanks, they're real."

"I'm saving up for a pair of my own," Erika says.

Celeste whips out her phone. "Give me your number. When you're ready, I'll send you some pictures for reference so you can show the doctor."

"Wow, thank you so much."

The two exchange numbers while I stand there without anything useful to add to the conversation.

How is Celeste so calm and collected?

Is she not affected the way I am?

Does she still hold a grudge after all this time?

Erika shoves her phone back into her apron. "Well, I'm going to pack up the van. I'll meet you out there in five minutes, Kourt."

I nod. "Thanks."

Erika collects the bags and carries the food out the back door.

Celeste's eyes bounce around the kitchen. "You're working for your parents' catering business."

It's not a question. She knows what I do. But I can read the fine print in what she's really getting at. We once dreamed of owning our own businesses. The last thing I wanted to do was work for my parents. I wanted to do something exciting. Something that gave me a purpose in life. Something that was mine.

I hike a shoulder. "They got really busy after Jason's team used them for an event. It was great exposure but they needed more help, so I agreed to work for them for a while."

A while being the operative words.

She nods. "That's great. I'm glad to hear their business is doing well."

I clear my throat. "When did you get in? I could've given you a ride home from the airport."

"The team sent a driver for us."

"Oh, duh. That's right."

The team—Jason's team.

Celeste reaches out and grasps my hands as I wring them in front of me. "Chill, Kourt. Why are you acting so weird?"

"Why *aren't* you acting weird?" I drop my hands and let them smack against my thighs. "We haven't seen each other in five years; we've barely spoken; and suddenly you're back and you're acting like it's no big deal."

Celeste's shoulders slump and all of her bravado leaves her. "How do you think this feels for me? You've built a life here—family, friends, a husband—and I don't know if I'll fit into it. I don't know if there's room for me."

My head jerks back. "Of course there's room for you. There's always room for you. Regardless of what happened between us, you're still my best friend. I'd like to get back to that."

"I do too." She lifts her shoulders and lets them fall. "Can you forgive me

for being a total bitch and not coming to your wedding?”

I laugh. “Only if you can forgive me.”

For being selfish and taking what I wanted from her, only to push her away when things got real.

For not having the guts to tell my parents about us.

For letting fear take our lives on two different directions.

For breaking both of our hearts.

I don't have to say any of that though. She knows.

“I already forgave you.” Celeste offers me a sheepish smile. “It took me some time, but I got there.”

Tears sting the backs of my eyes as relief floods me. “I'm really glad you're back.”

Celeste smiles, and this time, it's a genuine one. “Me too, little mouse.”

THE PRESENT

Two Years Later

JASON

“THESE HEELS ARE KILLING ME.”

Kourtney flings off her shoes, kicking each leg like a ninja and launching her heels across the room when we arrive back from our friends’ rehearsal dinner.

I chuckle as I hold open the door for Celeste. “This is all your fault.”

Celeste’s eyes widen as she presses her hand against her chest. “Me? It’s not my fault your wife can’t hold her liquor like she used to.”

I arch a brow as I lock the door behind her. “Right. Because you yelling, *Take the shot and quit being a little bitch*, had nothing to do with it.”

Celeste smirks. “Touché, Jay.”

Kourtney howls with laughter as she sways. “Touché, Jay. That rhymes.”

“All right, *agápi mou*.” I grip her shoulders and lead her to the sectional. “Let’s get you to the couch so you don’t tip over.”

“I love when you talk to her in Greek. It’s so adorable, it makes me want to puke.” Celeste flops onto the recliner and pushes the button to lie back. “How do you say *more alcohol* in Greek?”

I grin as I wedge a pillow under Kourtney’s head. “*Perissótero alkoól*. What would you like: We have beer, wine, and ouzo.”

“I’ll stick with wine. Please and thank you.”

I pour two glasses and grab a water bottle from the fridge before returning

to the living room.

Celeste clinks her glass against mine and takes a sip. “I can’t believe Trenton and Cassidy are getting married this weekend. It feels like yesterday when I drafted their fake dating contract.”

“I still can’t believe they were fake dating all that time.” I shake my head as I lower myself onto the couch beside Kourtney. “I had no idea.”

“Love always finds a way,” Kourtney slurs as I pop the cap on the water bottle and hand it to her.

Celeste chuckles. “Yeah, just look at the two of you. Who meets the love of their life on a porn site?”

I run a hand through Kourtney’s silky hair as she snuggles against my lap. “For the record, we dated in high school and then got back together years later.”

She purses her lips. “On a porn site.”

“On a porn site that *you* convinced me to go on in the first place.” Kourtney closes one eye and points her index finger at Celeste. “If you and I never went on that website to make some extra cash, who knows where we’d all be right now.”

Celeste takes a dramatic bow from the recliner. “You’re welcome.”

Kourtney’s eyes droop closed. “Seriously, think about it: What are the odds that we’re sitting in this apartment together after everything we’ve been through? The three of us have known each other since high school, and now we’re adults, spending this incredible life together. I never thought I’d see Jason again after we broke up when we graduated high school. And after college, Celeste moved across the country. Yet, here we are. Like, what are the odds?”

Warmth pools in my chest like it does whenever I think about this. “The three of us are meant to be together. Simple as that.”

Celeste flicks her eyes to the ceiling. “Well, it’d be nice if the universe sent me someone so I didn’t have to be the perpetual third wheel.”

Kourtney's eyebrows pull together. "You're not a third wheel. You're our best friend."

"You know what I mean." Celeste takes a sip of wine and averts her eyes, and guilt gnaws at my stomach.

Celeste will never admit to it, but I know how much it hurt her to lose Kourtney. I know because I felt the same pain when Kourtney let me go. Celeste will say it was years ago, and that she's moved on...but every once in a while, I catch the lingering glance she gives us when she thinks we're not paying attention.

It doesn't bother me. I love having Celeste around, and I always have. I only wish she didn't see herself as the mere outsider who tags along with us. I want her to feel like she's a part of our family, the way we feel she is.

Celeste downs the rest of her wine. "You know, I bet more people would find love like you two if there were a dating website made for that."

"No, no, no." Kourtney covers her face with her hands. "We are not discussing this."

I set my glass down on the coffee table. "Discussing what?"

"Nothing," Kourtney says.

But Celeste elaborates for me. "When we were in college, we talked about starting our own dating website, but incorporating the webcam into it. Think about how many people sign up for a dating app and get immediately turned off by all the unwanted sexual advances and unsolicited dick pics; or how many people are unhappy with their partners sexually because they feel ashamed to tell them what they're really into? If there was a website where you could be as sexual as you wanted, and still look for a partner with similar preferences at the same time, maybe people would find long-lasting love."

"A dating app with porn." I nod. "I fucking love that idea."

"We were so young and naïve back then. I couldn't do something like that now." Kourtney slumps back down against me. "What would I tell my parents? How could I explain that I'm quitting the family business to create

my own porn site?”

I lean down and press a kiss to her forehead. “I think your parents would love you no matter what you choose to do with your life.”

Celeste lets out a sardonic laugh. “Dude, I already tried that line on her years ago. It won’t work.”

“That’s easy for you to say,” Kourtney fires back at her. “Your parents are off traveling the world on their yacht. They don’t have religious or conservative beliefs. You don’t understand what it’s like to want their approval.”

“So, you’d rather be unhappy than risk someone not approving of you.”

“It’s not that I’m unhappy...” Kourtney’s voice trails off, and it’s because she can’t think of anything to back up her lie.

She *is* unhappy in her career.

I clasp her hand. “I know it would be uncomfortable at first, but I think your parents would be okay with it. Your happiness means everything to them, and they wouldn’t want to know that you’re unfulfilled working at their catering business.”

She shakes her head. “I can’t. I just can’t.”

Celeste taps her nails against her glass. “What if you didn’t tell them?”

“You want me to lie?”

She shrugs. “It’d be a white lie. Plenty of people work two or three jobs. You could do the catering business by day, and run the website behind the scenes and no one would have to know.”

I remain quiet, letting the idea settle in Kourtney’s mind. I’d never push her to do something she doesn’t want to do, but it kills me to know that she’s unfulfilled in her career. I get to wake up every day and play the game I love. I’m filled with passion and drive, and I know Kourtney is too, but she has nowhere to put it. It’s stifling her, and I want more for her.

Celeste waggles her eyebrows. “Imagine all the traffic you’d drive to your website if the two of you were boning on it.”

Kourtney snorts. “We can’t do that. We’re married.”

“So? You’re not fucking other people. You’d be doing it together. Plus, you’re both hot as fuck.”

Kourtney looks up at me with glassy eyes. “She’s crazy. This is crazy, right?”

I rub the back of my neck. “Honestly, it’s not that crazy, Kourt.”

Her lips part. “You’d want us to put our sex life out there for anyone to see?”

“We were putting our sex lives out there when we met on that website. Why not do it together, and help other people possibly find what we have? My face would have to be cut out for hockey purposes, but I’d be down if this is something you want to consider.” I squeeze her hand. “Think about all the people out there whose parents threw them out of the house because they couldn’t look past their sexual orientation or preference. You could create a safe space for sex workers and the LGBTQ+ community to make money and support themselves.”

Kourtney rubs her temples in small circles. “I think I’m too drunk for this conversation.”

“Sleep on it.” Celeste reaches over and pulls her phone out of her purse. “I’m going to get an Uber.”

“Why don’t you stay over?” I jerk my thumb over my shoulder. “We have a guest room, and you know I don’t like the idea of you in the car with a stranger this late at night.”

She scoffs. “I’m a big girl, Jay. I can handle myself.”

“Doesn’t make me feel any better.”

She rolls her eyes. “Save your worrying for your wife.”

“I have enough worry to go around.” I push off the couch to stand, and hold out my hand. “Stay the night and I’ll make us pancakes in the morning.”

Kourtney drags herself off the couch and wraps her arms around my waist. “And you know he makes the best blueberry pancakes in the world.”

Celeste slips her hand in mine and lets me pull her out of the chair. “Fine, I’ll stay. But only because you have a game tomorrow and I don’t want you up all night worrying when you should be resting.”

I grin. “Sounds a lot like *you* worrying about *me*.”

“Don’t let it get to your head.”

I lift Kourtney into my arms so she doesn’t have to stumble all the way down the hall. “There are clean sheets on the bed but you can grab a towel out of the closet if you want to shower.”

Celeste salutes me. “Got it, boss.”

Kourtney nuzzles against my neck. “Mmm. You like being the boss, don’t you baby?”

My dick twitches. “Too bad you’re drunk, otherwise I’d show you how much I like being the boss.”

“People would love that role play stuff on the website,” Celeste calls from behind us. “Just saying.”

At six o’clock the next morning, Celeste creeps into the hallway.

“You’re up early.”

Celeste flinches and clutches her chest. “Jesus, I didn’t see you there.”

I arch a brow, standing in the middle of my kitchen in plain sight. “Sneaking out on us?”

“I have a work emergency.” She slings her purse over her shoulder. “The paparazzi never sleep.”

“Everything okay?”

“Nothing I can’t handle.”

She eyes the Keurig machine on the counter, and I slide a to-go cup across the counter.

“Black coffee, just the way you like it.”

She grins. “Black like my heart.”

One corner of my mouth curves up. “Your heart isn’t black.”

She purses her lips. “What do you think you know me or something?”

“I knew you’d try to sneak out of here before Kourtney woke up.”

She always does after sleeping over at our place, so I woke up early to make sure she had caffeine before she left.

“I’m not *sneaking* out.” She waves her coffee cup in front of her. “I told you, I have a work emergency.”

I let out a low chuckle. “Okay, *kókkino*.”

She rakes her fingers through her hair and averts her eyes like she always does whenever I call her *red*.

“Kourtney needs you right now, you know.”

Celeste’s eyebrows jump. “What do you mean?”

“She’s not fully happy, and I know me being gone a lot during the season puts a strain on things, but I also know the other piece to that puzzle is her career.” I lift my mug to my lips and blow on it before taking a sip. “I’ve tried talking to her about it countless times, but she’s so closed off about it. She’ll listen to you.”

Celeste looks down at her cup, neither confirming nor denying what I’m saying.

“She values your opinion. You’re one of the people she loves most in this world.”

Celeste lifts her gaze to mine. “I can’t make her do something she doesn’t want to do.”

“No, neither of us can. But we can be the support team she needs, in whatever capacity that looks like.”

She nods like she’s agreeing to a silent pact between us. “I’m really glad you guys found your way back to each other. I love seeing how much you love her.”

My chest swells. “And I’m really glad you came back to us. It’s like old

times.”

She smirks. “Yeah, except we’re not playing spin the bottle in Jonas Hutchinson’s basement anymore.”

“You want to play spin the bottle? I’m sure Kourtney would be down.”

She laughs and turns around to make her way toward the door. “See you later, Jay.”

“I love you too, you know,” I call after her.

She pauses with her hand on the doorknob, but doesn’t turn around.

“You’re more than a third wheel. You’re family.”

She shoots me a wink over her shoulder. “Sure. Think of me as your really hot sister-in-law.”

And then she’s out the door.

I get started on the pancakes, and within the hour, Kourtney slinks out of the bedroom with the comforter wrapped around her.

“Good morning, my little burrito.”

She smiles, though it doesn’t meet her tired eyes. “This table looks so yummy. Is Celeste still sleeping?”

“No, she left about an hour ago.”

“She left?”

“She said she had a work emergency.” I pull out a bottle of Ibuprofen from the cabinet and shake a couple of pills into my hand. “Sit and eat. The pancakes are ready.”

“Thank you, baby.” Kourtney tugs my hand before I can walk away. “I love you.”

“I love you.” I lean down and press my lips against hers. “How are you feeling?”

“Just have a nasty headache.”

“I’ll rub your head after breakfast.”

She nods as she sips from the mug I poured for her—hazelnut creamer with a splash of coffee, just the way she likes it. “Last night was fun, even if

you two ganged up on me.”

I stuff a forkful of pancakes into my mouth and hike a shoulder. “Sometimes you need a good gang bang.”

She laughs and then clutches her head. “Ow, don’t make me laugh. It hurts.”

My smile fades, and I reach across the table to clasp her hand. “Seriously, though. I didn’t mean to make you feel ganged up on. I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay. I was just kidding.” She glances down at her mug. “I know you’re both looking out for me.”

“You were there for me when I needed you. After my mom passed, I was a mess, but you helped me through it.”

She brushes her thumb back and forth over the top of my hand. “Of course.”

“And when I thought that I wanted to give up hockey, you pushed me to go to therapy and put my mental health first so I could figure it out.”

“I will always be here for you, Jason.”

“So let me be here for you.” I shift in my seat to face her. “Let me build you up and push you to become an even better version of yourself. Whether it’s to create your own website, or even if it’s something completely different. Whatever it is that’s in your heart, just know that I am here by your side, believing in you every step of the way.”

A tear falls down her cheek. “I know you are.”

I lean over and kiss away the salty drop. “Forever, *agápi mou*.”

“Forever.”

She drops the comforter onto the floor and moves to stand in front of me, sliding her hands around the back of my neck. “I want you.”

I groan as I glance at the green numbers on the microwave. “We can’t be late to the venue.”

Kourtney tears the oversized T-shirt over her head. “Then you’d better hurry up and fuck me.”

KOURTNEY

WEDDINGS ALWAYS MAKE ME CRY.

They make Jason cry too. He's a big sap and I love it. He looks so handsome standing amongst the groomsmen, buttoned up in a black suit against his olive skin. His dark hair is neatly combed instead of the messy way he usually wears it. As if he can feel the weight of my stare, his green eyes find mine and he shoots me a wink that sends goosebumps popping up along my skin.

Trenton and Cassidy look like the picture of perfection, happiness radiating from their gazes as they face each other. Their relationship started out a bit unconventional—feuding neighbors turned to fake dating turned to actual dating—but that's my favorite kind of love story. One where it defies the odds and overcomes all obstacles.

I dab the corner of my eye as my gaze drifts to Celeste standing with Cassidy's bridesmaids. The emerald dress compliments her bright hair and fair skin. As much as she hates weddings, no one would ever guess it because she'd never let it show. She's the type of friend who'll be there for you every step of the way without a single complaint because she puts everyone's needs ahead of her own.

Celeste being back in Jersey these last two years has been incredible. It's all I could've hoped for, having both her and Jason in my life at the same

time again.

My heart soars as they link elbows and waltz down the aisle after the ceremony. Jason whispers something to Celeste that has her throwing her head back with laughter. They've become good friends, and it's not lost on me how lucky I am that my husband loves my best friend, and vice versa—especially since Celeste and I were previously together. Things have worked out between the three of us in the best way possible.

At the reception, we dance with Cassidy for a few songs until Trenton sweeps her up from behind and spins her around, stealing her attention. Celeste and I continue to move to the beat, our skin slick with sweat.

“Where’s Jason?” Celeste asks.

“By the bar.” I meet his gaze as he watches us from across the room. “He’s enjoying himself.”

Celeste grins. “Every exhibitionist needs a voyeur.”

“Let’s give him a good show.” I turn around and press my ass against Celeste, lifting my arms as I sway with the rhythm.

Celeste laughs as she rolls her hips into me. “I give him two seconds before he’s over here claiming you for himself.”

“You underestimate how much he likes watching.”

To anyone looking on, Jason’s stoic expression is unreadable. But his eyes tell me another story. The intensity in his gaze is laced with promises, like a secret language only we can understand.

“Well, it’s safe to say you got the best-looking man on the team.”

A laugh bursts from my throat as I turn my head to look up at Celeste. “What?”

“Trenton and Krumkachova are hot if you’re into the grumpy lumberjack look. McKinley is a fellow ginger and we’re always tens. But you nabbed a literal Greek god.”

I can’t fight the smile on my face as we both ogle my husband. “He might be a Greek god, but he worships me like I’m one.”

“Oh, I’m sure you get on your knees to worship him right back.”

My eyes squeeze shut as I laugh again. “I always forget that you’re into men. You haven’t dated them as often as women.”

“It’s difficult to compete with a woman.” Celeste’s fingertips trail down my arms. “There’s nothing like the curves of a woman’s body. The soft and smooth skin.” She brushes my hair over my shoulder and I feel her lips at my ear. “The way she smells.”

I let my head fall back against her shoulder. “Her breasts.”

“You were always a boob girl.”

“That’s because I have barely any.”

“Be grateful. They’re perky and they’ll never sag.” Celeste’s hands skim down my sides and grip my waist. “But you know I prefer the swell of a woman’s ass any day.”

“I remember.” I wind my hips left and right as I lower myself, rubbing my ass against Celeste’s body and loving the way Jason’s eyes narrow on me before I make my way back up again. “I do love a man’s body too though.”

Celeste’s breath is hot on my neck. “If the dick is just right, he can be a magnificent specimen.”

My thighs clench as the image of Jason’s cock flashes in my mind.

Celeste lets out a low chuckle, no doubt feeling my body’s reaction as I stare at my husband. “He’s hung like a goddamn horse, isn’t he?”

“He definitely isn’t lacking in the size department.”

But it’s so much more than that. Women are so concerned with size, as if we’d even be capable of taking a twelve-inch monster dick. It’s Jason’s thickness; the veins running along his length that I love to trace with my tongue; the way he knows exactly how to swivel his hips and work himself inside of me to make me scream. It’s the attentive care in which he handles me, recognizing every sound and move I make. He doesn’t just fuck me. He studies me, and gives me every single thing my body needs.

The song changes and the tempo slows. Groups of people break off into

pairs, wrapping their arms around one another as they move.

I step away from Celeste, grateful for a slow song so I can grab some water to cool off the heat burning in my core. But as I do, I back into a wall of muscle.

Jason's voice is raspy in my ear from behind me. "May I have this dance?"

I smile as I relax into his embrace. "Of course."

Celeste shoots me a wink as she turns to walk away, and guilt pricks in my gut. Almost everyone here has someone except her, and I hate the thought of how lonely she might feel—though she'd die before she admitted it.

Jason and I reach out for her at the same time, each of us clasping her hands and bringing her back to us. Her eyes widen in surprise as I pull her against me, sandwiching myself between her and my husband.

"Where do you think you're going?" Jason asks, sliding one hand around her waist while his other hand sits low on my hip.

I reach up to clasp my hands behind her neck. "Stay."

Celeste's eyes dart around the dance floor. "I was going to get a drink."

Jason pulls her closer, pushing her flush against my body. "You think you two are going to put on a show like that and then walk away when I come over to join?"

She rolls her eyes despite the smirk playing on her lips. "Three's a crowd, haven't you heard?"

"Three's company," I counter.

She opens her mouth to protest, but Jason cuts her off. "I want to dance with my girls. Give me one dance, *kókkino*."

Celeste's eyes flick between us, and then she lifts her arms. One hand rests on Jason's shoulder, and the other snakes around my waist. The three of us sway from side to side, moving as one.

Something inside me clicks into place. It's subtle. Quiet. Like when Jason comes home late from a game and I'm asleep in bed; the bed dips as he slides

under the covers and wraps his arms around me. I barely wake, yet I know he's home and I feel at peace. Complete.

That's how it feels to be held between Jason and Celeste as we dance. Everything I've ever wanted, ever needed, ever loved, is right here surrounding me.

My mind drifts, an idea taking form.

It's wrong.

I shouldn't want this.

So I stamp it down, and focus on the fleeting moment in front of me.

And when the song ends, we break apart, and it's gone.

I stand in front of the mirror in my bathroom pulling out the bobby pins holding my hair together.

Jason steps behind me and threads his fingers through my hair, massaging my scalp. "You looked beautiful today."

I hum as my eyes close, relishing in the feel of his strong hands. "So did you. I love seeing you in a suit."

He sweeps my hair to the side and lowers his lips to the crook of my neck. "You got quiet toward the end of the night. Are you tired?"

I reach behind me and palm him over his slacks. "Not too tired to fuck you."

He smiles against my skin before he spins me around and places me on the countertop beside the sink. "Are you ever too tired for that?"

I shake my head and brush my lips against his. "Never."

"You've got something on your mind though." He bunches up my dress, skimming his hands along my thighs. "Anything you want to talk about?"

I spread my legs and yank on his tie to loosen it. "Not at the moment. I'm a little busy."

His hands continue their ascent while I fumble with the buttons on his shirt.

He lets out a groan when he glances down between us. “This pussy has been bare underneath this dress all day?”

“Mhmm.” I whip off his tie and push his shirt over his shoulders, slipping it down his arms until I can yank it off and toss it to the floor.

He ghosts a knuckle over my clit, the feather-light touch sending a shiver throughout my body. “I want you to tell me what you’ve been thinking about.”

I arch my back and push myself against his fingers, needing more pressure to ease the ache between my legs. “We’ll talk later.”

Jason slips a finger inside me, curling it and then pumping in and out of me in an agonizingly slow rhythm. “Why not now?”

I whimper and let my head fall back against the mirror. “I don’t want to talk now.”

He arches a devious brow as he pulls his finger out of me and rubs my clit with my arousal. “Talk now and I’ll let you come.”

“You’ll let me come regardless.”

“Only after you’ve been punished.” He grips my neck and pulls my mouth to his so he can speak against my lips. “You think I’m going to let you get away with your little stunt on the dance floor with Celeste? You think you can tease me by making me watch someone else put her hands on you?”

“Tell me you didn’t like it.” My tongue skates across his lips. “Tell me you didn’t want to fuck me right then and there.”

“You would’ve liked that, wouldn’t you? Being fucked with everyone watching around you.” His fingers slide between my legs again, feeling how drenched he’s making me. “With Celeste watching you.”

“She’d be watching you too.” I clench around him as he pushes two fingers inside me this time. “We were talking about you while we danced. She told me how good-looking she thinks you are, and I told her what a

perfect cock you have.”

He removes his fingers and I whine in protest until he pushes them into my mouth to silence me. “So, that’s what you’ve been thinking about tonight.”

Worry and guilt seize my stomach as I suck on his fingers.

He continues when I don’t answer him. “You were thinking about the three of us together. What it’d be like if Celeste and I shared you. How it’d feel to be between us like we were when we were dancing. To feel me and her at the same time.”

I can’t help the moan that escapes me.

He should be mad. My husband should be angry that I was fantasizing about being with someone other than him.

Instead, he tugs on his belt and unzips his pants, pushing them down over his ass to free himself from his boxers.

“Tell me, Kourtney.” His eyes lock with mine as he runs the tip of his cock over my pussy, coating himself in me. “Tell me that’s what you were thinking about.”

I hike my knees up to my chest, resting my heels on the edge of the counter so I can spread myself wide for him. “Yes. Yes, I was thinking about it.”

He notches his head inside me, pumping in and out in short pulses. It’s not nearly enough and it’s driving me wild.

“Is that what you want? Do you want the three of us to be together?” He pushes all the way inside me before pulling completely out. “My girl wants to fuck me and her best friend?”

It sounds so wrong when he says it out loud. It *is* wrong. But my body reacts to it like it’s right.

“M-maybe.” I wrap my hand around his cock and line him up at my entrance, trying to guide him back inside me. “I don’t know.”

“You don’t know.” Jason lets out a low chuckle. Then he hauls me off the

counter and stalks out of the bathroom with me over his shoulder.

When he gets to the foot of our bed, he tosses me down onto it. “Get out of that dress and turn around.”

I scramble to do as he says, ripping the dress up and over my head before getting on my hands and knees, facing the headboard.

A loud slap echoes through the room as Jason’s palm connects with my ass. I moan, lowering onto my elbows so my ass sticks up in the air. We’ve done this before. I trust Jason with all that I am, and I’ve submitted to him while we played out a fake scenario.

But this time, the scenario isn’t fake.

This time, everything feels different. Heightened. Like we’re playing with fire, but it feels too good to stop.

“Let’s try this again,” he says, kneeling onto the bed behind me. “Tell me what you want, and tell me the truth. I want to hear it from that filthy little mouth of yours.”

“I want...I want...”

Another slap lands on my ass. “Now, Kourtney.”

Wetness seeps out of me, dripping down my thigh. “I want to fuck the both of you at the same time.”

“There’s my girl.” Jason plunges his cock deep inside of me. “Now tell me how you want it.”

The words come tumbling out of my mouth, desperate for him to keep fucking me like this. “I want to suck your dick while Celeste goes down on me. You holding my head and fucking my mouth while I ride her face.”

A primal growl rumbles in his chest as he thrusts in and out of me. “Keep going.”

“I want you to fuck me just like this so you can watch while I eat her pussy. I know how much you’d love to watch that. And I want to get on top of you and ride your cock while she rides your face at the same time.”

Jason reaches down and rubs my clit while he grips my hair with his other

hand. The sound of our skin slapping together fills the room, and I'm so close to coming but I don't want this to end yet.

I turn my head to look back at my husband. "Have you thought about this too?"

He pulls out of me and settles against the headboard, bringing me on top of him so I can straddle him. He doesn't speak until I sink down onto his cock.

"I haven't thought about fucking anyone else since the day I met you." He brushes my hair back from my face and pulls me close for a kiss. "But I won't lie, hearing you talk about it like this has me turned the fuck on."

"That's because it's her, isn't it?" I bounce up and down, grinding my hips against him as I ride him the way I know he loves. "Something has always been there between the three of us."

"The thought of you rubbing your tongue on her pussy, being able to push my cock inside you while I watch...fuck, Kourt." He grips my hips and lifts me up, then he slams me down on top of him before doing it again, and again.

He's unraveling like a madman, taking control and owning me, and it's the most erotic thing I've ever seen.

"You want that, baby?" I reach between us and rub my clit, leaning back so he can watch himself pump in and out of me. "You want to watch me make Celeste come? I can play with her pussy so good for you."

My words are the final straw and within seconds I'm coming.

Jason grips my throat and brings my face to his while I moan against his mouth. "That's it, baby. Come all over my cock."

As my body spasms, riding out the last wave of my orgasm, Jason comes loud and hard. He holds us still while spills inside me, and he rests his forehead against mine while we catch our breath.

Reality comes crashing down, guilt gnawing at me in the pit of my stomach.

We can blame everything we said on being swept up in the heat of

passion. People say crazy things all the time when they're in the middle of sex. But it'd be a lie, and I respect my husband too much to look him in the eye and pretend like I don't want all of the things we just said.

Jason brings his lips to mine. "I love you."

"I love you more."

"Impossible." He pulls back to look into my eyes. "Let's do this webcam site together."

My chin jerks back. "What?"

"You love being watched. I love fucking you. Add Celeste into the mix, and we'd probably crash the site within the hour with how many people would be signing up to watch."

"I...I can't. We should talk about what just happened."

"What just happened is my wife told me exactly what she wants, and I'm going to give it to her." He tucks a strand of hair behind my ear. "But you're going to give me what I want too."

"Which is...?"

"Which is building that website you've dreamed of. Celeste was right: You could still work for your parents and see how it goes. They'd never have to know about it, just like they didn't know about the two of you when you were in college." His eyes bounce between mine. "But please stop shoving down all the things you truly want. Not with me. Life is too short to not take advantage of this opportunity in front of us."

I ease off him and sit so we can face each other. "You're not mad about everything I just told you...about Celeste?"

"Why would I be mad? We tell each other all of our fantasies. All of our deepest, darkest secrets and desires. How is this any different?"

I scoff. "Because this isn't a fantasy. This is real-life. Celeste is a real person—my ex, no less. How are you okay with me telling you that I want to have sex with her?"

Jason clasps my hand. "Do you want a divorce?"

“What?” I cry. “No!”

“Do you love me?”

“Of course I do. With all of my heart.”

“Then there’s nothing wrong with you telling me that you want to have Celeste join in on our sex life. She’s already a part of our relationship. She’s with us all the time. We do everything a real couple would do, except for sex.”

My head spins. “Yes, and sex is the thing that separates a friendship from more than friendship. Which is why we don’t have sex with her, because she’s our friend.”

“She’s more than that, and you know it.”

My mouth clamps shut.

Celeste has always been more. I can’t deny it. But I love my husband and I would never do anything to jeopardize what we have.

Jason laces our fingers together. “Let me do this for you.”

A laugh bubbles out of me. “Even if I said yes, Celeste will never go for it.”

“If she doesn’t, then she doesn’t.” He hikes a shoulder. “I still want to fuck you on camera when you get that new website up and running.”

The idea sends a spark of excitement through me.

Starting my own business. Getting to fulfill my exhibitionist desires with my husband. Being shared between him and Celeste.

I take Jason’s hand and slip it between my legs. “We’ll discuss this more in the morning.”

CELESTE

THE ZOOM WINDOW OPENS, and my boss' face fills my laptop screen.

“Hey, Lance.”

“Hello, Celeste.” He adjusts his glasses on the bridge of his nose. “How are things in New Jersey?”

“They're great.” I tilt my laptop to face the window at my side. “The sun is shining. It's a beautiful October day.”

He tilts his screen, and I make out the gloomy Seattle weather outside his window. “No change here since you left.”

I chuckle. “Can't say I miss it.”

Lance straightens his laptop and folds his hands on the desk in front of him. “Listen, Celeste. I'm going to cut to the chase here. You know I don't like to beat around the bush.”

I sit up a little straighter. “What's going on, sir? Your e-mail sounded urgent.”

He heaves a sigh. “The president of our agency has been arrested for embezzling money.”

My eyes widen. “Shit. That's not cool.”

“No, it's not.”

Nerves dance their way up my spine. “So, what does that mean for the company?”

He clears this throat. “We’ll have to downsize and focus on our high-profile clients so we don’t lose them.”

Downsize.

My stomach twists. “Okay...”

“I’m going to have to let you go, Celeste.”

My chin jerks back. “What?”

The corners of his mouth pull down. “I’m sorry. I truly am. But we just can’t afford to keep you on right now.”

I’m being let go.

Lance drones on, giving me the practiced speech that he’ll go on to give others after he ends the call with me, saying words like *severance package* and *benefits*.

But I don’t hear any of it.

After devoting the last six years to this agency, starting out as an intern and working my way up, I’m being let go—all because some douchebag executive had to go and steal money that didn’t belong to him.

I’m back at square one without a job.

Panic claws its way up my throat, and I need to get off this Zoom before I start crying. “Look, Lance, I have to go. Send me everything I need to sign.”

“I will. I’m really sorry to see you go, Celeste.” He offers me a tight smile. “You’re a good agent.”

I can’t help the sardonic laugh that escapes me.

Obviously, I wasn’t good enough.

Story of my life.

I close my laptop and stare blankly out my window.

I’m unemployed.

Fuck.

I reach for my phone and as I’m in the midst of typing *PR agencies* into Google, Kourtney’s name flashes on my screen. I swipe my thumb across it and prop up my phone on my desk for the FaceTime.

“Hey, girl.” I force a smile. “What’s up?”

“I’m about to grab lunch and I’m near your apartment. Want to meet up?”

“Can we go somewhere that has margaritas? I’m feeling the need to be day drunk and forget about all my problems right now.”

Her eyebrows compress. “What’s wrong?”

“I’ll tell you once I have some tacos in my belly. Meet me at *Juanito’s*.”

“Tacos and day drinking? Sounds like an emergency. I’ll see you in five.”

I slip into an oversized hoodie and twist my hair into a messy bun, and then I’m out the door.

As soon as we’re seated at the bar, I order a mango margarita and down half of it when it arrives.

“Easy there, tiger.” Kourtney swivels on her stool to face me. “What the hell is going on?”

“I just got fired.”

“Fired for what?!”

“*Let go* is the appropriate term.” I roll my eyes. “The owner of my agency got caught embezzling money so now they’re under new management and they’re cutting half the staff.”

Kourtney’s eyes widen. “Shit, that really sucks. I’m so sorry, Celeste. I know how much you loved that job.”

“All that work for years, and they just cut me in two seconds.” I raise my glass. “Fuck me, I guess.”

“No, fuck *them*.” She rubs my back in soothing circles. “You don’t need them.”

“Maybe not, but I do need money.”

I have a nice chunk of change saved up, but I’d hate to dip into that if I don’t have to.

“You’ll find something. You have an amazing resume. Plus, Trent will go with you wherever you end up. That’s a pretty big carrot to dangle over an agency’s head.”

I hike a shoulder. “Not anymore. Now that he’s married and settled down, he really doesn’t need me anymore.”

Kourtney frowns. “Well, still. Any agency will jump at the chance to get you on their team.”

I down the contents of my margarita and signal the bartender. “Keep ‘em coming, buddy. And don’t stop until I can’t feel my feelings anymore.”

He arches a brow as he takes my empty glass. “Damn, has your day been that bad? It’s only twelve-thirty.”

I point my index finger at him and close one eye. “Hey, don’t tempt the universe to throw any more shit my way.”

He smirks. “Sorry. How about I make up for it with some chips and salsa? You’re going to need something to soak up this tequila.”

“Throw in some guac while you’re at it.”

Guacamole is the glue holding my life together at the moment.

Kourtney

“You have to be fucking kidding me.”

Celeste’s landlord Marc grimaces. “We’re going to take care of it, Ms. Gentile.”

I lean out of the passenger window of Jason’s car. “What’s wrong?”

Celeste cups her hands around her mouth. “Apparently, they found mold in the apartment building.”

Jason and I exchange glances before we get out of the car and walk over to the group of people standing outside Celeste’s building.

“How long does it take for mold to be properly removed?” Celeste asks.

“We’re treating each apartment before we allow anyone back inside. I’d say we’re looking at three weeks.”

“And where are we all supposed to go for three weeks?” Celeste plants her hand on her hip. “Will you be putting your residents up at another location?”

“Yes, of course.” Marc clears his throat and adjusts the brim of his hat. “We’ve already spoken to the Mystic Inn just down the road and—”

“The Mystic Inn?” Celeste coughs out an incredulous laugh. “That’s hardly comparable.”

“It’s the only place we could get in such short notice.”

I lean forward and grasp Celeste’s elbow. “You can stay with me and Jason.”

She shakes her head. “Not for three weeks.”

“Why not?”

“Because that’s too long. No way.”

“Don’t be ridiculous.” I turn to Marc. “Is she allowed to get her things out of the apartment?”

“Of course.” Marc waves his arm. “You have an hour to get anything you need. Once we start working, you’re not allowed back inside.”

Jason walks into the building ahead of us, but Celeste rushes after him. “Jay, stop. I’m not staying with you.”

He ignores her and disappears inside the apartment building.

“Jay.” She glances over her shoulder at me. “Dude, come get your husband.”

I chuckle as I follow them inside. “The only way he’s leaving is with you and your bags packed, and you know it.”

She grunts as she stomps into the elevator. “I’ll stay at a hotel. It’s not a big deal.”

“You’re not staying at a hotel.” Jason leans against the wall and folds his arms over his chest. “And you’re not staying at the Mystic Inn either. We’re your friends and you’re staying with us. End of conversation.”

Celeste steps in front of him, toe to toe, lifting her chin. “I know you like

to be the boss, but you are not the boss of me. I'm not staying with you two and *that's* the end of the conversation."

"Why not?" I ask. "What's so wrong with staying with us?"

"You two fuck like rabbits. I don't want to cramp your style."

"Jason isn't even home half the time." I lean against the wall next to Jason. "Plus, we can find plenty of other places to fuck, and you know it."

The elevator door slides open, and the three of us stand there at a stalemate.

"I don't want to impose." Celeste shakes her head. "I can find somewhere else to stay."

"The last thing you are is an imposition. We have plenty of room, and it's only for three weeks. We know you're a big girl who can take care of herself, but that doesn't mean your friends can't help out every now and then." Jason spins her around by her shoulders and whispers in her ear. "Now stop being a brat about it and go pack your shit."

A frustrated growl leaves her throat as she blows past us in the hallway.

And I smile as I thread my fingers with Jason's.

Twenty minutes later, we head back to our apartment with a moody Celeste in the back seat. It sucks for her to be displaced from her apartment—especially right after losing her job—but after the conversation Jason and I had the other day, I can't help but feel excited at the idea of living together like this.

The three of us.

Though tonight doesn't seem like the best time to bring that up.

When we arrive home, Jason and I leave Celeste to get settled into the guest room with her things. I hop on the kitchen counter and watch as Jason makes his infamous chili.

"Her parents really did a number on her, huh?" Jason asks.

I nod. "She never really had anyone looking out for her, so she prides herself on being independent."

He frowns as he slices into a crisp green pepper. “I hate that she thinks she can’t ask for help. We’re her friends. That’s what we’re here for.”

“Hey.” I tug the sleeve of his shirt and pull him between my legs. “She knows we’re here for her. She just needs to throw a tantrum first.”

He presses a kiss to my forehead. “Sometimes, I think it’s me she doesn’t want to be around. She has no reason to be uncomfortable in front of you.”

“That’s not true at all, babe.” I cup his face. “She loves you. She just doesn’t want to step on anyone’s toes.”

The guest bedroom door flies open and Celeste strides out into the living room. “I’m here for twenty minutes and you’re already fucking on the kitchen counter.”

I laugh as Jason goes back to chopping. “Don’t act like you wouldn’t sit your ass right down and watch us if we were.”

“You can save that for the camera.” She hops up onto the counter beside me. “Whatcha cookin’, boss man?”

“Chili and cornbread.”

“You lucked out finding a man who can cook for you.” Celeste leans over and steals a pepper slice off the cutting board. “Did Kourtney ever tell you about the time she almost burned down our apartment?”

Jason grins. “Just one time?”

I scoff. “Yes, just one time. And at least I didn’t set my hair on fire like this one.”

Celeste cackles. “I don’t know why they let kids play with open flames in school.”

“You weren’t supposed to play with it.”

“Okay, well, sorry I wasn’t a science geek like you.”

Celeste’s smile fades. “I can’t believe I lost my job and my apartment in one week. Bad things happen in threes, you know. Something else is coming down the pike.”

“Hey, we happen to be a trio and we’re pretty awesome.” I wrap my arm

around her shoulders. “It’s going to be okay. The universe is setting you up for the next phase in your life. Shit always gets worse right before it gets better.”

She laughs. “You’re reading too many of those manifesting self-help books.”

“Maybe I am. But I’m serious.” I turn to face her. “I have some news.”

“News?”

“I talked with Jason about the website, and I’m going to move forward with it.”

“That’s fantastic.” Celeste beams. “I’m so happy for you.”

“You were right: My parents don’t ever have to know what I’m doing. I can still work for them and run my own business on the side.”

She flips her hair over her shoulder. “When will you learn that I’m always right?”

“And so modest.”

Celeste laughs. “Fuck, I thought you were going to tell me that you’re pregnant.”

My head jerks back. “What?”

“You said you had news. I don’t know.”

Now I’m the one laughing. “Oh, god no. Jason and I aren’t going to have kids.”

Celeste looks between the two of us. “Never?”

I shake my head. “We talked about it and decided we didn’t want children. He got a vasectomy a couple of years ago.”

Celeste raises an eyebrow. “You got neutered, Jay?”

He chuckles. “I did.”

“Damn. Now I’ll never be the hot auntie.”

I shrug. “Maybe Trenton and Cassidy will have kids.”

“Ah, there’s still hope.” She nudges me with her shoulder. “Seriously though, I’m happy for you, Kourt. You’re going to do great things with this

website.”

“You should run it with me.”

She pauses. “What do you mean?”

“Let’s do this together. You just lost your job, so what better time to start the business we always used to dream about?”

I watch her face as the thought settles in her mind.

“You can do all the marketing for it. Spread the word on social media. You’d be amazing at it,” Jason says.

Celeste’s head moves in a slow nod. “I would be.”

“I think it’s the perfect plan.” I hold out my hand. “What do you say?”

Celeste slips her hand in mine and gives it a firm shake. “Let’s fucking do it.”

CELESTE

TWO DAYS.

That's how long it took for Jason and Kourtney to have sex since I started staying here.

Two days, and he was at an away game for one of them.

I can't fault them though. They did go outside on their balcony to do it...but I sleep with the sliding glass door cracked open.

Kourtney's moans float through the door, and I smile. She might be my shy little mouse, but she becomes a different person during sex. It's like she opens up and transforms into who she really is—a sexy goddess who's carefree and unashamed of taking what she wants.

Is she the same during sex with Jason?

With the noises coming through my window right now, it sounds like she is.

“Good for you, Kourt.” I roll over and pull the covers up around my chin, letting my eyes close.

But my body reacts to what's going on outside.

I've hit a dry spell since I moved back to Jersey. I haven't had much time to date, and it feels like all my free time is spent hanging out with friends who are all married.

I reach for my phone and scroll through the porn I have bookmarked, but

nothing piques my interest. I've seen it all already, and I'm bored of it.

Or maybe I'm just more interested in watching it live.

I fling off my covers and tiptoe toward the sliding glass door, holding my breath while I push it open. It squeaks against the track and I freeze, waiting to see if anyone heard it.

But Kourtney's moans get louder.

I creep outside, crouching down until I get to the concrete half-wall that separates our balconies. I lift my head slowly, praying that they don't spot me.

Jason sits in a chair facing me, while Kourtney sits straddling him, both of them completely naked—perks of living at the top of the highest building in the area. With both of his hands gripping her plump ass, she bounces up and down on his lap, head thrown back and long hair cascading down in a dark river.

I already know what it's like to have sex with Kourtney. The sounds she made when my tongue was on her pussy. The way her fingers felt inside me. The sight of her ass bouncing above me while she rode my face. Watching her fuck her husband brings all the memories flooding back.

While Kourtney is petite, everything about Jason is big. He's well over six feet tall with bear paws for hands. His feet are huge too—yes, I've looked like any best friend would to make sure that Kourtney was being well-taken care of. Nobody wants their bestie to be stuck with a micro dick for the rest of her life.

And from the way he's dragging Kourtney's body up and down his length right now, I can tell he's long.

One of his hands leaves her ass and slides up her spine, threading his fingers through her hair and gripping a fistful of it. He's whispering something in her ear, and she lets out several breathy yesses in response.

My thighs clench together, wondering what he said to her. Kourtney has mentioned in the past that they like to role play. He orders her around, and

she submits.

I slip my hand into the waistband of my sleep shorts, needing to relieve this ache. If I'm quiet, they'll never know I'm here watching. And they plan on having sex on the internet, so they wouldn't mind it if they had an audience anyway.

Even if it's their best friend.

With my eyes on them, I don't notice anything around me—until a spider makes its way onto my foot.

I gasp as I jump up and flick the spider off me.

“Ew, gross,” I whisper, rubbing my foot against my other leg.

Then I realize I'm standing straight up in plain sight, and my head whips around to Kourtney and Jason. Luckily, her back is still to me.

But Jason's eyes are locked on mine.

Shit, shit, shit.

I duck down behind the wall again and pretend like my best friend's husband didn't just catch me watching him fuck her. I squeeze my eyes shut and count the seconds, waiting for him to call me out.

But Kourtney's moans don't let up, and Jason doesn't say a word.

There's no way he's going to let me get away with this.

I peer back over the wall to see what's happening. With one hand in Kourtney's hair and the other gripping onto her ass, Jason keeps his gaze tangled with mine while she rides him. Seconds later, she comes, screaming his name over and over again. Jason comes right after her, letting out a primal groan as he holds me captive with his intense gaze. I feel each of his last thrusts inside of Kourtney as if he's thrusting inside of me. Then he devours her with a kiss.

I make a run for the door, sure to close and lock it behind me. I dive under my comforter, pulling the sheets over my head, waiting for the both of them to burst into my room and ask what the hell I was doing spying on them like that.

I wait and wait, my heart pounding in the silence while I figure out what I'm going to say.

Why was I watching them?

They're my friends. That's weird, right?

Of course, that's weird. What the hell was I thinking?

My ears strain to listen, waiting to hear talking or footsteps or the crack of my door opening.

But nothing comes.

Neither does sleep.

I contemplate scaling down the building to escape the next morning.

It'd be less scary than facing Jason and Kourtney.

But I'm a pro at faking confidence and a who-gives-a-shit attitude, so I hold my head up high and strut out of my bedroom for breakfast. All the while, my stomach twists in knots.

Kourtney turns to me and flashes me a bright smile. "Morning. How'd you sleep?"

My eyes flick to Jason who tilts his head, no doubt waiting for my response. The smug smirk he's wearing prompts my snarky response.

"I slept great, once you two were done fucking like rabbits on the balcony." I reach up into the cabinet and pull down a mug. "Sounded like you had a fantastic night."

Kourtney laughs and her cheeks tinge pink. "You heard us?"

"I think all of Jersey City heard you, babe."

Jason says nothing.

Maybe he's the one who should feel weird. He kept going and watched me while I was watching them. He watched *me* while he was fucking *his wife*.

I pour coffee into my mug and bring it to the table, sitting beside Kourtney. “You don’t have to fuck outside for the next three weeks while I’m here, you know. Temperatures are dropping. We don’t want Boss Man here to freeze his balls off.” I shoot him a wink. “The cold causes shrinkage.”

His green eyes sparkle with amusement. “I’m not worried about shrinkage.”

No, I suppose he wouldn’t be with a dick that size.

I shake my head and force the thought of my best friend’s husband’s dick out of my mind.

Luckily, Kourtney changes the subject. “I think we should write up a plan for the website today. I was thinking about creating a menu with preferences: Straight and gay; trans options; as well as options to watch masturbation, couples, or multiple partners.”

“Yes, and we also need options for scenarios. Doms and subs, things like that.”

“It’s overwhelming.” Kourtney rubs her temples. “I don’t want to leave anything out and exclude anyone.”

“Maybe you can set up a quiz and have an option for people to write in what they’d like to see on the site.” I hike a shoulder. “A space for comments and feedback.”

“I’m so glad you’re here to help me with all this.”

“You’re never alone, boo. You’ve got me.” I gesture to the man sipping coffee across the table from us. “And you’ve got this big guy too.”

She glances at Jason before turning to face me. “I have another idea I’d like to run by you.”

I scoop a pile of scrambled eggs onto my plate. “Shoot.”

“Would you want to be on the website?”

I scrunch my nose. “Nah.”

“Why not?”

“I’m not into solo work.”

“What if you didn’t have to be on camera alone?”

I roll my eyes. “I would rather die than be set up with someone—especially someone to make porn with.”

“But what if—”

“No.”

“Just listen—”

“Nope.”

The words erupt out of her before I can cut her off again. “What if the three of us did it together?”

“The three of who?”

“Me, you, and Jason.”

I blink.

She blinks.

Kourtney, Jason, and me...having sex...on camera...?

I burst out laughing. “Oh my god. You really sold that. You looked so serious, I almost believed you for a second.”

Kourtney folds her arms over her chest and leans back against her chair.

My shoulders shake as I laugh. “Me having sex with you and your husband. Could you imagine?”

She shrugs. “I could imagine actually.”

Wait a minute...

My eyes bounce between the two of them. “Why aren’t you laughing?”

Jason laces his fingers with Kourtney’s. “Because we’re being serious.”

The laughter dies on my tongue and I clear my throat. “Guys, stop fucking with me.”

“We’re not fucking with you, Celeste.” Kourtney tucks a strand of hair behind her ear. “Jason and I want to have sex with you on our website.”

This is a joke. It has to be.

“Is this because I saw you two having sex last night?” I set down my mug harder than I mean to, coffee sloshing out of the top. “I didn’t mean to

intrude. I just wanted to...well, I don't know what I wanted. But that doesn't mean I want to join in."

"I think you know what you wanted." Jason shoots me a dubious look. "I think you liked what you saw, and you were turned on by it."

My heart races, panic setting in. "It was two people having sex. Of course I was turned on by it. But it didn't mean anything."

"It wasn't just two people." Kourtney reaches out and covers my hand with hers. "It's us, Celeste. You can be honest."

This is *crazy*.

I yank back my hand and push out of my chair. "I have to go."

Kourtney jumps up and follows me to the front door. "Celeste, wait."

I snatch my purse off the entryway table and sling it over my shoulder. "Look, I don't know what kind of twisted shit you and your husband get up to, but this is not something I want to be a part of."

"Why not?"

"Because you're married for Christ's sake. You can't just add another person to join like it's a ride share."

"Again I ask: Why not?"

I search her eyes for the truth, for some hint that she's not serious about what she's asking me to do. "Have you lost your mind?"

Kourtney plants her hands on her hips. "I'm being serious. Can we please have a normal conversation about this?"

"A normal conversation...about me having sex with you and your husband. Sure, that's totally normal."

She jabs her index finger in the air. "You were the one who told me there's no such thing as normal, remember? You told me I was being judgmental, but now look who's being all Judgy Judgerton."

"We were eighteen, Kourtney. We were in college. Those were the years for being wild and spontaneous."

"Who says that has to end just because I'm married?"

I jab my finger toward Jason, who's walking toward us. "That man loves you to death. You think he wants to share you?"

He crosses his arms over his chest. "We already discussed it."

"The two of you discussed this?" My mouth flaps open while my mind races. "And how did that conversation go? *Honey, I think I'd like to fuck Celeste. Oh, I was thinking the same thing, sweetheart. Can you please pass the green beans?*"

Kourtney purses her lips. "Not exactly like that, no."

"Then tell me." I plant my hands on my hips. "Tell me how you and your husband discussed fucking me, like I'm some rag doll you can pass around and use to get traffic on your website."

"It's not like that at all." Kourtney reaches out and grips both of my hands. "I know you felt something between us when we danced together at Trenton's wedding last weekend. The three of us have a connection. I know the two of you care about each other, and we're all attracted to each other. Why not act on it and enjoy ourselves while we make money?"

"The connection is called friendship, Kourt. I know I said your husband is hot but that didn't mean I wanted to fuck him."

"But what if you could? What happened to old Celeste who was down for anything?"

I grit my teeth. "She's still in that one-bedroom apartment off campus where I left her."

Kourtney's hands fall to her sides. "Celeste..."

Fuck this. She has nerve asking me to do this.

"You broke my heart and told me you didn't want this. You built a new life and married someone else. Now you want to *have some fun* and invite me into your marriage like it's no big deal? You can't have it both ways, Kourt."

"Who says we can't have it both ways?" Her eyes water while her bottom lip trembles. "You once told me that we could have whatever we want in life. We just have to be brave enough to go for it."

“Brave? You want to talk about being brave?” I huff out a laugh. “Do you plan on telling your parents about the three of us too? Or am I the dirty secret along with your website?”

Her lips part but she says nothing.

“Exactly.” Tears well behind my lids but I blink them away. “You want to use me for your website and then what? When does it end? Until you get what you want, and then discard me when you’ve had your fill?”

Jason steps forward. “You know it’s more than that, just like you know what you were doing last night when you came out onto the balcony and locked eyes with me while I was plunging inside your best friend. You would’ve stayed out there until the very end if I didn’t spot you, and I’d bet all my money that you were touching yourself behind that wall.” He inches forward, moving toward me until my shoulders hit the wall behind me. “Tell me I’m wrong, *kókkino*. Tell me you weren’t wishing you could feel what it’d be like to be with us. Tell me it doesn’t make you wet right now thinking about our hands all over you, touching you, licking you, fucking you.” He lowers his head until his lips are at my ear. “Tell me you don’t want this.”

I swallow hard, ignoring the thumping pulse in my neck as I squeeze my legs together. “I don’t want this.”

I slip away from him and he steps back, letting me swing open the door and slam it shut behind me.

KOURTNEY

“THAT’S THE LAST OF IT,” Dad says, tugging on the zipper of the delivery bag. “I’ll get this in the van for you two.”

“Thanks, Dad.”

He turns to exit the kitchen, and Celeste breezes through the door with four coffee cups.

“Good morning, Celeste.” Dad pulls her into a hug. “To what do we owe this pleasure?”

“Just wanted to bring my favorite people some coffee to get their day started.” She sets down the cup holder and passes out the cups to each of us. “Kourt, I made sure to tell them that you only wanted the teeniest drop of coffee with your cup of milk.”

I shoot her a glare as I snatch the cup out of her hand. “Thank you very much.”

I’m surprised to see her in such a chipper mood after our argument the other night. Then again, she’s here to see Erika so in true Celeste fashion, she’s putting her feelings aside and showing up for our friend.

Dad smiles. “Kourt, bring Celeste to dinner on Friday when you come with Jason.”

I flick my eyes to her. “You free on Friday?”

“Free as a bird.” Celeste holds out her arms and spins in a circle. “Not

having a job really clears up your schedule.”

Dad chuckles. “All right, I’ll see you ladies later.”

He leaves, and the three of us wait to make sure he’s gone before we start talking.

Erika whips around to face Celeste. “Okay, show me your tits.”

Celeste lifts her shirt, revealing her bright-pink bra, and sticks out her chest. “Feel ‘em. I took some pictures with and without the bra for the doctor.”

“You are the best.” Erika lifts her palms and squeezes Celeste’s D-cups. “Damn. These things are magical.”

I laugh. “They are pretty magical. They’ve gotten us just about anything we’ve ever asked for growing up.”

Celeste pulls down her shirt and air drops several pictures to Erika. “When’s the surgery?”

Erika heaves a sigh. “I don’t know yet. I’m going for a consultation today, but I have to wait until I get the okay from the doctor after my vaginoplasty.”

Erika has saved up for this moment for years. I couldn’t be happier for her to finally feel like she belongs in the body she’s in.

Celeste’s eyes light up. “You should make a mold of your dick before the surgery, and make a dildo out of it. Then, you can literally fuck *yourself*.”

Erika throws her head back as she laughs. “Oh my God, you’re sick. I love it.”

Celeste hikes a shoulder. “I would totally do that.”

I shake my head. “Of course you would.”

Our laughter dies down, and silence fills the space between us.

I clear my throat. “Well, we should get going if we don’t want to sit in traffic.”

Erika shoves her phone back into her apron before pulling Celeste in for a hug. “Thank you so much for the pictures.”

“Of course.” Celeste pulls back and nudges Erika with her elbow. “If the doctor is hot and he likes what he sees when you show him my pictures, feel free to slip him my number.”

Erika chuckles. “Will do.”

Celeste’s piercing blue eyes lock with mine, and for a split-second, it’s just the two of us alone in our off-campus apartment again. Thoughts of last night’s conversation push to the forefront of my mind, and my throat thickens as I fight to swallow past the growing lump.

Is she still mad?

Did I ruin our friendship with my idea?

“I’ll see you at home later?” I ask, hoping she isn’t moving out already.

But Celeste nods. “See you later.”

Celeste

The look on Kourtney’s face when I left her apartment last night flashes in my mind as I lie in bed trying to fall asleep.

She’s my best friend and I never want to upset her, especially not to the point of tears. And I’m not the kind of person to judge or squash my friend’s dream. I was thrilled to hear she wanted to create the website and finally start her own business. I was ready to hand over my contacts and tell her to make an app to go along with it. I was on board with anything she wanted to do.

Anything but this.

I’ve heard about couples who invite a third person into their relationships, and I never thought twice about it. Gay, straight, monogamous, polyamorous—whatever floats your boat is cool with me, as long as you’re all consenting adults.

But this is my best friend and her husband. This isn’t some random

couple looking to spice up their love life. This would complicate things between us in ways we could never take back.

No matter how hot it would be.

That notion isn't lost on me.

I'd be lying if I said I wasn't turned on by the way Jason was watching the two of us dance together at Trenton's wedding. Feeling Kourtney's body against me, knowing it was turning her on to have my hands on her while her husband watched, knowing that if I slipped my fingers between her thighs, I'd find her wet. And then when Jason joined us and told me to stay so he could dance with the both of us...a piece of my heart broke off like a traitor jumping ship and swimming across enemy lines.

But Kourtney and I blurred the lines between us once before, and it ended with me having to learn how to let her go. Now, I'd have to let them *both* go, and watch them continue living happily ever after. I don't have it in me to go through that.

Why would she offer something like this?

I roll onto my back with a frustrated sigh. Things are going to be so weird between us for the next few weeks while I'm staying here. I should just pack my shit and go stay at a hotel like I originally wanted to. But maybe that'd make things worse. Maybe in the morning, we can move forward and forget about this whole crazy idea of fucking each other. Maybe they got my message loud and clear, and they'll drop it.

Only one way to find out.

I sit up and yank the charger out of my phone before typing a text to Kourtney.

Me: I'm sorry I reacted that way earlier. I didn't mean to make you cry.

Little Mouse: It's understandable. I know it was a shocking thing to hear.

Me: That was probably the last thing on earth I'd ever expect to hear from you.

Little Mouse: I wish you would've stayed so we could've kept talking.

Little Mouse: Jason feels awful you left the way you did.

Me: He knows not to worry about me. I'm a big girl.

Little Mouse: I always worry about you—Jay

Me: Ew now you're texting as a couple? *barf emoji*

Little Mouse: *middle finger emoji*

Me: I really am excited for you about the website. I have some contacts I'm going to share with you. Web designer, graphic designer, etc. They can make the website look amazing.

Me: Plus, I think we should consider making an app to go along with the site. People are using their phones most of the time anyway.

Little Mouse: I love that idea. Thank you so much.

Little Mouse: Now can you please come out of your room so we can talk?

I let out a long breath and set my phone down on my nightstand before heading into the hallway.

"We're in the bedroom," Kourtney calls.

I stick my head through the doorway. "Please tell me you're both clothed."

Jason chuckles. "Do I need to put a shirt on, or are you good?"

I waltz into their bedroom and hop onto the corner of the bed. "You're good, Boss Man. Just keep that anaconda in your pants."

Kourtney sits up against the headboard, wearing an oversized T-shirt that hangs off one shoulder. "I'm really sorry about earlier. I never meant to make you feel like you were some play thing that could be passed around between us. That's not what I was thinking when I came up with this idea."

My eyebrows press together. “What *were* you thinking?”

“It was on my mind after Trenton’s wedding.” She runs a hand through her hair. “I liked the way it felt with the three of us dancing together. Having you both close to me. Having you close to each other. It just felt...right.”

It did, as much as I hate to admit it.

My gaze drifts to Jason. “And how does that make *you* feel?”

“What are you, my therapist now?”

I smack his foot. “Come on. You guys brought this up. Let’s be real.”

He lets his head fall back against the headboard, leveling me with that intense stare of his. “You’ve always been a part of us. You should know that by now.”

Kourtney nods. “And this isn’t some fantasy I want to fulfill with just anyone. It’s you. And it’s him. The two people I love and trust the most in this world.”

“I guess I just don’t understand how two people who are in as much love as you two are would be okay with sharing each other. Wouldn’t you feel jealous?”

“Kourtney is not my property,” Jason says. “She chooses me and I choose her. I’m secure in our love. It doesn’t matter what she wants—if it makes her happy, then I’ll stop at nothing to make sure she has it. What she loves, I love. If it’s important to her, it’s important to me.”

“And you?” I swing my gaze to Kourtney. “You want your man sticking his pecker in someone else?”

Her nose crinkles as she laughs. “No, not someone else.” She glances at her husband briefly before her eyes return to mine. “You, though...while I’m there.” She nods. “The three of us together.”

Desire fists my heart, blocking out all logic, but I fight to keep my mind in control.

“There’s no going back from something like that. You know that, right? If we crossed that line, it would ruin everything between us.”

Kourtney's lips tug into a frown. "Why does it have to ruin everything?"

"Because how does it end? Where does our friendship go from there?" I hike a shoulder. "What happens when your little fantasy fizzles out?"

"Who says it'd fizzle out?" Jason asks.

My mouth falls open. "You said it'd be for the website. How long would it go on for until you're ready to turn your threesome back into a couple?"

Kourtney chews her bottom lip. "I don't know, okay? I didn't think this all through. All I know is that we're all feeling something here, and I want to explore what that something is."

Despite my mixed-up emotions, pride surges in my chest. "Confidence looks good on you, Kourt. I'm proud of you for speaking your mind."

She drops her gaze to her hands in her lap, letting her hair fall in her face to conceal the smile I know is there. "I'm tired of not going after the things I want."

Jason leans in and presses a kiss to her temple. "You deserve it all, *agápi mou*."

The two of them look at me, searching my eyes for an answer.

But I don't have one.

Not yet.

"I need time to sit with this," I say. "This isn't something you jump into without thinking through."

Kourtney's eyebrows hit her hairline. "But you'll think about it?"

"I will." I roll off the bed and plant my feet on the floor. "But not tonight. I'm tired."

Kourtney slides out of bed and wraps her arms around me in a tight hug. "Nothing will ever change between us. I promise."

I don't say what I'm really thinking, not wanting to smack down her hopeful heart.

"Night, guys."

"Goodnight, *kókkino*."

I glance over my shoulder at Jason and he shoots me a wink before I close their door and return to my room.

I said I wasn't going to think about it tonight, but the more I tell myself not to think about it, the more my mind wanders to the very thought I'm trying to avoid.

What would it be like to have sex with multiple partners? A trio instead of a duo. Two mouths, two sets of hands, multiple holes and pleasure points.

When the three of us were dancing together at the wedding, Jason snaked his hand around to settle against my lower back like he was claiming me. He pulled me close, pressing me against his wife, and there was possession in his eyes. He likes to be the boss. To sit back and assess, to watch everything around him so he can be in control of the situation.

I can almost hear his gruff voice in my ear. *Get on your knees and suck my cock, kókkino.*

He only calls me that because I have red hair. It doesn't mean anything special. But it *sounds* special coming from him.

What would it feel like to be fucked by him while Kourtney sits on my face?

God, this is so wrong, fantasizing about my best friend and her husband.

This is what they wanted though, isn't it?

I slip my hand into the waist band of my sleep shorts, rubbing myself to the thought of Kourtney and Jason.

He might like to be dominant, but so do I. I'd make him get on his knees so I can put my foot on his shoulder and make him eat my pussy. Kourtney would kneel down beside him, jealous for a taste. Their tongues would entwine as they lapped at me, and I'd grip onto the backs of their heads, a fistful of hair in each hand like a fucking queen ordering her servants to feast.

My hand goes wild between my legs as the fantasy plays out in my head, and I come so hard I see stars.

I'm left panting alone in my bed as the scene fades—just like I'd be once

Jason and Kourtney were done having their fun with me.
Alone.

KOURTNEY

“JAY LOOKS GREAT THIS SEASON. It’s like he gets better every time I see him.”

I grin. “I’ll never get tired of watching him play.”

Jason has played defense for the Goldfinches since getting drafted in college. He’s easily one of the fastest players on his team, and he’s assisted in more goals than almost any other player currently in the league. It’s not surprising, being that I know him as well as I do. He sees everything, and his reaction time is unprecedented. It’s like he’s always one step ahead of everyone else on the ice. I love getting to watch my husband live out his dream.

“I spoke with your friend Tim yesterday,” I say. “He said it could take a couple of months to get the app and the website up and running.”

“That’s great.” Celeste nudges me with her shoulder. “You can create a ton of content in the meantime.”

Creating content is code for having sex.

Jason skates over to us and skids to a stop in front of the boards. His eyes flick down to Celeste’s jersey—Trenton’s jersey that she always wears for games—and then he shakes his head as his eyes lift back to hers.

“Someone’s in trouble,” I singsong.

Jason has made several comments about her wearing Trenton’s jersey instead of his over the last year. She jokes and tells him that Trenton pays her

as his PR agent, and she'd gladly wear Jason's if he wants to pay her too.

Celeste rolls her eyes at him and shouts, "Shouldn't you be warming up?"

His gaze slides down the length of my body this time, and one corner of his mouth ticks up before he shoots us a wink and skates away.

I fight to conceal my smile. "He *warmed up* right before he went out there."

Celeste's head whips to look at me. "Here?"

My cheeks heat as I nod. "In one of the storage closets."

Her head tips back as she laughs. "And what if you got caught?"

"That's the thrill of it."

I clench my thighs together at the reminder of Jason fucking me hard and fast in the closet.

"Don't you know that you're supposed to fuck *after* the game? He needs all that pent-up testosterone to play."

I grin. "He's got plenty to spare, trust me."

"That'll come in handy for your website." She turns to face me, the smile fading from her face. "Hey, listen. I don't want to sound like a Debbie downer, but just make sure you two are careful about hiding your identities on there. I know you don't want your parents to find out, but this could get Jason into a bit of hot water for doing something so scandalous being that he's representing the NHL."

She's right, and it's something Jason and I have been discussing lately. Hiding our faces is doable. We'll just have to get creative with camera angles.

"We'll be careful." I nudge her with my shoulder. "And if anything happens, at least we know the best PR agent who can help us."

She flips her hair over her shoulder. "Ain't that the truth?"

I want to ask if she's thought about my proposition.

Will she truly open her mind to the possibility of what I'm asking for?

I don't want to pressure her to do something she isn't comfortable with.

But a little temptation never hurt anyone...

Celeste

After tonight's win, the team disperses to celebrate.

It's the first weekend they're off in months, and Trenton heads out to Mexico for the weekend for his honeymoon, while the single guys plan which nightclub they want to hit up.

Kourtney links her elbow with mine. "Let's go to Pegasus."

"We haven't been there in forever." I smile at the memory. "Remember when the drag queens were hitting on McKinley?"

Jason chuckles. "He got blackout drunk and woke up naked on someone's boat the next morning. No clue where his clothes went."

"Didn't he have to take an Uber home in a bath towel?" Kourtney asks.

I nod. "They really showed him a good time."

Jason slings an arm around each of us while we walk toward the black car waiting for us. It's something he's always done, something that shouldn't make me feel uneasy. But after finding out about the conversation he and Kourtney had, I don't know how to act around him.

Spending the night drinking and dancing won't lead anywhere good. I should put distance between the three of us.

"I don't know if I feel like going out tonight." I stifle a fake yawn. "I'm kind of tired."

"Please come," Kourtney whines. "We can people-watch and get ideas for the website. It'll be like a business meeting."

I roll my eyes. "That's a reach."

"But it's working." She waggles her eyebrows. "Come on, Celeste. Let's celebrate me finally starting my own business."

I guess I can't avoid hanging out with these two forever.

I heave a sigh. "Fine."

We ride over to Pegasus and slip in through the side door. It's a private drag bar without paparazzi and fans. Each guest signs a waiver when they become a member, and what happens inside the club stays inside the club.

Kourtney and I talk about the website while we have a couple of drinks, but it's not long before she drags me downstairs onto the dance floor.

It's crowded so we're sandwiched together, closer than I'd like to be at the moment, but we've always danced together like this so I try not to let it get to me. She wraps her arms around the back of my neck and my hands slide around her waist like the traitors they are. One song turns into five, and two drinks turn into shots.

Then while we're dancing, Kourtney lets out a small moan in my ear.

I glance down at her flushed cheeks. "Are you okay? Do you need some water?"

"No, I'm good." She runs her fingers through her hair and winds her hips, acting as if nothing happened.

I'm imagining things. My head hasn't been right since our argument a few days ago. She's probably breathing heavy because it's so hot in here.

But then her knees buckle and her back arches as she grips onto me, and a distinct moan floats into my ear.

"Kourt, what are you doing?"

"It's not me. It's him."

My eyes fly to Jason who's watching us from his seat. He tears his eyes away from us just long enough to glance down at his phone in his hand and move his thumb over the screen.

Kourtney releases another moan, clutching onto me for support.

"I'm wearing a vibrator," she says. "He's controlling it from his phone."

Oh for fuck's sake.

I'm equally parts pissed off and turned on. "Then why aren't you dancing

with *him*?”

“You know he likes watching me squirm.” Kourtney turns around and presses her ass against me, lifting her arms over her head just like she did at the wedding. “Every time you touch me, he’ll reward me.”

I keep my eyes on his phone, and slide my hands along her ribs. Sure enough, his thumb moves and Kourtney’s body reacts, her legs shaking as she whimpers.

I drop my hands to my sides, but my feet stay rooted to the floor. “I’m not going to be a part of this game.”

“Come on, Celeste.” Kourtney spins around and pulls me close. “Be real with me. I know you better than anyone in this world. Tell me you don’t find the idea of the three of us hot.” Her hands skate down my spine, settling on the small of my back. “Tell me the real reason you haven’t been able to sleep lately.” She positions her legs on either side of mine, rubbing herself against my thigh like an animal in heat. “Tell me you don’t feel as turned on as I do right now.”

The vibrator between her legs buzzes against my skin, and she rolls her hips, letting her head fall back as she moves.

I know what she’s doing. She thinks she can seduce me into agreeing to their fantasy. And fuck if it isn’t the hottest thing knowing she has a vibrator inside her right now.

“Please,” she whispers. “This feels too good to stop.”

I should rip her off me and storm out of here, furious at her for pushing me to do something I explicitly told her I didn’t want to do. But I can’t move. I can’t push out the word *stop*.

Instead, my hands drop to her ass and rock her back and forth over my thigh. “This is so fucked up, Kourt.”

“Says who?” She tilts her chin and brushes her nose against mine. “It’s us.”

My body ignites at the feel of her in my arms, at the possibility of kissing

her. My stomach clenches, anger and desire mixing with the tequila and dulling my senses.

My eyes flick to Jason over Kourtney's shoulder.

His emerald eyes are on me, and he arches a challenging brow like he's asking, "What are you going to do?"

It only stokes my bratty side.

Fine, buddy. Let's see how much you like seeing someone else kiss your wife.

I take Kourtney's face into my hands and crash my mouth into hers. Her mouth opens instantly, our tongues finding one another in a deep, passionate kiss. We're ravenous. Insatiable. Hands in hair, gasping for breath, all-consuming. I kiss her with everything I've got, with all the love and emotion and heartache I've had inside me.

And she gives it right back to me.

I expect Jason to stalk over to us and snatch her out of my arms. It's what I would do if someone was kissing my wife in front of my face.

Kourtney's moan fills my mouth, and she begins riding my leg again, faster than before.

Instead of claiming his wife, Jason brings Kourtney to the edge of ecstasy with the flick of his thumb until she's writhing in my arms. She's close. I know what it sounds like. I know how her body reacts.

But so does Jason. Right before she comes, he slips his phone into his pocket and makes his way toward us, pushing through to the center of the dance floor.

He wraps one arm around Kourtney's waist, and then clasps my hand. "Let's go home."

My sense comes back, and I shake my head. "I don't know if—"

Jason presses a finger against my lips, silencing me. "I don't want to hear what you *think*, or what we *shouldn't* do, or whatever it is you're trying to predict will happen. I only want to hear what you *want*, so if you don't want

to go any further, then tell us right now. Otherwise, you're going to come home with us and we're going to fuck every last bit of doubt right out of you."

Jesus Christ.

Instead of answering with words, I open my mouth and suck Jason's finger between my lips, wrapping my tongue around him.

"That's what I fucking thought." Jason guides us toward the exit. "Let's go."

No one says a word on the short car ride home. I think they're too afraid to say something that'll make me change my mind. I'm half-tempted to jump out of the car at the next red light, but it's late and I don't feel like waiting for an Uber alone. That and the fact that Jason's hand grips my thigh like he can hear my thoughts.

Silence continues as we walk into their apartment building, and the elevator crawls up each floor. In the time it takes us to reach the penthouse, walk inside, and lock the door behind us, I've convinced myself and unconvinced myself to leave at least thirty times.

Jason's voice finally breaks the quiet when we get into the bedroom. "Get on the bed and spread your legs for us, baby."

Kourtney crawls onto the comforter and lies on her back, letting her knees fall apart. She's not wearing panties, and a thin piece of pink plastic sticks out of her pussy.

Jason reaches down between Kourtney's legs and pulls out the vibrator. Then he turns to me and holds it up, hot pink and dripping with her arousal. I can smell Kourtney's scent, and my next breath is a shaky one as I try to keep my composure.

He tips his chin. "Open that sassy mouth, Celeste."

I open my mouth at his command, as if my body is controlled by him the same way the vibrator was. He places the toy on my tongue and I close my lips around it, sucking off every last drop of Kourtney's familiar taste. I close

my eyes and hum, relishing in the memory of her, until he releases it from my mouth with a pop.

“She’s sweet, isn’t she?”

I nod.

“But you knew that already.” Jason glances down as he runs his thumb along Kourtney’s clit while he keeps talking to me. “You’ve missed her, haven’t you?”

I nod again, biting my bottom lip.

“Taste her, Celeste,” he whispers. “Rub your tongue all over my wife’s pussy and tell me it isn’t the best you’ve ever had.”

My eyes shift to Kourtney, searching for some sign that she doesn’t want this, that this isn’t right, that she wants me to leave.

Instead, she opens her legs wider, serving herself to me as she hits me with a pleading gaze of desire and need. “Please, Celeste.”

And my restraint snaps.

Fuck it.

I lower myself on the edge of the bed and grab two handfuls of Kourtney’s plump ass before burying my face in her pussy. Her back arches as she lets out a loud moan, her hands flying to the back of my head.

Jason walks around to the other side of the mattress and kneels behind where Kourtney’s head lies, gazing down at me with those intense emerald eyes. He palms himself over his jeans with one hand, using the other to unhook the clasp behind Kourtney’s neck, dropping the straps of her halter to reveal her breasts. She moans again as he pinches her nipple, and her grip on my hair tightens.

I swirl my tongue over her, lapping her up from her ass to her clit in languid strokes. Both pairs of eyes are on me, and warm arousal pools between my own legs.

Jason unzips his pants and pushes them down until he’s able to free himself from his boxers and pump his length. He’s thick and long, just as I

suspected.

He gazes down at his wife, running his free hand through her hair. “You’re going to come on Celeste’s face, baby. But you’re going to be choking on my cock while you do. Understand?”

Kourtney releases a breathless, “Yes,” before opening her mouth for her husband.

He positions himself above her. Then he pushes into her mouth, inch by inch, slowly, until he hits resistance. He drags himself out of her mouth before pushing inside again.

Kourtney is so wet, she’s dripping down my chin, and it only spurs me on to know how much she’s enjoying this.

Jason runs his hand over her throat, coaching her as he presses in further. “Relax your throat. Just like that. *Kaló korítsi.*” He smirks as he meets my gaze. “That means she’s our good girl, Celeste.”

I never thought I could be this turned on, but watching Jason fuck Kourtney’s throat while her arousal seeps into my mouth is on another level entirely. I don’t feel like an outsider, or a third wheel. I’m as much a part of this as they are, with Jason’s eyes on me and Kourtney’s palm at the back of my head.

We’re connected.

I love it...and I hate myself for it.

I flick my tongue faster, bringing Kourtney closer to the edge. She moans in between gags every time Jason hits the back of her throat, and her legs start to shake. She lifts her hips and holds me against her, riding my face while she rides out her orgasm.

Jason comes soon after, and he grunts his release as tears stream from the corners of Kourtney’s eyes. She swallows after he pulls out and gasps for air, chest heaving. Jason kneels down and swipes away her tears with his thumbs before pressing his lips to hers. They share a tender moment, and I avert my eyes, forcing myself to stand up and walk away to give them some privacy.

I shouldn't be here. This can't happen again.

I make it halfway to the door before Kourtney's voice stops me in my tracks.

"Celeste, wait."

I keep my back to her, not wanting either of them to see the regret etched onto my face.

She gets up and moves toward me. Jason follows, both pairs of footsteps smacking against the floor.

Kourtney's fingers trail down my back, stopping at the zipper on my skirt. "Don't you want more?" I feel the tug of the zipper, the way it loosens my skirt as it opens. "Stop me if I'm wrong."

I say nothing, and let my skirt fall to the floor.

Large hands skim up my sides, bringing the material of my shirt with them, and Jason's gravelly voice is at my ear. "You're ours now, *kókkino*."

I lift my arms so he can tear off my top, and Kourtney steps in front of me.

Her eyes widen when they land on my nipple piercings. "Those are new."

"You haven't seen me naked in six years. They're not that new."

"I love them." She leans forward and runs her tongue over one of them, flicking her eyes to her husband over my shoulder. "Look, baby."

Jason steps out from behind me and lets his eyes feast on my naked body before setting his gaze on my chest. "Goddamn, Celeste."

With Kourtney toying with my left nipple, Jason bends down and sucks my right one into his mouth, flicking his tongue against the metal bar. The sensation is overwhelming, two mouths on me at once.

Kourtney slips her hand between my thighs, coating her fingers, and brings them to her husband's mouth. His tongue wraps around them and he groans as he sucks on them. Without warning, he lifts me in his arms and carries me to the bed. He lays me down and spreads my legs wide, then reaches out for Kourtney.

She steps in front of him and he guides her head between my legs. She slides her tongue against me, flicking my clit in light, teasing circles. Then he kneels down beside her and rolls his tongue over me at the same time. My hips rocket off the mattress, overcome with pleasure from two warm tongues rubbing against my most sensitive spot.

It's better than my wildest fantasy.

Their hands are everywhere, Kourtney roaming over the dips and curves of my body like an old backroad she never forgot, and Jason feeling me for the first time, learning what makes me buck and moan.

Jason pushes off the bed and lets Kourtney take over. He tears his shirt over his head and yanks off his pants the rest of the way, tossing everything to the floor. Smoothing his palm over Kourtney's ass, he kneels behind her and gives her a firm slap.

Kourtney moans against my pussy, sending a delicious vibration throughout my body.

Jason's eyes lock with mine. "You don't come until I say you do."

I arch a brow. "I'll come whenever I damn well please."

He reaches down and grabs a handful of Kourtney's hair, pulling her off me. "That best friend of yours is such a stubborn woman."

Kourtney twists around and kisses him. "Sounds like she needs to be taught a lesson."

I laugh. "Strong words coming from you, little mouse. I like it."

Jason bends her over again, letting her mouth return between my legs. Then he pushes his crown inside her. Kourtney grips my hips, arching her back and shoving her ass back against him.

"Eyes on me, *kókkino*." Jason takes it slow, drawing himself completely out of Kourtney before pushing back in. "Watch like you wanted to the other night out on that balcony."

I fist Kourtney's hair as my hips lift to chase her tongue while Jason fucks her from behind. The three of us are wrapped in pleasure, each of us

racing towards our own releases yet moving as one. Kourtney might be going down on me, but it feels like Jason is fucking me at the same time with the way his thrusts coincide with the flicks of her tongue. She's watching me, and I'm watching them. It's unlike anything I've ever experienced before.

I'm already so turned on from what we did to Kourtney moments ago that I can't hold on any longer. I grip onto the back of her head and cry out as my entire body shudders.

Kourtney comes right after me, and Jason holds out until we're both riding the aftershocks of our orgasms. He releases a primal groan as he comes, and I feel it all the way into my toes.

They collapse onto the bed beside me, and Kourtney instantly snuggles against me while Jason wraps himself around her body.

It's too much. It's *all* too much. Everything that just happened. The things we did. The things I did with a married couple—to my best friends. My mind races, and my first instinct is to jump out of bed and get out of this apartment, far away from the evidence of what transpired here tonight.

Jason's arm reaches out and he rests his hand on my hip, giving it a squeeze. It's reassuring, like he's letting me know in his silent way that he wants me to stay.

Kourtney is attached to me like a spider monkey, so I guess I'm not going anywhere at the moment.

I'll just lay here a few more minutes until they fall asleep.

KOURTNEY

“WHAT IS ALL THIS?”

Celeste beams as Jason and I step into the kitchen. She finishes pouring the third cup of coffee, and sets it down on the kitchen table. “Consider this a board meeting.”

I arch a skeptical brow. “Board meeting?”

“Come sit.” She tugs my elbow until I lower myself into the seat. “Since you and I will be going into business together, and you know how much I like contracts, I wrote up a contract that I’d like to propose to you.”

“Okay.” I drag out the word and look up at Jason like my best friend has officially lost her mind.

She wasn’t in bed this morning when Jason and I woke up. I didn’t expect her to be. I know what happened last night is a lot for her to take in. We didn’t exactly dip our feet into the threesome pond. More like we dove in head-first.

She slides a red file folder across the table. “Please look over this carefully and let me know your thoughts. I’m willing to negotiate.”

I laugh as I shake my head. “Can you stop acting so professional? You’re making this weird.”

She rolls her lips between her teeth trying to keep her composure. “I want to do this right. This is a big deal for us, running a business and... everything

else.”

Ah. Everything else. That’s what this is about.

Jason takes the seat beside me and I tilt the folder so we can read the contract together. It seems like a standard business contract until we get to the final page.

“I included rules and stipulations of our sexual agreement.” She clears her throat. “We can add or change anything if you think of something I might have missed.”

My heart hurts at the thought of Celeste writing this. It means she’s worried, but she’s trying to be okay with this for my sake.

I flip the folder closed and reach across the table to clasp her hand. “Look, I know you’re worried about the logistics of it all, and if this makes you feel more comfortable, then I’ll sign it. But why don’t we talk about last night before we start talking contracts.”

“Just look over the contract first.” Her eyes finally meet mine. “Please.”

Jason takes the file and smirks. “All right. Let’s see what this little arrangement entails.”

He’s trying to keep things light for her sake, so I turn my focus to the contract and play Celeste’s game.

We record ourselves having sex for the duration of Celeste’s stay.

The three of us have to agree upon scenarios and positions, all of which will be posted on the website when it launches.

Once Celeste’s apartment is free of mold and it’s time for her to move back, then our contract ends.

If any party feels uncomfortable or jealous, he or she can get out of the contract at any time.

No sex with other people for the duration of our agreement.

We remain friends, first and foremost, no matter what.

I chuckle. “You really had to add that we’d remain friends? As if that needs a contract.”

She purses her lips. “I need some kind of protection if my best friend gets mad that I’m fucking her husband.”

I fold my hands on the table. “Why would I get mad when I’m the one suggesting this?”

“Because fantasizing about it and actually seeing it happen in front of you are two very different things.” She hikes a shoulder. “Last night was just the tip of the iceberg, and Jason and I barely had any physical interaction. It might be different when you see us...doing things.”

I push out of my chair. “Fine. Let’s test that theory right now.”

Celeste looks at Jason before flicking her eyes to me. “I’m not fucking your husband right now, Kourt.”

“Not sex.” I pull Jason’s arm until he’s standing, and position him until he’s in the middle of the kitchen. Then I turn to Celeste and hold out my palm. “Come here.”

She stands with a frustrated grunt and takes my hand.

I turn her so she’s facing Jason. “Kiss him.”

Celeste scoffs. “What? Just like that?”

“There’s only one way to find out how we’re all going to feel about this. So, why not try it and see what happens?”

She pinches the bridge of her nose. “This is so awkward.”

“It doesn’t have to be.” Jason drags his fingers down her arms, from her shoulders to her wrists, and I notice the goosebumps that fly across her skin. Lifting her arms for her, he places her hands on his chest. Then he lowers his lips to her cheek, pressing a soft kiss there before moving to the other side. Celeste’s throat bobs as she swallows, and her eyes flutter closed. Jason slips one hand around her waist, pulling her body against his, while the other hand

cradles the back of her head. Her hands fist his shirt, like she's willing them to stay put, refusing to let herself explore his body.

"Come on, *kókkino*." Jason drags his lips along her jaw. "Touch me."

But she's stuck in her head. She won't be the one to start this.

I step behind her, sandwiching her between us, and I cover her hands with mine. "Relax, Celeste. I'm here."

She uncurls her fists and flattens her palms against Jason's chest. I keep my hands over the tops of hers and guide them down his body. When we get to the hem of his shirt, I slip our hands underneath and smooth them over the hard ridges of his stomach.

"Do you feel the way his muscles clench under your touch?" I whisper. "He wants this. He wants us."

I guide Celeste's palms over Jason's chest, lifting the shirt with us. "Take this off, baby."

Jason does as I command and tosses his shirt onto the floor.

I bring Celeste's hands over his broad shoulders, leading her up his neck. When our hands settle on his face, I gently pull him down toward me. He dips his head and claims my mouth, with Celeste's face right beside mine.

Our kiss is slow and sensual. Jason's tongue snakes out and parts my lips, and I open for him as I tangle my tongue with his. His kisses always make my knees weak.

Will they have the same effect on Celeste?

Pulling back only slightly, I turn my head and lean in for Celeste's mouth. Her lips are stiff at first, unwilling to accept the fact that I'm kissing her. But after I plant a few lingering kisses on her, she starts kissing me back like she can't help herself. It's been years, but our tongues remember one another, twisting and winding around like they've never forgotten how to dance together.

I could never forget.

Moving Celeste's right hand to the back of Jason's neck, I pull him closer

to us. I tear my mouth away from hers to kiss my husband, and then I return to her again. Switching back and forth, I draw them closer together until the three of us are kissing and licking and nipping at each other's mouths in a frenzy.

When I've had my fill, I back away just enough so that Celeste and Jason can have this moment.

He grips her jaw and fuses their mouths together, consuming her in one of his mind-blowing kisses that I love so much. She moans as his tongue sweeps past her lips, and her hands slip out from under mine, moving of their own volition into his hair.

I reach between them and palm Jason's growing bulge over his sweatpants. "He's hard for you, Celeste. You're turning him on." I slide my other hand over her yoga pants, back and forth over the apex of her thighs. "You're turned on too, aren't you? I bet if I slipped my fingers inside your panties, you'd be wet."

"Are you wet for us, *kókkino*?" Jason murmurs against her lips.

Her hips rock against my touch as she whimpers.

"Do you like kissing my husband?" I brush her hair over her shoulder and lick the sensitive spot on her neck. "Are you enjoying the way I touch you while you kiss him?"

She lets out a moan as I sink my teeth into her neck.

"Use your words." Jason sucks her bottom lip into his mouth and releases it with a pop. "Tell us how you feel."

"Yes," she says on an exhale. "Yes, I'm enjoying this."

I slide my hand into her hair and yank at the roots, ripping her mouth away from Jason so I can kiss her again. All the while, my palm rubs her pussy over her pants.

Jason licks the cusp of my ear, his voice low. "I bet she'd come just like this."

It's taking all of my willpower to stop myself from slipping my hand

down her pants to relieve her of the ache between her legs.

I won't though.

We're kissing her, and she likes it. She wants this. I know she does. But if she wants more, she's going to have to make the move on her own.

Which is why I remove my hand and pull back. The three of us are panting, our chests heaving and our cheeks flush. We each have our hands on the other, binding us together.

Celeste's eyes bounce between mine, and I know she's warring with herself. Her body and her mind are at odds.

"See?" I caress her cheek. "I'm not jealous. I'm not mad."

"Got any other theories you'd like to test out?" Jason asks. "Because I'd like to add *blowjobs in the kitchen* to the contract."

Thank goodness for him and his humor. He knows Celeste needs it when things get too heavy.

Celeste laughs in spite of herself and shakes her head. She wants to keep fighting this, but there's no denying it. She can't look me in the eye and tell me that she doesn't want to see where this goes.

So instead of saying anything, she reaches down and scribbles her signature at the bottom of the contract on the table.

Then she storms off to her bedroom, and shuts the door behind her with a quiet *click* of the lock.

It's not the resounding, excited *yes* I was hoping for...but we'll get there.

I hope.

JASON

“I FEEL LIKE BATMAN.”

I chuckle as Celeste pulls the black mask onto her face. “Hey, maybe it’ll help us gain viewers within the comic book community.”

“I don’t understand how no one ever realized Bruce Wayne was Batman.” Celeste plants her hand on her hip. “And Superman. You mean to tell me everyone was fooled by a pair of glasses?”

Kourtney runs her fingers through her hair as she gazes at herself in the mirror. “I think we’ll be fine as long as we keep our faces out of the shot as much as we can.”

“I already lost my job. It won’t affect me if people find out that I’m fucking on a porn site.” Celeste adjusts her mask. “But you two have everything to lose. I just want to make sure we’re being careful here.”

“We will be.” Kourtney smooths her palm down Celeste’s back. “We’ll look over the videos and make any edits we need to before uploading it to the website. It’ll be okay.”

Celeste chews on her bottom lip as she nods. “I created a few accounts on different social media platforms. We can post before the website goes live to hype it up and grow our following.”

Kourtney’s eyes light up. “We might even be able to post teasers of the videos to come.”

“We’d have to censor them, but sure. That’s a great idea.”

I lift the tripod and swipe my phone off my nightstand. “Are we ready?”

“To get naked and have sex with my best friend and her husband for the internet?” Celeste offers us a thumbs-up. “I was born ready.”

Kourtney laughs and shoves Celeste into the hallway. “Are you going to be a sarcastic wench this entire time?”

“Have you ever known me to be anything more?”

I smile as I follow the women into the kitchen. Anticipation clenches my stomach. The first scene we decided to film will start with Kourtney and Celeste cooking breakfast. I’ll be behind the camera, making sure their faces aren’t shown and that the lighting is good before joining them.

The setup was entirely Kourtney’s idea. I want her to take the reins on this and let her imagination fly. This is her dream, her fantasy, and I’m going to support her to make sure she gets everything she wants.

Celeste says she doesn’t understand why I’d agree to something like this, but I know she gets it. She’s doing this for the same reason I am—because we love Kourtney and would do anything for her. She couldn’t say no, despite her reservations.

With their masks in place, my girls take their spots by the counter. An assortment of berries and a fresh stack of French toast sits on the counter beside a bottle of syrup.

I adjust the height of the tripod and clip my phone into place. “The natural light coming from the window is perfect.”

“Make sure you don’t get too much of the apartment in the frame.” Celeste jerks her thumb over her shoulder. “Don’t want anyone to recognize your place.”

I zoom in and give them a nod. “Good to go.”

Kourtney loosens the belt on her silk robe. “How do we look?”

I shoot her a grin. “Sexiest women I’ve ever laid eyes on.”

Celeste shakes her head. “You’re such a smooth talker, boss man.”

“One of my mouth’s many great talents.”

Celeste rolls her eyes but she’s smiling. I have to keep things light with her because I know how nervous she is. We all are, even Kourtney. It takes a lot of nerve to let strangers in on the most intimate part of your life, of your body. Sex is a vulnerable thing. It’s the reason I love watching Kourtney explore this side of herself. She’d never admit this to anyone but the two of us in this room. It’s private, even when it’s being put on display for the world to see.

This thing between the three of us means something.

I press the record button on my phone, and the room falls silent. We didn’t rehearse anything because we wanted it to be as natural as possible. I don’t know what will happen any more than they do, and it’s exhilarating. The anticipation crackles in the air like a live wire.

Kourtney starts by pressing a soft kiss to Celeste’s lips. She lets her hands explore, smoothing down Celeste’s back and over the swell of her ass. Celeste’s curves spill out of Kourtney’s small hands as she squeezes. Celeste reaches between them and unties the belt on Kourtney’s robe before pushing it over her shoulders and letting it fall to the tile.

My dick hardens at the sight of Kourtney’s bare body; the way her nipples harden; the way her back arches so she can get closer to Celeste; and the way she lets out the smallest whimper of desire.

To my surprise, Celeste takes the lead and reaches for the bottle of syrup and pops open the top, letting the dark sugary liquid trickle onto one of Kourtney’s nipples. I zoom in on the screen to catch the way it glistens as it slides over her, and then Celeste bends down and captures her nipple in her mouth. Kourtney moans, and my dick jumps as if it knows the familiar sound of her voice calling for him.

Celeste does the same thing to the other side, taking her time as she watches the syrup drip down Kourtney’s nipple before sucking it off. After she’s had her fill, she drops the straps on her camisole and it falls around her

waist. She steps back and drizzles the syrup over her own chest, and Kourtney wastes no time lapping it up.

Celeste squeezes a drop of syrup onto her fingers and sets the bottle down on the counter. She traces Kourtney's lips with her coated fingers and pushes them inside her mouth. Kourtney's eyes lock with Celeste's as she wraps her tongue around her. Celeste removes her fingers and then she's sliding them between Kourtney's legs.

My wife's pleasure is directly linked to mine, and seeing her turned on like this spurs me on in ways I could've never imagined.

I tilt the phone and zoom in again, focusing on the way Celeste's fingers glide over Kourtney's clit. She's so wet, I can see the way her arousal gleams on her skin. Kourtney rocks her hips in time with Celeste's languid strokes, letting her moans fill the air around us.

It takes all my restraint not to tell Celeste what to do next. I want to tell her to spread Kourtney's legs so I can get a good look at my girl. I want to tell her to bend down and rub her tongue all over my wife's pussy to make her soaked for me so I can plunge my cock inside of her. But I keep my mouth shut because as much as I love being in charge of my wife's pleasure, I equally love watching it get drawn out until neither of us can bare it any longer, until it's almost painful and we're about to explode.

Whoever said *patience is a virtue* must've been a voyeur.

Kourtney's knees buckle, and she hops up beside the sink, spreading her legs and resting her heels at the edge of the counter. But instead of burying her face between Kourtney's thighs, Celeste reaches for the syrup bottle again and drizzles it over her pussy. She plucks one of the strawberries from the bowl on the counter, and swirls it over Kourtney's clit, coating it in syrup. Kourtney moans, her hips chasing each stroke of the strawberry.

Then Celeste glances at me over her shoulder, watching me watch her get my wife off. She lifts the strawberry like she's offering it to me, and I tear off my boxers before stepping in front of the camera.

I reach out to take the strawberry from Celeste, but she yanks it back. “On your knees.”

A smirk pulls at my lips as I lower myself onto the tile, doing as she commands.

“Open.”

I oblige, but instead of feeding me the strawberry like I expect her to, she sets her foot on my shoulder and feeds me her pussy instead.

I slide my tongue over her and she grips the hair at the back of my head, shoving my face against her.

“What a good boy,” she murmurs.

With one hand clenched around an overflowing handful of Celeste’s ass, I reach up with the other and rub my thumb over Kourtney’s clit so she can get off while she watches us.

Celeste tosses her head back as she moans, riding my face and taking exactly what she wants. It’s hot as fuck. I might like being in charge, but there’s something about being on my knees, at her mercy, that fuels a different side of me that I’ve never tapped into before.

I slip a finger inside Kourtney, pumping in and out in slow strokes while my thumb circles her clit. She braces her hands on the counter behind her and rocks her hips in rhythm with my touch.

It’s intoxicating, bringing pleasure to two women at the same time, the way they’re both spread for me. My dick throbs, begging for relief. And the more Celeste talks me through it, the more turned on I get.

“That’s it,” she whispers, gazing down at me. “Just like that.”

I hum against her pussy, basking in her praise. She likes it when I flatten my tongue and lap at her in long licks, so I continue the motion until I feel her legs start to shake.

I curl a second finger inside Kourtney, and she cries out. Within seconds, she breaks apart on my hand, moaning loud and coming hard.

And Celeste comes right after her.

It's a symphony of ecstasy, their voices echoing off the walls. I don't pull back, letting them ride out their waves until they're fully sated.

I remain on my knees, waiting for Celeste's next command—and she knows it.

A sly grin spreads across her face and she tips my chin. "I think our good boy gets a reward for his patience."

"I agree." Kourtney slides off the counter and takes my hand. "Have a seat right here."

She leads me to a chair at the kitchen table, and gives me a gentle push until I'm seated. My dick bobs in my lap, swollen and leaking at the tip. Kourtney and Celeste drop to their knees in front of me.

Celeste gathers Kourtney's long dark hair at the back of her neck and nods her head in my direction. "Go ahead, baby."

Kourtney sucks me slowly into her mouth and my hips jerk. The feel of her soft tongue wrapped around me like this will have me coming in seconds.

But she releases me with a pop and holds me at my base, flicking her eyes to Celeste.

Celeste leans down and drags her tongue over me from base to tip. She pulls Kourtney back in and they each take a side, putting both of their mouths on me at the same time. As one wraps her tongue around my shaft, the other sucks on my crown in short pulses. Saliva drips down my cock, glistening off their lips as their tongues tangle. Every now and then, they'll stop to kiss each other passionately, as if they can't help themselves, before returning their attention to me.

I place my palms at the backs of their heads. "I'm gonna come. Fuck, this feels too good."

They don't let up, panting and moaning, taking turns sucking me in and out of their mouths like a game of Russian roulette to see who I'll spill my load into first.

Celeste lets her mouth fill with my cum and then she yanks Kourtney by

her hair, jerking her head back, and spits it into her mouth.

Kourtney swallows and licks her lips with a smile. “Damn, that was hot.”

I cup their faces in each of my hands, letting my thumb brush over the cum still glistening on their lips. “Come here.”

They sit up on their knees and I lean down to kiss them, separately and together.

Celeste pulls back first and gets up to stop my phone from recording. She scrolls through the video and her eyebrows lift. “This looks really good.”

“Let me see.” Kourtney jumps up and peers around Celeste’s shoulder. “Wow. We look amazing together.”

I smirk as I rise from the chair. “Nice work with the syrup.”

Celeste shoots me a wink. “I’m good at improvising.”

“I have to wash this syrup off of me.” Kourtney takes Celeste’s hand, and holds her other hand out for me. “Let’s take a shower together.”

Celeste pulls back. “Eh, I think I’ll wash myself.”

“Come on.” Kourtney pouts. “Aftercare is important.”

She rolls her eyes. “We didn’t do anything crazy, Kourt. We don’t need aftercare.”

“I still think it’d be nice.” Kourtney squeezes our hands. “We should do it after every video we make.”

Celeste eyes the both of us before letting out a loud exhale. “Fine.”

“Lead the way, my love.” I press a kiss to Kourtney’s forehead and then I bend down and toss Celeste over my shoulder.

She squeals, arms and legs flailing. “Put me down, you big brute.”

I turn my head and bite her ass in response.

Kourtney’s laughter floats down the hallway ahead of us.

“This three-way isn’t fair,” Celeste says as we step into the bathroom. “I’m outnumbered.”

“You didn’t seem to have any complaints about five minutes ago.” Kourtney twists the lever to turn on the shower. “I think you like being

outnumbered.”

I flip Celeste over and set her feet on the tile. She crosses her arms over her chest and tips her chin. “That was for the camera.”

I bark out a laugh as I step under the spray of the warm water. “You keep telling yourself that.”

Kourtney tugs Celeste into the shower with her, and closes the glass door behind her.

“I—” Celeste pauses as her eyes bounce around the space. “Shit, this is a nice shower.”

“Perks of marrying a pro athlete.” Kourtney tilts her head back and soaks her hair under the waterfall. “This shower system is one of my favorite things in the entire apartment.”

“I bet it is.” Celeste waggles her eyebrows as she stands in front of one of the side sprayers. “There’s water coming from every angle.”

I squirt a handful of shampoo into my palm and massage it into Kourtney’s scalp. “We’ve had some fun in here.”

“We should film a scene in here,” Kourtney says. “You think the lens will fog up?”

“We could try.” I jerk my chin in Celeste’s direction. “Grab the pouf and lather it up.”

She purses her lips. “I don’t need instructions. I know how to shower, boss man.”

I bite back a smile and rinse the shampoo out of Kourtney’s hair.

Celeste starts soaping herself up, but Kourtney steps closer to her and takes the pouf out of her hand. Without a word, she washes Celeste’s body, swirling the soap suds over her curves. Celeste doesn’t have a snarky remark, and I don’t make a joke to lighten the mood. Instead, I move to stand behind Celeste, and massage her head with shampoo the way I did to Kourtney. She hums and closes her eyes, and I glance over her shoulder to meet Kourtney’s gaze.

She flashes me her sweet smile, and my heart swells with love and devotion. She reaches up onto her toes and presses a kiss on my lips, with Celeste between us. I wrap my arms around the both of them, holding them close. Kourtney turns to Celeste, kissing her softly. I expect Celeste to cut it short, to stop us from showing her affection because it isn't part of the deal we made. The camera isn't rolling.

But she doesn't.

I lower my mouth to her neck, dragging my lips along her skin, and her head falls back against my chest. Kourtney moves around us until she's behind me, and starts lathering my back with soap. My hands roam freely over Celeste's body. She lets out a small moan as my fingers graze her nipple piercings, and I groan as Kourtney's hand slides around my front to lather my cock.

We're all turned on, touching and kissing and exploring each other's bodies. But we don't take it further. We simply exist in this moment.

And for a split second, I wonder how we're going to go back to the way things were when this contract is up.

Or if we have to.

CELESTE

THE GOLDFINCHES HAVE AN AWAY game in Pennsylvania this weekend.

It's not too far from Jersey City, so Kourtney and I took the drive to watch Jason and the boys play. We used the time to discuss the website, and emailed Tim our notes.

We pull up to the hotel and spot some of the team waiting outside.

"There're the newlyweds." I wrap my arms around Cassidy and squeeze her tight. "How was the honeymoon?"

"It was amazing." She side-eyes Trenton. "Aside from the little hiccup on our first day."

Kourtney's eyebrows press together. "What happened?"

Cassidy fights a smile. "Someone was a little sleepy after the flight."

Trenton folds his arms over his chest. "That's because *someone* gave me Tylenol PM when I said I had a headache."

My mouth drops open. "Oh, shit."

"I thought it was regular Tylenol." Cassidy shrugs and flips her hair over her shoulder. "Totally not my fault."

Trenton grumbles, and we all laugh. "Well, the pictures looked beautiful. I'm dying to go on a vacation and visit somewhere warm for a while."

"You should totally go." Cassidy touches my arm. "How's the job search going?"

“Uh, well, I decided to give myself a little break before looking for a new job.” I hate lying to my friends, but it’s the only way to keep Kourtney’s secret about the website we’re creating. “I don’t really know what I want to do.”

Trenton nudges me with his shoulder. “You’ll figure it out.”

“It’s your fault, really. You had to go and fall in love and become all boring.”

He chuckles. “You want me to cause another scandal so you can be my agent again?”

“It’s the least you can do.”

Cassidy grins. “Hey, maybe I can cause a scandal this time. *Spicy romance author runs naked through Times Square*. What do you think?”

I scrunch my nose. “Not scandalous enough.”

“And you’re not getting naked in front of anybody.” Trenton bends down and presses a chaste kiss to Cassidy’s nose. “Your body is for my eyes only.”

Kourtney and I exchange glances, trying not to laugh.

Trenton would never be able to do what Jason is doing.

“Okay, we’re all checked in. Room 306.” Jason strides over and hands me the key card. “You’re in charge of this. Don’t let Kourtney get a hold of it, otherwise we’ll have to pay fifty dollars to get a new one.”

Kourtney scoffs. “You act like I lose every hotel key.”

“You’ve lost seven of the last ten we’ve had, sweetheart.”

I cackle. “Seven?! Kourt, where did they all go?”

She throws up her hands. “I don’t know, okay?”

Jason grins as he wraps his arms around her and pulls her in for a kiss. “It’s okay, *agápi mou*. I still love you.”

Cassidy sighs. “I love when he speaks Greek to her.”

Trenton arches a brow. “You want me to learn a foreign language for you? I’ll do it.”

She snakes her arm around his waist. “Will you talk dirty to me in another

language?”

“I’ll talk dirty to you in *every* language.”

I make a gagging sound. “The four of you are making my stomach turn with all this cutesy married couple bullshit. Don’t you have a game to get ready for?”

“Yes, you guys should get going.” Cassidy stretches onto her toes and kisses Trenton. “Good luck, baby.”

Jason kisses Kourtney. Then he turns toward me and leans in.

I jerk back, and Jason freezes as his eyes go wide when he realizes what he’s doing.

With Trenton and Cassidy watching us, I have to play this off somehow. So, I let out a laugh that definitely sounds high-pitched and awkward, and not at all like my real laugh, and I plant a kiss on Jason’s cheek. “Have a good game.”

I turn and do the same to Trenton, trying to make Jason’s kiss not look so weird, but as I’m doing it, I realize it looks even weirder that I’m going around kissing people on their cheeks.

Then I spin around and make a beeline for the elevators.

Fuck, Jason almost kissed me in front of our friends.

Kourtney keeps Cassidy talking about her honeymoon while we ride up to our floor. We say goodbye and head to our rooms to get ready for the game, and Kourtney and I don’t speak a word until we get inside the safety of our hotel room.

“God, that was a close one.” I exhale and press my back against the door as it closes.

“I don’t think they noticed anything.” Kourtney clasps my hand. “Try not to worry too much about it.”

“I hope they—” My eyes dart around the room. “Uh, Kourt? Where’s the second bed?”

She glances over her shoulder and her eyes land on one King-sized bed.

“I don’t know. I booked a room with two Queens.”

I let out a frustrated grunt. “I’ll call the lobby and see what happened.”

“I’ll text Cassidy and tell her that we’ll meet her at her room in an hour so she doesn’t come by and see one bed.”

“Good idea.” I bounce onto the edge of the mattress and dial zero for the lobby’s reception desk. “Hi, I’m in room 306 and it seems there’s been a mistake. There’s only one King-sized bed in here, but I booked a room with two Queens.”

“Let me check the computer. Give me one moment.” The woman on the other line pauses. “It looks like your husband asked for an upgrade when he checked in, and the only room we had available was with one King-sized bed.”

“Thank you for checking.” I clench my jaw and shoot a glare at Kourtney. “*My husband* failed to mention that to me. Do you have any other rooms with a single bed available?”

“No, I’m sorry. We’re all booked due to the game tonight.”

“Of course. Okay, thank you. I appreciate your time.” I slam the receiver down. “Jason upgraded the room. He did this on purpose.”

Kourtney bites her bottom lip. “I’m sorry, Celeste. I think he just wanted us to be together tonight. It would be kind of silly to have you sleep in a separate bed, especially if we’re filming tonight, right?”

I roll my eyes and take out my cell phone.

“What are you doing now?” she asks.

“I’m Googling the Greek word for *asshole*.”

“Turn on the lamp on your nightstand.”

Kourtney reaches out and switches on the light. “How’s that?”

Jason glances at his phone and nods. “Perfect.”

“Can you get everything in the shot?” I ask. “You know, like how there’s only one bed instead of two in this room?”

Jason chuckles. “You noticed, huh?”

“Yeah, I fucking noticed.” I arch a brow. “You think you’re pretty slick, don’t you, boss man?”

“I have my moments.”

“Well, I learned a new word today: *Vlakas*.”

His head tilts back as he laughs. “I’m an *idiotic ass*?”

My eyes narrow as I step closer to him. “I think you’re a major *vlakas*.”

Amusement glistens in his eyes. “I’ll teach you another: *Na sa gamiso tora*.”

“What does that mean?”

He tips my chin and speaks against my lips. “It means *I’m going to fuck you now*.”

My body shivers with anticipation. I wish I could say that I didn’t like arguing with him, but the back and forth of our banter only turns me on more.

Kourtney crawls across the bed and tugs on my hand. “Let’s get started.”

Jason adjusts his phone on the tripod and nods. “I’m hitting record. Start whenever you’re ready.”

Kourtney’s idea for this second video is for her to ride Jason’s dick while I ride his face. But she wants the three of us to start out in bed together, letting the natural progression of things to lead us to her final plan.

I almost wish she’d script the entire thing from start to finish. It feels too real like this, kissing and vibing off of one another, letting our desires take the reins. Once her lips are on mine, once Jason’s hands are on my body, I succumb to the moment, powerless to the pleasure they bring.

Kourtney and I are facing each other, lying in her and Jason’s hotel bed with our masks in place. She slides her hand down my bare back, and leans in to press her lips against mine. We start off with slow, light pecks until our tongues snake out and wind around each other in a sensual, open-mouthed

kiss, moaning and licking each other as we draw it out for the camera.

Jason stands behind the camera, fisting his cock in his hand while he watches. I wonder how long it'll take him to make his way over to us.

I pull Kourtney's thigh over mine, giving the camera—and her husband—a perfect shot of her pussy peeking out between her legs. I smooth my hand over her ass and dip my fingers between her cheeks, sliding down until I reach the wetness seeping out of her. I swirl it over her clit and she arches her back, moaning into my mouth.

The mattress dips as Jason slides into bed behind her, and he starts kissing her neck and her shoulder while I work my fingers between her legs. I pull back my hand and coat his dick with her arousal, pumping him in slow, firm strokes.

Jason groans, thrusting his hips into my touch. Then he lines himself up at Kourtney's entrance and plunges inside her. I crawl down her body, and toss her leg over my shoulder so I can lick her clit while he fucks her from behind. I let my tongue slide down to where Jason's cock is buried inside her.

He lets out a loud groan when he feels my tongue wrap around his base. "Fuck, keep doing that."

He pulls himself out of Kourtney and drives back inside her while my tongue massages her and him at the same time. He does it again and again, until the two of them are about to explode. Then he pulls out and rolls onto his back.

Kourtney straddles his hips, and cries out as she drops down onto his cock. He reaches for me, and I kneel over his face with my knees on either side of his head, facing Kourtney. His massive hands splay across my ass cheeks, spreading me open. When I feel his warm tongue swirl over my pussy, I lose all sense.

This man's tongue has the potential to ruin me.

Kourtney grabs my face and kisses me hard. I can only imagine how hot this must look from the camera's angle, the both of us grinding our hips on

Jason and taking what we need from him.

Kourtney's fingers toy with my nipples, and I arch my back, pushing them closer to her while I rub myself on Jason's face.

Kourtney leans back, planting her arms on Jason's legs for leverage as she bounces on his cock. I take this opportunity to lean forward in a sixty-nine position so I can return my tongue to the both of them, loving the way I can feel Jason's cock move in and out of Kourtney.

"Don't stop licking me," Kourtney whispers, clutching my head. "Fuck, this feels amazing."

Jason grunts his approval underneath me, sending delicious vibrations against my skin. My clit rubs against the stubble on his chin, and I rock my hips faster.

The three of us are being fucked at the same time and it's the hottest thing I've ever been a part of.

Kourtney breaks first, screaming as she comes. I go over the edge right after her, locking my thighs around Jason's head like a vice. Jason roars his release seconds later, like he was barely holding on waiting for us to come.

Kourtney collapses onto the bed, and I roll off Jason on the other side.

We lie in the silence for a while, panting as we come back down to earth.

I get up and pull Jason's phone off the stand. Leaning back against the headboard, I tilt the screen so we can all see it.

Kourtney smiles. "Damn, we look good."

And I smile too, because we do. It doesn't look fake, or put on, because it isn't. The three of us look natural together, like it's normal for us to have sex like this.

But it's *not* normal.

This is only temporary, no matter how good it feels.

This will come to an end, and we'll go back to being just friends.

And I have to remind myself of that reality, especially when Jason tucks the both of us under each of his arms, and we fall fast asleep entangled in the

sheets.

KOURTNEY

“EVERYTHING OKAY OVER THERE?”

My head jerks up. “Did you say something?”

Erika gestures to the planner on the table. “You’re staring at that calendar like it holds the secret to life.”

I chuckle as I rub my forehead. “I’m sorry. Just trying to get organized with the upcoming weeks.”

Lie. I was staring at the date Celeste’s apartment is supposed to be ready, and wondering what’s going to happen when she moves out. We just finished week one of our contract, and it went by entirely too fast.

Erika nods. “We’re pretty busy this month.”

“Busy is good.” I force a smile and flip the calendar closed. “When’s your pre-op appointment?”

“Next Monday.”

“Are you nervous?”

She nods. “Excited, but nervous. This is a major surgery. What if something goes wrong?”

“Try not to think like that.” I reach out and squeeze her forearm. “I can go with you if you want.”

Her eyes light up. “Really? You’d do that?”

“Of course. And I’ll come with you when you go in for your surgery. I

want to be the first person to celebrate your new vagina.”

Erika laughs. “Deal.”

“I’m really proud of you, Er. You know who you are, and you’re not afraid to be her.”

“I wasn’t always this way. I think I got to a point in my life where I looked at myself in the mirror and you couldn’t recognize the person staring back at me. I had to choose: Either make everyone else happy and die a little more inside each day, until there was nothing left of me; or start living my life for myself and hope that people love me enough to stick around.”

My lips pull downward. “Do you miss your parents?”

“I miss who I wanted them to be.” She picks at her thumb nail. “I miss the love they showed me when I was a kid. The kind of love that feels unconditional, like no matter what bad thing you did, you knew they’d always love you.”

I nod. “Things were a lot easier back then.”

“I remember when I accidentally put a hole in my bedroom wall.” Erika smiles as she recalls the memory. “I was rocking too hard on my rocking chair, and the edge of the wood went right through the drywall. I thought my dad was going to whoop me. I tried to hide it. I piled a bunch of stuffed animals in front of the hole, thinking no one would ever find it. But my mom found it the next day when she was vacuuming. And they weren’t mad. They said they were more upset about the fact that I tried to hide it instead of coming to tell them right away.” She hikes a shoulder. “So, when I started having feelings that I wanted to transition, I was honest with them. But they just couldn’t understand. I wasn’t a hole in the wall they could patch up.”

“I can’t imagine turning away my own child like that.”

“Neither can I. All I can do is hope that one day they have a change of heart.”

My chin jerks back. “You’d be willing to forgive them?”

“I’ve already forgiven them.” She tilts her head. “Our parents are only

capable of so much based on the way they were raised. It's up to them to do the work and expand their minds in their adult lives. And most of them can't do it. That shit is hard, undoing decades and generations of close-minded discrimination and judgment. They have to truly want to grow and learn."

I think about my own parents, and what they'd say if I told them the truth about me and Celeste, or what Jason and I are doing with her for the website.

Could they ever truly understand?

Would they love me in spite of our differences?

I can't say with certainty that they would.

And that saddens me.

Erika and I pack up the catering van and head to our next event.

"I don't mean to pry, but I have to ask: Is everything okay with you lately? You seem like you're somewhere else, lost in your head a lot."

I let my head fall back against the headrest. "I don't want to lie to you and tell you that everything is fine, but it's a complicated story."

Erika flicks on the blinker and rolls to a stop at the red light. "I'm trading in my dick for a vagina. I don't think anything you say will phase me."

Laughter bursts from my throat. "I don't know. This might shock you."

She arches a brow. "Can I take a guess?"

"Sure."

"Does it have something to do with that best friend of yours?"

My eyebrows hit my hairline. "Yes, yes it does."

Erika laughs as the light turns green. "I knew it."

"You're good."

"It's a gift." She tosses her braids over her shoulder. "All right, what's going on?"

I spill my heart to Erika, and admit everything that has transpired over the last week between me, Celeste, and Jason, as well as the website. I know she won't judge me, or criticize me, and I know that my secret is safe with her.

I didn't realize how badly I've needed a friend's thoughts on this.

Normally, I'd tell Jason and Celeste everything that's going on in my head. But when they're the ones in this situation with me, that leaves me with no one I can talk to when my head and my heart are all mixed up.

Erika heaves a sigh. "What's going to happen when Celeste moves back to her apartment and your agreement is over? Have you thought about what things will be like after this?"

"That's all I seem to be thinking about. But if I'm being honest with you, I don't want it to be over." Emotion lodges in my throat and my voice shakes. "I don't want Celeste to go back to her apartment. I like having her there with us. I don't want to stop having sex together. And I don't want to only have sex for the website. I want...I don't know. I guess I want things to stay like this."

Erika glances at me before returning her gaze to the road. "So, what's wrong with that?"

I hike a shoulder. "I don't know. For one, I don't think Celeste would go for that. She was on the fence about doing this temporarily, let alone permanently. Plus, Jason and I are married. How do I tell my parents, or our friends, that we're now dating Celeste?"

"I think you just tell them. There's no easy way to do it. You say the words, and then the secret's out. You just have to be prepared for the fallout if your parents don't approve of your throuple."

My stomach churns. "I don't think they'd approve."

"So, what's more important to you: Having your parents' approval, or being together with Jason and Celeste?"

My mind races for an answer, but I don't have one. "I don't know."

Erika nods like she knew that'd be my answer.

It's dark when I get home.

Jason is at another away game in Boston, but Celeste didn't say she was going out anywhere.

I kick off my shoes and drop my purse on the entryway table before heading to Celeste's bedroom.

I stick my head through the open doorway, and spot the light shining from under the bathroom door.

I tap my knuckles against the door. "Hey, I'm home. Whatcha doing?"

"I'm in the bath. This tub is glorious."

"That tub is the best." I hesitate before asking, "Mind if I join you?"

"Sure. There's room for, like, four people in here."

I crack open the door and gasp at the mound of bubbles sitting on the surface of the water. "Damn."

"I dropped the bottle of bath bubbles by accident." Celeste scoops a pile of bubbles into her hand and blows them at me. "But I think it's more fun this way."

"I agree." I peel off my uniform and dip my toes into the water before submerging my entire body. "God, my feet are killing me."

"How many events did you work today?"

"Four." I stretch out my legs and wiggle my toes in the warm water. "We're super busy this month."

Celeste pulls my legs onto her lap and digs her thumbs into the heel of one of my feet. "I spoke with Tim again today. He was asking a bunch of questions about the look of the website, so I wrote everything down and told him you'd call him back tomorrow with the details."

I let my head fall back against the edge of the tub, relishing in the foot massage. "Thank you. I'm so glad you're doing this with me, Celeste. Seriously."

"Me too."

"I just want to check in with you...about our agreement." I lift my head and look into her eyes. "How are you feeling with everything so far?"

Her shoulders rise and fall with her breath. “It’s fun, I’ll be honest. And it’s hot as hell.”

I smile. “It is.”

She holds my gaze, and I wait for her to divulge more about how she’s feeling emotionally. But she volleys the question back to me. “And you? How are you feeling about this?”

“I love it.”

“Good.”

“Jason’s enjoying himself too,” I add.

She smirks. “I think we knocked his socks off with that double blowjob we gave him the other day.”

I laugh. “Yeah, he’ll never want to go back to one mouth on him ever again.”

The smile fades from Celeste’s face, and she clears her throat. “So, I was thinking we should throw a party for Erika after she has her surgery.”

I sit up straight and my eyes widen. “Oh my god, yes. I love that idea.”

“I’m also kind of worried about her living alone after the surgery. I’ve been doing a lot of research about it, and it sounds like she’s going to need some help the first few days.”

I nod. “I’ve been researching it too. What are you thinking?”

Celeste pushes the bubbles around herself. “I think we should have her stay here for the first week. She can have my room.”

“And where will you go?”

“I’ll room with you and Jason.” She swallows. “If that’s okay with the both of you.”

I fight the smile that’s trying to stretch across my face. “Of course that’s okay.”

“We’d have to put our sexcapades on hold while she’s here.” She hikes a shoulder. “I figured we could push back our contract date another week.”

“Sure.” I reach under the water and squeeze her hand. “I think this is a

great idea. Erika will be so happy when we tell her.”

Celeste nods. “I know she really doesn’t have anyone else, and I couldn’t imagine going through something like that alone.”

“You’ll never have to be alone a day in your life.”

“You promise?”

I pause at the genuine look of worry on Celeste’s face. “Of course, I promise. Why would you even question that?”

Her eyes bounce between mine. “I’ve loved you my whole life, and this thing we’re doing? It’s fun and it’s thrilling, but we’re risking our friendship. If things get fucked up when this is all over, I won’t be able to withstand the fallout. You and Jason will have each other, but I’ll always be the outsider.”

“Hey, stop.” I move across the tub until I’m sitting right beside her. “Look at me, Celeste. You’ll always have me, no matter what. Even when you moved across the country to Seattle, you still had me. If you needed me for anything, all you had to do was call and I would’ve jumped and ran to help you. And you have Jason too. We’ve all been friends since we were kids, and he has your back. Whether you want to believe it or not, he cares about you. We’re not going anywhere.”

Celeste has deep-rooted trust issues from her parents, and I know she needs to hear this despite how tough she acts. I just don’t know how else to reassure her, other than proving it to her in time.

“I think we should check in like this more often.” I lace our fingers together. “It’s important to communicate and make sure we’re on the same page.”

Her stomach growls like a sea creature under the water, and my eyebrows shoot up. “Someone’s hungry.”

“Too bad Jason isn’t here to cook us one of his delicious cuisines.”

I grin. “I guess you haven’t looked in the refrigerator.”

She arches a brow. “No, why?”

“He made us a pot roast with mashed potatoes and peas before he left.”

Celeste huffs out a laugh. “You found the perfect man, Kourt.”
Pride swells in my chest. “I really fucking did.”

CELESTE

“W_HO_A. What smells so good in here?”

Jason calls to me from the kitchen. “Dinner’s ready.”

“Those are my favorite words out of your mouth.” I drop my purse on the entryway table and make my way into the kitchen. “Wow. Candles and everything? This is some romantic date night shit right here. Where’s Kourt?”

He pulls out a chair, gesturing for me to sit. “She’s working an event. She’ll be home late.”

I plop onto the chair and glance up at him. “So...*we’re* having date night?”

“That okay with you?”

My stomach flips, but I arch a brow. “Did you hear about our girl time in the bath the other night and get jealous, boss man?”

He leans down and presses his lips to my cheek. “Maybe I did.”

“Tell you what. I’ll let you braid my hair and then we can have a pillow fight after.”

“I might like that.”

I snort. “You would.”

I know what this *really* is. Kourtney is trying to prove something to me. She heard my worries and she wants to ease them.

It's not necessary.

But I'll go along with it since they both went through all this trouble to set this up.

"What's on the menu tonight?" I reach out and take a swig of wine already waiting in my glass.

"I ordered from *Patrizio's*. I know their spaghetti and meatballs is your favorite."

"Mmm. Italian food is the way to my heart."

"I know it is." He sets a bowl down in front of me. "Want extra sauce?"

"Yes, please."

I wait for Jason to serve himself and take the seat across from me before digging in.

I swirl my fork around and shove a heap of pasta into my mouth. "This is so good."

Jason laughs as spaghetti falls out of my mouth. "Easy, tiger. I don't want to have to give you the Heimlich maneuver."

"I'm like a snake. I never choke. My jaw unhinges and I can fit any amount of food into my mouth." I cut into the meatball and shovel it in. "They're one of the only places that puts pignolis in their meatballs. It's the only way to make them."

"I love them. Kourtney picks them out."

I roll my eyes. "She doesn't know what's good for her. You know she won't eat the stalks of on broccoli either? She says it tastes different."

Jason breaks off a piece of the Italian bread and hands me a piece. "She still doesn't eat the crust on her pizza."

"Blasphemy. That's the best part." I cover my mouth with my hand to cough. "Sorry, there's a tickle in my throat." I reach out and suck down a big gulp of wine before finishing the rest of my meatball.

Jason arches a brow. "You sure it's not all the half-chewed food lodged in there?"

I wave him off and dip my bread into the sauce. “You’re a phenomenal cook, boss man. Seriously, everything you make is outstanding.”

He bites back a smile. “Thanks.”

Jason is one of the most down-to-earth professional athletes I’ve ever met. He isn’t full of himself, or arrogant. He plays because he loves the game, and doesn’t care how the world perceives him.

My nose twinges, and I turn away from the table to sneeze into my elbow. After the first, another one follows.

“Bless you.” Jason watches me from over the rim of his glass. “You okay over there?”

“Yeah, I don’t know what’s happening.” I blow my nose into my napkin. “Sorry. What a sexy date I am, huh?”

He smirks. “You’re sexy even with snot in your nose.”

My hands fly up to cover my face. “Fuck, I have a booger?”

His head tilts back as he laughs. “No.”

I chuck a piece of bread at him. “Don’t be a *vlakas*.”

Jason laughs harder. “I love it when you curse me in Greek.”

Another sneeze has me turning away from the table.

“Seriously, are you okay?” Jason asks.

I wipe my nose with the corner of my napkin. “This is so weird. I only get like this when I have dairy.”

Jason’s fork clanks onto his plate, and his eyes widen as they meet mine.

My stomach lurches as realization sets in. “You told them not to put dairy in this, right?”

“I told them twice when I ordered.” The color drains from his face. “Are you having an allergic reaction?”

I stare down at my plate, assessing the quantity of cheese I must have consumed between the meatball and the sauce.

“Fuck.”

“It’s okay. It happens sometimes when we order out.” My eyes fly up to

his. “Unless you’re trying to kill me for having sex with your wife. Oh god, please don’t tell me this nice guy thing was just an act. I’ll stop, I swear. You don’t have to kill me with cheese.”

Jason drops to his knees beside me. “This isn’t funny. Stop making jokes. Tell me where your pills are.”

“In my purse.”

Before I can get up, Jason has my purse and sets it down in my lap. “Shouldn’t we go to the hospital? Will these pills be enough?”

“I don’t need to go to the hospital.” I shake out two pills from my medication container into my palm. “Can I have some water, please?”

Jason darts over to the fridge and pulls out a water bottle, snapping the top off before handing it to me.

I swallow the pills before another series of sneezes begins.

Jason runs his fingers through his hair. “I can’t believe I fucked up like this. I’m such an idiot.”

“See? Told you that you’re a *vlakas*.”

His green eyes lock with mine. “Please stop making jokes right now. I’m freaking out.”

“Why are you freaking out? You’re not the one going into anaphylactic shock.” I clamp my hand over my mouth. “Sorry. That was the last joke, promise.”

“How long does it take the pills to kick in?”

“If they work, it’ll take about thirty minutes.”

“What do you mean *if* they work?”

I drag my fingernails around the back of my neck, scratching the hives that are forming there. “Sometimes, the pills don’t help and my throat closes. Then I have to administer my Epi-Pen.”

He grimaces. “Maybe we should go to the hospital.”

“That’s only a last resort.” I scratch my chest. “I hate that fucking place. I was there all the time growing up.”

Jason moves my hair over one shoulder. “You’re covered in hives. Come on, let’s get you in the bath.”

I clear my throat to relieve the itch and try to swallow, but I can feel it thickening. I push out of my chair and stand. “I don’t have any packets of the oatmeal bath. I haven’t needed them in years.”

Jason wraps his arm around my waist. “I have them. I stocked up when you moved in just in case.”

My feet falter as I gaze up at him. “You did?”

He nods. “Let’s go.”

“No, there’s no *let*’s. I’ve got this.”

“I’m coming with you.”

“Look, boss man. This allergic reaction isn’t pretty. My throat and eyes swell, I get extremely mucousy in the nose, and I usually start puking. You don’t need to stick around for all of that.”

He says nothing as he leads me into the hallway.

I’d argue with him, but I have another sneezing episode.

He reaches into the linen closet and pulls out a box of Aveeno oatmeal bath packets, and then we head into my bathroom.

I pull off my top and shimmy out of my jeans before leaning over to twist the lever on the faucet in the tub.

Jason’s eyes roam over my skin. “When should you resort to the Epi-Pen?”

“I hate that thing. It hurts like a bitch.”

He grips my face. “Where is it?”

“In my nightstand.”

Jason bolts out of the room while I pour the Aveeno packet into the water. It’s sweet that he’s so worried, but I’ve been through this plenty of times. I don’t need him to stay with me.

I prepare to tell him exactly that when he gets back into the bathroom, but my stomach convulses. “Fuck, I’m gonna puke.”

I drop to my knees in front of the toilet and lift the seat. Jason slips the elastic hair tie off my wrist and gathers my hair away from my face, twisting it into a bun.

“Please don’t look,” I say, right before the contents of my stomach unloads.

Jason rubs my back in soothing circles. “It’s okay, *kókkino*. I’ve got you. I’m here.”

Wave after wave passes through me, and I can barely breathe between heaves with how congested my nose is.

“Hey, boss man.” I flush the bowl and lean my back against the cool porcelain tub as I gasp for air from my swelling throat. “Think I’m gonna need that Epi-Pen after all.”

He swipes it off the counter and hands it to me.

I pop open the cap, staring down at the thin but painful needle.

Fuck, this is going to hurt.

I hover the needle over my thigh, and my hand shakes as I try to suck in a deep breath.

I can do this.

Then Jason’s hand covers mine. “We’ll do it together, okay?”

I nod as a tear slips down my cheek. “On the count of three. One...two...”

Jason pushes down before I can say three, and the needle punctures my skin.

“Ow, fuck,” I cry out. “I knew you were going to go before three.”

“I’m sorry.” Jason swipes the tear from my cheek and brushes his thumb along my jawline. “Now what?”

I leave the needle in for several seconds before pulling it out. “Now, I get into the bath.” I push off the floor, and my stomach roils as I move to get up. “But first, I’m going to puke again.”

Jason stays with me, rubbing my back and pressing a cool washcloth to the back of my neck. I’m naked on the floor, vomiting up the beautiful dinner

he bought. My eyes are swollen, my skin is covered in hives, and there's active snot leaking out of my nose while I throw up.

I can't help but laugh.

Jason leans over. "Are you...are you laughing?"

"Would you believe it if I told you this wasn't the worst date I've been on?"

He rests his forehead against my back as he huffs out a laugh. "Well, this is a first for me. I've never almost killed my date."

I pat him on the leg. "It's going to take a lot more than that to kill me."

Jason leans over and shuts the water in the tub. Then he tears his shirt over his head and steps out of his pants. In one quick sweep, he hoists me off the floor and steps into the bath with me, lowering us down together until I'm lying against his back.

The warm water blankets my body, and the oatmeal mixture soothes my itching skin.

Jason runs his hands along my arms. "I'm so sorry I did this to you and ruined our night."

"It's okay. Seriously, accidents happen when it comes to my allergy. You remember prom night, don't you?"

He nods. "It was scary as fuck seeing you like that."

I let my heavy eyelids droop closed. "My parents would send me to a birthday party and forget to tell the kid's parents. I was young, so I didn't know enough to ask what the cupcakes were made with. So, I'd end up at the hospital instead of at a sleepover with my friends. Or we'd go on vacation in another country, and I'd end up having an allergy attack because my parents couldn't figure out how to say *no dairy* in another language."

Jason's arms tighten around me. "They should've been better with you. You deserved better."

I hike a shoulder. "I turned out okay on my own."

He presses a kiss to my shoulder. "You turned out better than okay."

Sleepiness overcomes me as we lie together. I stifle a yawn. "I'm gonna sleep so hard after this."

"Does the medicine make you drowsy?"

"It does. I'll probably sleep half the day away tomorrow."

He heaves a sigh, and I know he's beating himself up about this.

"Listen, Jay. It was sweet of you to go through all this trouble to set this night up. No one's ever done that for me." I let out a laugh. "Even if you are my best friend's husband."

"Can you do something for me?" he asks.

"Sure."

"Do you think you can try to look at me as more than your best friend's husband?"

"What do you mean?"

"We've known each other since we were teenagers. I'd like to think that I'm one of your best friends." He swallows. "Not just someone you associate with because of Kourtney."

A small smile creeps onto my face. "Sure, boss man. I can do that."

We lie together until the water loses heat, and then I drain the tub and dry off. I brush my teeth while Jason heads to his room to change out of his wet boxers, and he returns with one of his T-shirts.

He pulls the shirt over my head. "Let's get you into bed."

I glance down at the shirt he picked for me. It's black with the Goldfinches' yellow logo on the front. "Your name is on the back of this, isn't it?"

He chuckles as he ushers me into the bedroom. "Save your voice. You need to rest."

I shake my head. "Does it really bother you that I wear Trenton's jersey and not yours?"

"Not as much as the reason why you don't wear it." He pulls back the comforter on my bed. "But I get it. Trenton is one of the best players in the

league.”

My mouth drops open. “You think I don’t wear your jersey because you’re not good enough?”

He fluffs my pillows and doesn’t meet my eyes.

Is this what he really believes?

I crawl across the mattress and sit up on my knees, cupping his face. “Look at me. You’re one of the best players I’ve ever seen. You’re beyond talented. Every time I see you on the ice, my chest swells with pride. So don’t think for one second that I don’t want to wear your jersey because you’re not good enough. Honestly, I don’t wear it because I like pissing you off.”

A laugh bursts from his throat. “You’ve always enjoyed fucking with me.”

“And you like fucking with me. It’s our thing.”

His eyes bounce between mine, and he lifts his hand to my cheek. “Get comfortable, and I’m going to get you some water.”

I burrow under the covers, and Jason returns with a bottle of water and a bucket. He sets them down on my nightstand, and then he climbs into bed beside me.

I glance over my shoulder. “What are you doing?”

His arms wrap around me, pulling my back flush against his body. “I’m going to lie here with you, if that’s okay.”

Either I’m too tired to argue, or he just feels too good to push away.

“Fine. You can stay for five minutes.”

I pass out in two.

Kourtney

It’s after midnight when I get home.

The lights in the kitchen are on, and my eyes widen when I see the table covered in half-eaten dinner. The food was left out, and wine was left in their glasses.

Damn. They must've barely been able to keep their hands off each other if they couldn't make it through dinner.

I grin as I creep down the hallway, excited to wake them up with middle-of-the-night sex.

To my surprise, they're in Celeste's room.

Jason is sitting up against the headboard, while Celeste is fast asleep beside him.

He jumps out of bed when he spots me in the doorway, and guides me out of her room, closing the door behind him. "Hi, baby. How was work?"

"It was fine." I press a kiss to his lips and waggle my eyebrows. "How was your night?"

His eyebrows collapse. "Celeste had an allergic reaction."

My head jerks back. "What?"

"They must have put cheese in the meatballs." He pinches his eyebrows. "I'm such a fucking idiot. I shouldn't have trusted them with her allergy. I should've cooked her dinner myself. She got so sick. She was puking, and she had to administer her Epi-Pen."

I gasp. "Oh my god. Is she okay?"

"She's asleep now. She took an oatmeal bath and then she passed out in bed." He shakes his head. "I haven't been able to sleep. I keep checking to make sure she's still breathing."

My heart wrenches in my chest. "She'll be okay, baby. She just needs to sleep it off. You did good taking care of her."

"I fucking poisoned her."

"It was an accident. She knows that." I stroke his soft hair. "I know how scary it is seeing her like that."

He frowns. "So much for date night."

“Trust me, the way you helped her tonight means more to her than anything else.” I kiss his lips again. “I’m going to take a quick shower, and then I’ll meet you in her bed.”

He gestures to the kitchen. “I should clean up our food in there.”

“Leave it for tomorrow. It’s been a long night.”

Jason nods and shuffles back into Celeste’s room.

When I return, I slip into bed behind him. He’s wrapped around Celeste, so I wrap myself around his body like a koala hugging a tree. He takes my hand and holds it against his chest.

He won’t get a wink of sleep tonight.

My sweet husband.

CELESTE

TWO PAIRS of eyes are on me as soon as I step out of my bedroom.

“There she is.” Kourtney smiles. “How do you feel?”

“Groggy as fuck.” My voice sounds like I swallowed a frog, but feels like I swallowed razor blades. “What time is it?”

“A little after noon.”

My gaze drifts to Jason, sitting on the couch next to Kourtney. “You look worse than I do right now, boss man.”

His lips tip up, but his smile doesn’t stretch across his face.

Kourtney runs her fingers through his hair. “Pretty sure he listened for your breaths the entire night.”

Guilt clutches my stomach. “I told you: You didn’t have to worry about me.”

He hikes a shoulder, like he couldn’t help himself from worrying. Purple rings line his undereye skin, and his eyes are bloodshot.

I stride across the room and climb onto his lap, wrapping my arms around him. “Thanks for taking care of me last night. Sorry that I was such a mess.”

His hands slide around my waist and he rests his chin on the top of my head. “You don’t have to apologize. I’m the one who’s sorry.”

I reach out and lace my fingers with Kourtney’s. “Your husband is going to have to try harder next time if he wants to get rid of me.” He digs a finger

into my ribs and I squeal. “What, too soon?”

“Your safety will never be a joke to me.” His low voice floats over my skin and the magnitude of how seriously he’s taking this settles deep in my bones. “This won’t ever happen again.”

Being here with the two people I care about most in my life, feeling the way they care for me, knowing I can depend on them...it terrifies me and calms me at the same time.

It feels a lot like a family, or what a family *should* feel like—not like my parents ever gave me that example.

I can’t get too attached. I can’t fool myself and think that this will continue forever. We have an expiration. A couple more weeks and I’ll go back to my apartment, and they’ll go back to being the happy, perfect couple.

I’ll be on the outside looking in, left with all the memories of what we had.

I slink off of Jason’s lap, needing some space.

He jumps up and follows me into the kitchen. “What do you need?”

I bite my tongue to hold myself back from making a joke about how I don’t trust him to feed me after what happened last night. “I’m just making some toast, boss man. I can handle it.”

He reaches for the bread and turns over the package to show me the ingredients. “There’s no dairy in this bread. I checked at the grocery store before I bought it.”

I glance over at Kourtney who’s watching us from over the back of the couch with a knowing smile on her face. “Is he going to be like this from now on?”

“He already cleaned out the fridge this morning.” She opens her arms wide. “We’re officially a dairy-free household.”

I shake my head. “That’s not necessary, Jay. Just because I can’t have dairy doesn’t mean you two can’t enjoy the wonderful world of lactose.”

He pops two pieces of bread into the toaster oven. “I’m not taking any

chances.”

I press my fingers against the puffy skin surrounding my eyes. “At least we’re wearing masks for the camera, so I can cover my face.”

Kourtney joins us in the kitchen and snags a water bottle out of the fridge. “We don’t have to make a video tonight if you’re not up to it.”

“I’m fine.” I shoot a glare at Jason. “I’m *fine*. Plus, we should get one more in before Erika’s surgery tomorrow.”

Kourtney nods. “Then we can spend the week editing them before we make the next batch.”

Jason pulls a plate out of the cabinet and sets it down on the counter. “I’ll go move your things into our bedroom so you can get settled.”

I pat him on the shoulder. “Thanks, boss man.”

The toaster beeps, and Kourtney sits with me at the kitchen table while I enjoy a couple of slices of dry bread, praying I don’t puke them up after.

“How’s your stomach?” she asks.

“We’ll find out.”

She grimaces. “I’m sorry you got so sick last night. I know how much you hate anyone seeing you like that.”

“It is what it is.” I speak around the ball of dough in my mouth. “I just hope he can still get it up around me after seeing me puke up my guts.”

Jason pops his head out of my bedroom and holds up my double-sided dildo that he must’ve found in my nightstand. “We’re *definitely* using this for the video tonight.”

Kourtney throws her head back as she laughs. “I don’t think he’ll have any problem getting it up.”

“Hey, guys,” I call over my shoulder. “Did someone order food?”

Jason strides toward me from the hallway. “That was me.”

I glance down at the cart, and the man standing behind it at our front door. “Uh, are we having a party I don’t know about?”

Jason ties the drawstring on his waistband before reaching for his wallet in the bowl on the entryway table. “No, this is all for us.”

My eyebrows shoot up. “Damn.”

The delivery man’s eyes roam over Jason’s bare torso as he fishes out a fifty-dollar bill from his wallet. “Are you...oh my god, are you Jason Stamos?”

“I am.” Jason offers him a smile before handing him a generous tip. “Would you like an autograph?”

He pulls his phone out of his pocket. “Would you mind taking a picture instead?”

“Of course not.”

I hold out my hand. “I’ll take it for you.”

The man’s eyes light up as he hands me his phone. “Thank you so much.”

Jason steps into the hallway and wraps his arm around the man’s shoulders, smiling wide as if it’s totally normal to be posing for a picture with a stranger while he’s half-naked.

“Thank you.” The man practically drools on his chest. “Enjoy your food.”

After he wheels the cart away, I start hoisting the tote bags onto my shoulders. “What is all this food for?”

Jason slings the remaining bags on his arms. “I looked up vegan food markets in the area, and this place had the best reviews.”

I gesture at the bags. “So, you bought everything from the entire store?”

He chuckles as he locks the door behind us. “No, just the important stuff.”

I shake my head and carry the bags into the kitchen, setting them down on the counter. “Are you going vegan now? I heard a lot of athletes are doing that.”

“No, but I got a bunch of dairy-free stuff that I think you’re going to

love.” He talks a mile-a-minute as he unloads the groceries onto the counter. “I got the basics, like vegan butter and vegan cheeses. I wasn’t sure which brands would taste the best, so I got a variety. They also had vegan parmesan cheese, so we’ll see if that’s any good. I got dairy-free cereal, and dairy-free gum. Did you know some brands put milk in their gum? Crazy. I never would’ve thought to check the ingredients on gum.” He holds up a box. “They had vegan granola bars with only, like, four ingredients. They might taste like tree bark, but we’ll see. Oh, and I also got coconut milk ice cream in a few different flavors.”

I blink up at him. “Why did you do all of this?”

He pauses and turns to face me, his eyebrows pinching together. “I don’t want to order takeout and chance you having an allergy attack again. I figured if I cook for you, we can guarantee that you’ll be okay.”

My heart constricts inside my chest. “Jay, you didn’t need to go crazy over this.”

He reaches out and tucks a strand of hair behind my ear. “To me, this isn’t crazy. This is just me making sure you have everything you need here. This is your home just as much as it is ours.”

Home.

My eyelids flutter closed as I lean into his touch. “You’re always looking out for me.”

“I always will.”

“This really wasn’t necessary though.”

He brushes his lips against mine. “Just say *thank you, Jay.*”

“Thank you, Jay.”

“*I appreciate you, Jay.*”

I nip at his bottom lip. “I appreciate you, Jay.”

“*You’re a sex God with the world’s most perfect cock.*”

I roll my eyes as I laugh, and shove his chest. “Don’t push it.”

“Just say it one time,” he calls after me as I head down the hallway.

I cup my hands around my mouth. “Hey, Kourt!”

“Yeah?” She pops her head out of the bedroom, fresh out of the shower with a towel wrapped around her body.

“Your husband is a sex God with the world’s most perfect cock.”

“Don’t I know it.” She shoots me a wink. “Now hurry up and get in here so we can put that perfect cock to use.”

KOURTNEY

“HOW’S MY SUNSHINE DOING?”

I smile as my father hands me a mug. “Good. How are you guys doing? I feel like I haven’t talked to you about anything other than orders and events.”

Mom slides a tea bag across the table. “That’s because we’re so damn busy all the time.”

“You need a vacation.” I dip the tea bag into my mug, swirling it around the hot water. “When’s the last time you two took some time off?”

Dad waves me off. “We can’t take a vacation right now.”

“Why not?”

“We just can’t. There’s too much going on.”

I fold my hands on the table in front of me. “Dad, listen. Life is too short to spend all of it working. You and Mom are lucky to have your health right now. You should take advantage of it.”

Mom nods fervently. “This is what I keep telling him. I don’t want to wait until I’m eighty to see Rome.”

My eyes widen. “You should totally go to Italy. I can run things here while you’re gone.”

Dad shakes his head. “Erika is out for the next two weeks. John is taking some vacation days at the end of the month.”

“So?” I shrug. “When do *you* get to take vacation time?”

“How is Erika doing by the way?” Mom asks.

“She’s in a bit of pain.” My lips tug downward when I think about how out of it she was this morning when we visited her at the hospital. “But she’ll heal and this will all be worth it.”

Dad clears his throat and shifts in his seat. “I don’t understand how something like that even works.”

I blow on my tea before taking a sip. “From what I understand, they remove the testicles, and then use genital tissue from the penis to create the parts of the vagina.”

Dad cringes, staring down at his mug.

Mom places her hand over the top of his. “It’s amazing what doctors can do these days.”

“I don’t know about that.” He shakes his head. “It’s not right. It’s not what God intended.”

“Dad...”

“No, I’m sorry but I don’t understand what’s wrong with these people.”

“These people?” I echo.

“Men dressing like women. Women dressing like men. People want to be called a they.” He sets down his mug. “That show *Sister Wives* just got renewed for another season. There are people out there in the world who are in a relationship with more than one person at the same time—and all of them are aware of it. Can you believe that?”

My stomach clenches as I try to keep my composure. “To each their own, right? We don’t know what it’s like unless we’ve experienced it, so we can’t say what’s right or wrong.”

“The Bible does.”

I scoff. “The Bible, Dad? Really? We’re not living in the Old Testament. And don’t you think that if God created everyone, he also created gay and transgender and non-binary and polyamorous people?”

“There’s man and woman. Husband and wife. Everything else is just

ridiculous.”

I grit my teeth. “It’s not ridiculous, and it’s ignorant to think that way.”

Mom pats the top of Dad’s hand, her signal for him to stop talking. “People are free to do whatever they want to do.”

Would she be as tolerable if it were her own daughter?

“What would you guys have said if I told you that I wanted to change my gender like Erika when I was growing up?”

Dad shoots me a dubious look. “You wouldn’t do that.”

“But what if I did?” I arch a brow. “Would you still love and accept me?”

“Of course we would,” Mom answers for him.

“You’re my daughter.” Dad lifts his eyes to mine. “I couldn’t imagine you turning into my son. It’s...it’s so strange.”

“It’s not strange, Dad. It’s how people feel. Is that how you would you feel about *me* if *I* was gay?”

Mom gives me a look that says *enough*. “Why don’t we change the subject? I liked talking about Italy.”

Dad clasps my hand. “You’re my daughter, and you’re married to a wonderful husband, so we don’t have to worry about a hypothetical situation just to get into an argument, okay?”

Only, it’s not hypothetical.

Tears sting my eyes but I will them away. There’s no use talking to him about this. He’s never going to change his mind.

I nod and force a smile. “I think you guys should go to Italy.”

Jason

“Whatcha doing, boss man?”

I glance up from my laptop as Celeste walks into my office. “Editing our

videos.”

She tilts her head, making like she’s checking under my desk. “You’re not jerking off under there, are you?”

I rock back in my chair. “You’d be turned on too if you were watching what we made together.”

She walks around the corner of my desk and leans over my shoulder, peering at the screen. “Damn, my tits look good.”

I grin. “Are you surprised?”

“Nope. Just stating the obvious.”

I chuckle and pat my knee. “Sit with me. I’ll show you what I’ve been working on.”

She lowers herself onto my lap, and her sweet cinnamon scent wafts around me. I snake my arm around her waist so I can reach the mouse on the desk.

“How did you learn to do all this?” she asks.

“I was a computer nerd in college. If hockey didn’t work out for me, I would’ve gone into technology of some kind.”

“It’s good to have a plan to fall back on. So many athletes get injured and have to figure out another path for themselves.”

I zoom in on the clip to cut out the dead space around us. It’s the scene from the hotel room last week. As soon as I press play, the sounds of Kourtney and Celeste’s moaning pierce the air. I cut the video as we change positions on the bed so the video moves smoothly from one scene to the next. Then we get to the part where Celeste bends down and her head disappears underneath Kourtney as she rides me.

“Damn,” Celeste murmurs. “I wish we could get a better view. That’s hot.”

My dick hardens at the thought of being able to see her tongue on Kourtney’s pussy as my dick moved in and out of her. “We can use another phone to get a better angle next time. People will want to see close-ups mixed

in with the stationary shot.”

Celeste squirms in my lap as she watches Kourtney bounce on my dick in the video. Her thighs rub together, and I know she has to be turned on watching this because how could she not be?

I brush her hair over her shoulder, and press my lips to her neck. “Do you like watching me fuck her?”

Celeste nods, licking her lips.

“Have you thought about me fucking *you*?”

Her body stills, and she hesitates before responding. “No.”

I smooth my hands over her thighs. “No?”

“You were always my best friend’s husband. I never thought about having sex with you, not until...”

“Until now?”

She nods again, her lips parted and her eyes on the screen.

I bite the cusp of her ear, dragging my hands up her legs until I reach the hem of her shirt. “Tell me, *kókkino*. Tell me all the different ways you’ve been imagining your pussy wrapped around my cock.”

I slip my hands under her shirt and cup her breasts, loving the way she arches her back into my touch.

“I’ve thought about riding your cock just like that.” She gestures to Kourtney on the screen. “You’re so big. I bet would feel amazing to be able to feel you filling me.”

Dragging my tongue along her neck, I toy with her nipple piercings while she speaks. She opens her legs, positioning her thighs on either side of mine.

“I’ve thought about you fucking me from behind, shoving my face into the mattress while you plow into me.” She moans, rocking herself against my leg. “I’ve thought about that one quite a few times.”

“My girl likes it rough.” I tear off her shirt and lift her hips, pulling her shorts and thong down her legs so she can sit her bare pussy on my thigh. “Kourtney sent me a text ten minutes ago saying that she was on her way

home from her parents' house. Think you can hold out until she gets here so she can see you come all over my leg?"

She grinds against me, planting both hands on the desk for leverage. "Yes."

I grip her hair and yank her head back. "I don't believe you."

"Wanna make a bet?"

I reach down and swirl my thumb around her ass hole. "If you come before she gets home, I get to fuck you tonight."

She moans loud. "And if I don't? I get to tie you to the bed, and Kourtney and I will have our way with you."

"Fucking deal."

Either way, I make out like a lucky bastard.

Celeste slides her pussy over my leg in long, agonizing strokes. She's so wet, I can hear her gliding over my skin.

"Look at you, getting yourself off on my leg." I slap her ass and she cries out. "But it's not enough, is it? You need something more."

"Yes." Her pace picks up as I continue talking.

"I've thought about fucking you too, Celeste." I slide my hand around her throat and give it a squeeze. "You're on your back with your knees hiked up to your chest while I bury my cock deep inside you, my fingers wrapped around your throat just like this."

She tries to moan, but I cut it off as I squeeze her neck tighter. Her arousal drips down my leg, and it's taking all of my restraint not to push her onto the desk and fuck her with my tongue until she comes on my face.

The truth is, I don't want her to come right now. I don't want her to fuck me because she lost a bet, or because she thinks it'll be good for the website.

I want her to fuck me because she trusts me enough to let go of her reservations about being with me and Kourtney.

For real.

I hear the front door close, and Kourtney's voice down the hall. "Where

are my people?”

“In my office,” I call. “And you better get in here quick before your best friend makes a mess all over my leg.”

Kourtney stops in the doorway and her eyes widen. She shakes out of her coat like it’s on fire, and then she’s stalking across the room, stripping out of her clothes and tossing them on the floor behind her.

“What’s going on here?” She glances at the computer screen before letting her gaze roam over Celeste’s naked body grinding on me. Her eyes heat with desire.

“I win.” Celeste stands and grabs Kourtney’s face, pulling her in for a passionate kiss. “We both win, actually.”

Kourtney arches a brow. “What do we win?”

“We’re going to tie your husband to the bed.” Celeste glances over her shoulder at me. “And then we’re going to see how long he can last.”

Anticipation shivers down my spine. “Guess it’s going to be a long night.”

Kourtney smirks. “We’ll see about that.”

I yank off my shirt, and drop my shorts and boxers as soon as we get into the bedroom. I lie on the bed and reach my arms up over my head, resting my hands against the bars of the headboard.

“Such a good boy,” Celeste murmurs, pumping my dick a few times before releasing me. She reaches into Kourtney’s nightstand and pulls out our masks while Kourtney takes one of my ties out of the closet.

Celeste slips my mask on while Kourtney ties my wrists to the headboard.

The both of them step back and gaze down at me from opposite sides of the bed.

While Celeste pops her phone into the stand at the foot of the bed, Kourtney leans in and presses her lips to mine before sliding her mask into place.

Celeste pulls on her mask and fluffs out her hair. “You ready, boss man?”

“Give me your worst.”

She moves around the corner of the bed to stand behind Kourtney. “I know how much you like to watch.” She brushes Kourtney’s hair to one side, and runs her tongue along her neck. “I’m going to make you beg to have your hands untied.”

My cock jumps as Celeste’s hands roam over Kourtney’s body, teasing her and causing goosebumps to spread across her skin. Kourtney sighs, letting her head fall back against Celeste’s shoulder.

Celeste dips her fingers between Kourtney’s thighs, swirling over her clit. “Lift your leg for him, little mouse,” she whispers. “Let him see what I’m doing to you.”

Kourtney rests her foot on the nightstand, spreading herself open. Celeste’s finger plunges inside her, and comes out glistening. She dips a second finger in, pumping them in and out of Kourtney in slow pulses. The wet sound it’s making along with Kourtney’s satisfied moans makes me hard as a rock. My dick bobs on my stomach like it’s attempting to reach out for my girls.

And Celeste notices, flashing me a devilish smirk. “Should we let him have a taste?”

Kourtney pulls out Celeste’s fingers and brings them to my lips. I wrap my tongue around them and suck off Kourtney’s sweet taste, humming my approval.

“Lie back on top of him and spread your legs,” Celeste tells her.

Kourtney climbs on top of me and lies down with her back flush against my chest. The head of my cock grazes her pussy, and I thrust my hips to get closer to her.

“Uh-uh,” Celeste tsks as she points a finger at me. “You don’t get to move unless I tell you to move.”

She brings the tripod closer to the right side of the bed, and lowers it until the camera is level with the mattress. Then she kneels on the bed and settles

between our legs.

I glance down over Kourtney's body and watch as Celeste sucks me into her mouth. She releases me too quickly, and runs her tongue over Kourtney's pussy.

Kourtney moans and arches her back, running her hands over her breasts and swirling her fingers over her nipples. My hands jerk against the material restraining them. It's a delicious kind of torture being able to look and not touch. If I could, I'd be the one toying with my wife's nipples, and bringing Celeste's mouth back to my throbbing cock.

Kourtney turns her head and captures my lips while Celeste goes down on the both of us at the same time, taking turns sucking and licking. I feel her take my dick and rub it back and forth against Kourtney's pussy, making the both of our hips buck. I'm dying to sink inside of her, to feel her clench around me.

But Celeste won't let me do that just yet.

"Get up and suck his cock," she commands. "But don't let him come."

Kourtney scrambles off of me to obey, and then my wife's warm mouth wraps around me.

Celeste straddles my face and lowers herself until I can feel her wetness on my waiting tongue. She grips my hair and moves her hips over me, riding my face and taking what she wants from me.

Our eyes lock as I gaze up at her, and I wish she would untie my hands so I can hold her tits and feel their weight while they bounce above me.

"Oh, fuck. Just like that." Celeste rocks her hips as my tongue swirls faster. "Yes, baby. Just like that."

Her praise makes my dick swell as Kourtney torments me, sucking me all the way to the back of her throat until she gags. Then she pulls back and sucks on my crown, leaving me begging for more before repeating it all over again.

It's not long before Celeste breaks apart. The sound of her screaming

while she comes on my face is enough to drive me over the edge, but just as I get there, Kourtney releases my cock from her mouth with a pop and my orgasm rolls back out to sea.

Celeste rolls off the bed and digs into the nightstand while Kourtney crawls on top of me and kisses me hard, tangling her tongue with mine. “I love the way she tastes on you.”

We turn our attention back to Celeste, and Kourtney grins.

Celeste dangles one of her dildos in front of her face. “Lie down next to your husband.”

I’m not worried about the things we say on camera. I can always edit them out. But hearing Celeste use these real-life names, like *little mouse* and *husband*, makes me feel like she’s not just putting on a show for the camera.

She’s as much in this with us as we are, whether she wants to admit it or not.

Kourtney lies to my left and Celeste lowers herself down to my right. She’s sandwiching me between them, forcing me to be as close as possible to them while she continues her game.

“Get this nice and wet for your wife’s pussy.” Celeste pushes the dildo inside my mouth to coat it in my saliva. “You’re going to watch me fuck her, and if you beg just right, I might let her fuck you when I’m done.”

I grit my teeth and suck in a deep breath, unable to do anything except watch as Celeste leans over and slides the dildo inside of Kourtney.

My wife pulls her knees to her chest and spreads herself wide, crying out as Celeste sinks it deep inside her before pulling out and plunging back in.

I groan, half in pleasure and half in agony.

Celeste crawls over the top of me, leaning down with her ass in the air to flick Kourtney’s clit with her tongue as she fucks her. If I had a free hand, I’d spank her ass raw for teasing me like this.

“How bad do you wish this was you, boss man?” she whispers. “How much do you wish you could drive your cock inside her?”

I've never come without physical touch, but it feels like I'm pretty damn close to it right now. The more Celeste talks, and the louder Kourtney's moans get, the more my cock aches for a release.

I pull against the tie holding my hands in place, and the headboard bangs against the wall. "Please, let me fuck her."

Celeste keeps pumping in and out in a steady rhythm, bringing Kourtney closer to climax. "I like the way you sound when you beg."

"Parakalo, kókkino. Please let me come."

With that, she pulls the dildo out of Kourtney. "Fuck him now."

Kourtney wastes no time straddling me and sinking down on my cock. We both cry out in relief, and she rubs her clit while she rides me.

Celeste relaxes back against the headboard, and fucks herself with the dildo beside me while she watches.

I commit it to memory, the way she moves it in and out of her, the way she plays with her nipples, the rhythm of her hips. One day, she's going to come on my cock, and I'm going to give it to her exactly the way she likes it.

It doesn't take long for Kourtney and I to come, and I roar my release, my hips lifting Kourtney off the bed as I spill my cum inside of her.

The three of us are a panting, sweaty mess when we stop the camera and collapse onto the bed. Finally, Kourtney unties my wrists and my tired arms fall limp on the mattress.

"Aww, come on, Kourt." Celeste shoots her a wink. "I would've left him like that a little longer."

KOURTNEY

“EITHER I’M on a lot of pain meds, or Jason Stamos of the New Jersey Goldfinches is carrying me into bed right now.”

Jason laughs as he lowers Erika onto the bed. “You’re not too sedated to make jokes, I see.”

Erika winces as she adjusts herself, and I cringe with her. “Are you okay? Do you need anything right now?”

She shakes her head. “I can’t thank you guys enough for letting me stay here this week. This is too much.”

Celeste squeezes her ankle. “This is what friends are for. They’re there for each other when they get new vaginas.”

Erika laughs, and then clutches her pelvis. “Ow, don’t make me laugh.”

Celeste holds her hands up on either side of her head. “I’m sorry!”

“Get out of here.” Jason turns Celeste around by her shoulders and ushers her toward me. “You both need to leave before you’re late for your meeting.”

“Good luck,” Erika calls after us.

“Make sure she takes her next dose of medicine if we’re not back in an hour.” Celeste points her index finger at Jason. “And you can call us if she needs to use the bathroom.”

Jason continues pushing her out the door behind me. “She’s in good hands.”

“Don’t let her get out of bed. The doctor said to keep walking to a minimum. Bathroom trips only.”

I laugh as I tug on Celeste’s elbow. “Come on. She’ll be fine.”

I drag Celeste down the hall to our office and close the door. We’re having a Zoom meeting with Tim to go over everything for the website.

Nerves dance through my bloodstream as we take our seats in front of the laptop and wait for the call to connect. “I still can’t believe this is happening.”

“Your dream is coming true.” Celeste nudges me with her elbow. “I’m so proud of you.”

“I’m proud of *us*.”

Tim’s face fills the screen when the call connects. “Hi, ladies. How are we doing today?”

“Hi, Tim. We’re doing great.” I flash him a bright smile. “Thanks so much for meeting with us today.”

“Of course.” He adjusts his silver frames on the bridge of his nose and clicks a button to share his screen. “So, here’s what we came up with since the last time we talked.”

I gasp as the mockup of the website fills the screen. “Oh, wow. Look at this.”

“We have our menu bar up at the top. Everything is color-coordinated based on the colorful specifications you gave me. We have a couple of stock photos here, but we can change those if you want something else.”

“This looks great.” My eyes bounce all over the screen. “Where will people go if they want to upload their own videos?”

“They’d have to create an account first.” Tim circles his mouse at the top by the menu. “They’ll create a secure login, and they’ll need to upload information for taxes and self-employment forms.”

“How will they receive payment?” Celeste asks.

“You’ll have a payment processor on your site. It’ll accept all major

credit cards, as well as things like PayPal and Apple Pay. We'll make it as easy as possible for people to transfer money."

I chew on my bottom lip. "And the site will be able to withstand a lot of traffic?"

Tim grins. "Absolutely. I love the positive thinking."

We continue to ask questions and discuss the logistics of everything. I take notes while Tim and Celeste talk about a marketing plan so that our website will be at the top of the Google search.

"Do we have a name for the website yet?" Tim asks.

Celeste turns to me and waits.

"Well, I originally wanted something sexy, like *After Dark*. But then I thought about it some more, and that name gives off the impression that we can only be on this website after dark—like it's this taboo, scandalous thing. And that's not how I want this website to be portrayed. People in the LGBTQ+ community spend years of their lives in the dark, hiding from who they truly are." I heave a sigh. "I want a name that's going to embrace people of all walks of life, and make them feel welcome, free of judgment."

Tim nods. "And it should be something quick and catchy. Think about all these one-word apps like Tinder and Hinge."

"We'll keep thinking about it," Celeste says. "When do you see the site being up and running?"

"I'd say you'll be ready to launch right before the holidays in December."

My eyes widen. "That soon?"

He laughs. "Yes. You're a top priority client. Celeste is a good friend of mine."

I glance over at my friend. "She's the best."

"And I just want to say before we conclude this call, I truly love your idea here. My younger brother just came out a few years back, and he's been having a hard time with dating because he's a bit of a homebody. I think your website will attract people who aren't confident enough to go out and

socialize. It's more than a porn site; it's more than a dating app. I think this is going to be huge. It's a place for people to be who they truly are."

My heart soars hearing that kind of feedback. "Thank you for sharing that with me. If this website is something he'd be interested in, I'd love to give him a free membership."

"That's very kind of you."

Tim and Celeste make small talk before we get ready to end the call.

Then an idea hits me. "What about *Free Me*?"

"Free Me," Tim echoes.

"One word without a space: *FreeMe*." Celeste thinks out loud. "Join *FreeMe*, a place where you can feel free to be."

I smile. "I love it."

Tim wags his finger at the screen. "That's catchy. Perfect."

Celeste and I slap our palms together.

"If I may make a suggestion..." Tim pauses. "I know we talked about keeping your identity a secret, and I respect your wishes. But I also think it would draw in a lot of people to hear your story. People are always looking for someone they can relate to, and what better way to do that than to tell the story of how you founded this website?"

I shake my head. "I know what you're saying, but I can't. I don't want my parents to know about what I'm doing, and I have to worry about my husband's career too."

"Understood." Tim waves me away. "I totally get it. I just wanted to put it out there."

"Thank you so much for your time today," Celeste says.

"I'll be in touch with you in the upcoming weeks."

"Bye, Tim."

Celeste clicks the red button at the bottom of the screen, and closes the laptop. "*FreeMe*. You're a genius."

I slump back against the chair. "Yeah, a genius who can't own up to the

name of her own company.”

“Hey, don’t get down on yourself right now. Your website is going to launch next month. We should be celebrating.”

“Am I crazy for doing this? Is this stupid to think I can handle this on top of helping my parents with their catering business?” I rub my temples. “What if the website tanks and we wasted all this money?”

Celeste cups my shoulders and spins my chair to face her. “Listen to me, and listen good: It doesn’t matter if the website is a huge success or not—which it will be. What matters is that you’re reaching for the stars. You have a dream, and you’re going after it. You’ll never get anywhere in life if you don’t try. So don’t think about the *what if*’s, and only focus on the *fuck yesses*.”

I wrap my arms around her, and hold her tight. “I love you, you know that?”

“I love you too, little mouse.” She pushes out of her chair and holds her hand out for me. “Come on. Let’s go see if Erika will let us check out her new vagina.”

“There’s no way you could keep an erection for that long. They definitely take Viagra.”

“I don’t need a pill to stay hard.” Jason points at the video on Celeste’s phone. “They cut between takes. All I need is a couple of minutes and then I’m ready to go again.”

“I hate the dialogue in porn.” Celeste curls her top lip. “It’s so corny. Like, no one is watching porn for the plot. Why bother?”

I hold up the book I’m reading. “That’s why we read romance books. Spice with a good plot.”

Jason tilts the cover to see it. “That’s Cassidy’s latest book?”

“Yup. It’s good. She’s so talented.”

“Did you read the one she wrote while she was fake-dating Trenton?” Celeste beams. “I’m in it!”

I laugh. “Yes, I read that one. I knew the fiery red-headed PR agent was you the whole time.”

Cassidy is a best-selling romance author, and she ended up having to pretend to date Trenton after pictures of the two of them spread like wildfire on the internet. She used the real-life situation to write a romance book about it, and it has been her best-selling book to date.

“We should tell her about *our* situation.” Celeste gestures between the three of us lying in bed together. “Now that’s some best-selling material.”

Jason smirks. “Could you imagine if the team found out what we were doing?”

Celeste cackles. “McKinley would want to join in.”

“Coach would have something to say about it though.” Jason lets his head fall back against the headboard. “It would turn into a PR nightmare for sure.”

I set my book in my lap and watch as the two of them talk and laugh, like this is the most natural thing in the world to sit up in bed and talk before we fall asleep.

The tie between Jason and Celeste has been growing stronger. I can feel it, and it excites me in ways I can’t even begin to comprehend.

Is there something wrong with me that I love seeing the two of them together?

Is it strange to get off on watching my husband give his affection to someone else?

I know it’s not the norm in society. I know we’re taught that love is between two people. But then why do I feel so strongly about this? How can it be wrong when my heart feels certain that this is how I need my life to be?

I imagine sitting at my parents’ dinner table, Jason to my left and Celeste to my right; my father laughing at something Jason said; my mother clasping

Celeste's hand and sharing a story with her. We've dined with them countless times in the past, but would it look the same if my parents knew the three of us were together? My mother would ramble uncomfortably so as not to address the elephant in the room. My father would opt for silence while he eats. His unacceptance would speak volumes.

Or would they turn me away and cut ties? Maybe there wouldn't be a dinner with us at all.

Would I really have to choose between the people I fell in love with, and my parents?

"Uh-oh." Celeste's voice breaks through my tumultuous thoughts. "Something's wrong. She's got that faraway look in her eyes."

Jason wraps his arm around my shoulders and pulls me closer to him. "What's going on inside that beautiful head?"

I snuggle against his bare chest and breathe in his familiar scent. "Just thinking about my parents."

"Do you think they'll take the trip to Italy they've been talking about?" he asks.

"I hope so. I sent them information on a two-week holiday cruise. I know my mom would hate to not be with us on Christmas, but it would be magical to be in Italy during that time."

"We should go on a vacation when the season is over." Jason nudges Celeste. "The three of us."

"Where would you want to go?" Celeste asks.

I school my features to conceal my surprise that Celeste is entertaining this idea at all. "Why don't we go to Greece? We could visit the place where Jason's mother grew up, and the pictures always look breathtaking."

Jason squeezes me. "I would love to go to Greece."

"I already know how to speak Greek." Celeste sits up and points at Jason. "*Vlakas.*"

His shoulders shake as he laughs. "You only know the vulgar words. You

can't go around cursing people out and telling them that you're going to fuck them when we get to Greece."

"Why not?" She shrugs. "How is that any different than the way I speak to Americans?"

"True." His laughter dies down. "Why don't I teach you some basics?"

She arches a brow. "Can you do it while wearing a suit and holding a ruler?"

"Oh, yes. And your black-rimmed glasses." I lean over to look at Celeste. "He looks so fuckable in his glasses. Like Clark Kent, but hotter."

Celeste nods. "We can wear plaid school-girl skirts."

Jason leans in and places a kiss against my temple before doing the same to Celeste. "This is starting to sound like a bad porno."

"Not a porno." Celeste waggles her eyebrows. "I just learn best when there's an incentive."

I toss my book onto my nightstand, and crawl over to Celeste. "A kiss for every word you pronounce correctly?"

"Game on."

"Let's start with hello." I hover above her lips, pressing my body against hers. "*Geiá sou.*"

"*Geiá sou.*"

I drop a kiss to her lips. "Very good. Now let's try *how are you?* Say, *pós eisai.*"

"*Pós eisai.*"

I give her another kiss. "*Eísai poly ómorfi.*"

She repeats me. "What does that mean?"

"You're beautiful." I drag my lips down her neck. "*Eísai séxi.*"

She giggles as she says it. "That one's easy."

I push up her T-shirt and kiss along her stomach. "*Se thélo.*"

"*Se thélo.*" Her breath catches in her throat as I kiss my way below her belly button. "What does that mean?"

“It means *I want you.*”

She lifts her hips as I tug her shorts down her legs. “H-how do you say *I need you?*”

I glance up at my husband, and he lays down on his side, propping up his head with his hand as he leans on his elbow to face us. “*Se chreiázomai.*”

Celeste’s eyebrows jump. “Se chre...”

I swipe my tongue over her clit. “Try again.”

She butchers the word, and Jason cups her face and speaks against her lips as he repeats, “*Se chreiázomai.*”

She moans as I lick her again. “*Se chreiázomai.*”

“Keep her quiet,” I say to Jason. “We wouldn’t want to wake Erika down the hall. She needs her rest.”

Jason claims Celeste’s mouth without hesitation, and I bury my face between her thighs.

And not one of us takes out our phones to hit record.

CELESTE

“FUCK, THIS SUCKS.”

I grunt as Erika leans on my shoulder. “This ain’t no picnic for me either.”

She coughs out a laugh. “Stop making me laugh, bitch. It hurts.”

“I can’t help it if I’m naturally funny. That’s like asking a leopard to hide her spots.”

She leans over to flush the toilet. “I hate letting people see me like this. It’s almost worse than the pain.”

“I get that. I hate feeling like I *need* someone’s help.”

Erika clutches my arm with one hand and uses her other hand to brace herself on the doorframe. “That’s what happens when you have mommy and daddy issues like us.”

“Our parents fucked us up good, didn’t they?”

“They sure did.”

I help her back to bed, and fluff her pillows behind her so she can sit up. “How’s that?”

“It’s perfect.” Erika pats the space beside her. “Sit. Let’s talk.”

“Uh-oh.” I hoist myself onto the mattress and prop myself up against the headboard. “Am I in trouble?”

“Not at all. I’ve been wanting to check in with you and ask how you’re

doing.”

My chin jerks back. “I’m fine. What are you talking about?”

“Girl, you’re fucking your best friend and her husband. You are the farthest thing from fine.”

I cover my face with a pillow and groan into it. “I’m so not fine.”

“I bet the sex is so good though.” She peers under the pillow. “Tell me the sex is good.”

I grin. “It’s hot as fuck.”

“Damn right it is. You get to have everything that is soft and feminine in Kourtney who knows her way around a pussy...yet you get to have that hard, sexy body of Jason’s who can ravish you and bring you to your knees.”

I arch a brow. “You want to get in on this too?”

She laughs and then clutches her pelvis. “God damnit, that hurts.”

“What do you want me to say? Yes, being able to be with Kourtney and Jason at the same time is the hottest thing I’ve ever done.”

“But...”

“But what?”

Erika levels me with a look. “But how are you feeling in the midst of all this? You can’t tell me this is purely sexual. You three have a past.”

I nod. “We do, but I think that’s what makes this so easy. I’m comfortable with them.”

“So when this is all over, you’re going to move back into your apartment and go back to being friends without all the benefits.”

“Yup. That’s the deal.”

She clicks her tongue on the roof of her mouth. “And you seriously think it’ll be that easy?”

I hike a shoulder. “Why wouldn’t it be?”

“You forget that I’ve been living with the three of you for the last week. I’ve seen you together—when you’re not having sex in front of a camera. The way you move around each other in the kitchen; the way you steal

glances at each other when you think the other isn't watching; the little touches and caresses as you pass one another. You have this incredible dynamic between you." Erika shakes her head. "Either you're in deeper than you realize, or you know exactly what I'm talking about, and you're just trying to ignore it."

I chew the inside of my cheek. "Ignoring works for me."

Just like I've been ignoring the fact that we had sex without recording it the other night. As if we were a real couple...or throuple, I guess. I got carried away, and the sleeping arrangement isn't helping.

Erika chuckles and winces. "Come on. Look at me. I'm being vulnerable with you, laid up in bed after vaginoplasty. Be real with me."

"Real." I let out a humorless laugh. "I tried real. It hurt like hell."

Losing Kourtney devastated me. I was head-over-heels in love with her, and I truly believed we'd be together forever. When she pulled the rug out from under me, I swore I'd never let anything like that happen again.

"You were young back then. Kourtney wasn't ready for the magnitude of you yet. She needed to go her own way and learn along her journey." Erika clasps my hand. "But that path led her right back to you."

"Her path led her down the aisle to someone else."

"Yet she's still trying to get you back."

I shake my head and flick my eyes up to the ceiling, refusing to let Erika's words sink in.

"Are you still in love with her?" she asks.

"I don't think you ever really fall out of love. Time passes, so the memories aren't at the forefront of your brain anymore, but your heart never forgets." I shift on the bed to look at her. "It's like when man first landed on the moon and stuck the flag into it. You might not think about it all the time now, but that flag will always remain there. The moon will forever be changed because of it."

Erika nods. "And what about him? Are you in love with Jason?"

My chest squeezes at the thought. “I care about him. Is it love though? I don’t know. I don’t know what any of this is that we’re doing. It’s confusing as hell.”

“You can be in love with more than one person at a time. People tell you that you can’t, but you can. The only limits on our hearts are the ones we put there.”

My voice is a whisper, too ashamed to admit this out loud. “I *could* love him.”

If I let myself.

Jason is kind and caring and everything I’d want to find in a man. I just didn’t expect to find it in my best friend’s husband. But maybe he was right when we said I need to stop looking at him that way. And maybe Erika is right: I’m the only one limiting myself. If this is what Kourtney wants, and this is what Jason wants, maybe I can allow myself to want this too.

“How’s Erika doing?”

“She’s in pain but she’s okay. She still needs help getting around, which is why Kourtney isn’t here tonight. We’ve been taking turns on bathroom duty.”

Cassidy glances at my jersey. “You’re a good friend being here to represent for the both of you.”

I smile as I swing my gaze out over the ice. Since Kourtney couldn’t be here, I figured it was time I put on Jason’s jersey and surprise him. Anticipation bubbles inside me like fizzy champagne.

“Kourt and I finished your latest book, by the way.” I nudge Cassidy with my shoulder. “I loved it. You’re such an incredibly gifted writer. I wish I had a way with words like you.”

“Thank you. I’m glad you guys enjoyed it.” Her cheeks redden, but she

holds her head high. “People have been asking me for your story, you know. They loved the outgoing PR agent in my last book, and they want her to get her own happy ending.”

I cough out a laugh. “Yeah, I’d like my own happy ending too.”

“Have you been dating at all?”

I shake my head. “It’s been a hectic time being displaced from my apartment and losing my job. I don’t think I’m in the right headspace to be dating.”

Oh, and you know, I’m also in the middle of a throuple with my best friends at the moment.

“I get that.” Cassidy lights up as Trenton skates onto the ice to warm up. “You never know. Love can find you when you least expect it. Just look at how Trenton and I turned out.”

Trenton skates around the goal and blows Cassidy a kiss before waving to me.

Jason takes the ice next, and my eyes follow him until he makes his way over to where Cassidy and I are sitting. He skids to a stop and his eyes go wide when they land on the number six on my jersey.

I twirl the end of my ponytail and grin.

He runs his tongue over his bottom lip and shakes his head, his emerald gaze promising a reward for my surprise later.

After he skates away, I can feel Cassidy staring at me but I don’t turn to look at her. I know she saw the feral look on Jason’s face. To an outsider, this looks all kinds of wrong.

Luckily, I don’t have to explain any of it because Cassidy returns her attention to the boys and we before we know it, the game starts.

“Come on. Get in there, McKinley!” I jump to my feet as the Goldfinches scramble for the puck in front of the opposing goal before it’s passed back to our side of the ice. “Goddamnit.”

A Boston player makes an attempt on our goal, but Jason is there to block

the shot. He passes it to Krumkachova and he takes it down to the other side of the rink.

I cup my hands over my mouth. “Yeah, Stamos! That’s what I’m talking about.”

Cassidy laughs as she claps. “You should wear his jersey more often. He’s on fire tonight.”

I bite back a smile. Jason always plays hard. He gives everything his complete attention, so if he’s on that ice, he’s giving one-hundred percent.

It’s a tough game. The teams are evenly matched, and as we go into the second period, the score is still 0-0.

As soon as the puck drops, Boston comes away with it and number twenty-two heads straight for our goal.

“Fuck, get him out of there!” I yell.

Krumkachova rides him and manages to regain possession of the puck. He passes it to Jason, and fast as lightning he skates away with it.

And then number twenty-two comes back around. He flies up behind Jason, but instead of fighting for the puck, he checks Jason into the boards.

Hard.

Jason’s back slams into the wall, and then he falls to the ice.

The crowd goes wild over the illegal hit, and both teams erupt in a fight, throwing punches as helmets and sticks slide around them.

But Jason doesn’t move, lying lifeless on the ice.

Cassidy clamps her hand over her mouth. “Oh, no.”

The ref stops the game and the stadium goes silent as the players realize what’s happening behind them.

Get up, Jay. Please get up.

The medical team is by his side, and all we can do is watch and wait. Until they signal for a stretcher.

Fuck.

I grab my purse. “I’m sorry to leave you here alone, Cass, but I have to

go.”

“Go, go.” She pulls me into a quick hug. “Text me with updates.”

“I will.”

I make my way through the stadium with my phone to my ear calling Kourtney.

“Come on, Kourt. Pick up.”

I try Erika’s phone next, but she doesn’t answer.

“God damnit!”

I know damn well security won’t let me into the medical area, but I’m friends with a few of the therapists, so I shoot them a text to keep me informed on Jason’s status.

Finally, Kourtney calls me back.

My heart is in my throat as I press my phone to my ear. “Kourt, are you watching the game?”

“No, Erika and I are watching a movie in her bed. Why?”

“Jay just took a hit. I can’t get in touch with anyone in the medical room to find out what’s happening, but he was unconscious when they took him off the ice.”

She gasps. “Unconscious?”

My heart sinks. It’s an awful phone call to have to make, and I’m not even there to hold her.

“It was a hard hit, babe. Someone checked him into the boards.”

“Wait, I’m getting another call. Let me go and I’ll call you right back.”

Kourtney hangs up, and all I can do is pace.

Maybe he just had the wind knocked out of him.

Maybe he’ll come back in the game.

Players take hard hits all the time, and they can still play.

The medical staff will run their tests and follow protocol, and Jason will be fine.

My phone buzzes again and I answer it on the first ring. “Kourt, what’s

happening?”

She snuffles. “They’re taking him to the hospital. Can you meet me there?”

“I’m on my way.”

I bolt through the stadium, out the doors, and through the parking lot as fast as my legs will carry me.

I’m closer to the hospital than Kourtney is, so I make it there before her. I run into the emergency entrance and my chest heaves as I try to catch my breath before reaching the counter.

“Hi, I’m here for Jason Stamos. He’s the professional hockey player who just got brought in from the game. His wife is on her way.”

The woman behind the counter nods, barely looking up at me as she slides a clipboard my way. “Have a seat and his wife can fill out these forms when she gets here.”

My stomach clenches. “Are you able to give me any information on his status? Is he conscious?”

“I can speak with his wife when she arrives.”

Immediate family only.

Of course.

I slump into a seat and fill out as much of the information as I can while I wait, but it isn’t much. I don’t know his social, or his medical information.

I know as much as a friend would, because that’s all I am.

Tears spring into my eyes but I will them away. I need to be strong for Kourtney when she gets here.

Within ten minutes, Kourtney arrives, eyes wide as she rushes through the giant revolving door.

She leaps into my arms as I stand. “Have you heard anything?”

I shake my head. “They won’t tell me anything because I’m not immediate family. I tried filling out the paperwork as much as I can.”

She digs into her purse and pulls out her insurance card before taking the

clipboard from me. “Thank you.”

Kourtney scribbles the missing information onto the paperwork and takes it to the woman at the counter.

Jason slamming into the boards replays in my mind over and over while I wait. The sound of the hit, the way his body fell to the ice, the way his arms and legs went limp. Bile rises in my throat as my thoughts lead me to all the worst-case scenarios.

Kourtney gets ushered through the doors, but looks back at me over her shoulder. “Can she come with me?”

The nurse shakes her head. “Only one person at a time, immediate family only.”

She flashes me an apologetic look, and I shake my head as I try to force a smile. “Go.”

Then the doors close behind them.

Jason

“Anything else I can get you?”

“Actually, there is one thing you can do for me, Nancy.” I flash my most charming smile up at the nurse. “Our friend is in the waiting room. They wouldn’t let her in because she isn’t immediate family. Can you pull some strings and get her back here?”

The nurse purses her lips and she glances at Kourtney. “Does he use that smile on you?”

Kourtney laughs. “He sure does.”

“And you give him anything he asks for, don’t you?”

“I do.”

Nancy shakes her head and turns her attention to me. “There’s a limit to

one guest per room, Mr. Stamos.”

“We’ll be quiet, Nancy.” I hold out my pinky. “I promise.”

She glares at my finger.

“Please? My friend is really upset. She was at the game and saw me get knocked out. I don’t want her to be out there all alone, and I don’t want to have to send my wife out into the waiting room either. Do you think you could make an exception for me, just this once?”

Nancy heaves a sigh. “Fine, but you’re signing an autograph for my husband and my son.”

“Deal.”

“What’s your friend’s name?”

“Celeste. Tall with red hair. You won’t miss her.”

“All right, give me five minutes.”

I shoot her a wink. “You’re the best, Nancy.”

She rolls her eyes as she makes her way into the hallway. “Yeah, yeah.”

Kourtney runs her fingertips over my forearm. “Are you sure you’re feeling okay? The doctor rattled off a lot of side effects.”

“I’ve had concussions before. I’ll be fine.”

“But this is the first one you were knocked unconscious for.”

“I’m good.” I reach out and cup her face. “The only pain I feel is the pang in my heart when I see you worrying like this.”

Tears brim over her eyelids. “I can’t help it. I don’t ever want to get a phone call like this again.”

“It’s okay, baby. I’m okay.”

I press my forehead against hers and run my fingers through her hair.

Celeste’s voice booms into the room. “Oh, God. Is he dying?”

Kourtney wipes her cheeks as she chuckles. “No, no. He’s fine. Come in.”

Celeste stands frozen in the doorway, her wide eyes raking over the wires and tubes attached to me. “Hey, boss man. Did you enjoy your little nap?”

She's making jokes because she's nervous. I can see it in her expression. She's putting on a brave face for Kourtney, but I can see past it. She needs reassurance.

I hold my palm out, face up. "Come here."

She steps into the room and slips her hand into mine. "How do you feel?"

"Better now." I tug her arm, bringing her closer to me, until her shins hit the side of the bed. "Now that I've got both of my girls with me."

Before Kourtney and I invited Celeste into our marriage, I never felt incomplete. There was never anything missing. So many people assume that your marriage must be lacking if you're looking to add a third partner into the mix. But Celeste wasn't meant to fill a void. She enhanced our lives, our relationship, in a way that no one else could have. The three of us were inseparable in high school, and it's no different now. She's a part of us.

She feels it too. If only she could admit it.

Celeste looks between the two of us. "Well, the good news is: The Goldfinches won, and that asshole got ejected from the game. They ruled it a check from behind."

"How do you know?" Kourtney asks.

"I didn't know what to do with myself while I was in the waiting room, so I searched up the details of the rest of the game." She shakes her head. "That was a dirty hit. He's lucky I don't follow him after a game and Nancy Kerrigan his ass."

"Easy, Tanya." I smooth my thumb over the top of her hand. "I don't need you getting into trouble for me. I just need you to kiss it all better."

"He should get fined, you know," she continues. "Players can't go around making illegal hits and get a slap on the wrist. I think—"

"Celeste." I cut her off and squeeze her hand. "Kiss me."

She leans down and presses her lips to mine. I run my fingers through her hair and hold the back of her head as I deepen the kiss. Her tongue wraps around mine as she sighs into my mouth, and I feel her body relax.

“How are we doing in here?” Dr. Patel’s voice startles us from the doorway, and Celeste jumps a foot away from me before he steps into the room. “I see we have a guest.”

Redness creeps into Celeste’s cheeks. “Hey, Doc.”

“I hope we’re not having too much fun in here. The hockey star needs his rest.”

Kourtney and I exchange glances, and I try not to laugh when I say, “Only a little fun.”

Dr. Patel smiles. “Well, your scans came back and everything looks normal. You can go home, but make sure you take it easy over the next few days. You might experience side-effects, like dizziness, headaches or vomiting. If you experience confusion or memory loss, please come back immediately.”

“Memory loss,” Kourtney echoes. “Does that happen often?”

“Every patient is different, and your husband took a significant hit.” Dr. Patel turns his attention back to me. “I just want you to know the importance of rest so you don’t overdo it. I know you have a big game coming up this weekend. I think you should be fine to play as long as you don’t have any side effects this week.”

“That’s what I wanted to hear.” I stick out my hand. “Thank you, Doctor.”

He clasps my hand in a firm shake. “You ladies take care of him.”

Kourtney smirks. “Oh, we will.”

JASON

“I’M SO EXCITED FOR THIS.”

I peer under Kourtney’s robe. “So am I.”

She swats me away and tightens the belt around her waist. “No peeking.”

Celeste’s eyes bounce around the dim studio. “I love the exposed brick in here.”

Victoria, our photographer, grins as she adjusts the setting on her camera. “This is my favorite place to shoot. Plus, it’s rent-controlled. I don’t think I’ll ever give this place up.”

With less than a month until the website launches, Celeste has been kicking the marketing into high gear. She set up a boudoir photoshoot for the three of us in order to use the photos on social media to gain attention.

Between Celeste’s marketing, my injury, and all the charity work Kourtney and the WAGs did for Thanksgiving last weekend, the three of us haven’t been able to fully enjoy our final week together after Erika went back home. I’ve been looking forward to today’s photoshoot so we can spend some intimate time together.

“You know, it’s not every day I get asked to sign an NDA.” Victoria chuckles. “I feel like I’m working with the President.”

Celeste flips her hair over her shoulder. “We’re hotter than the President.”

Victoria tilts her head back as she laughs. “This is true. Okay, you three.

Drop your robes and come stand over here by the window. We'll do some group shots to get you loosened up. Then we'll break off into the couple shots. We'll save the solo pictures for the end."

We disrobe and pull our masks onto our faces. Celeste surprised us with new masks for the photoshoot. Mine is made of black leather, while the girls' masks are made of black lace. She instructed us to wear black to go along with the theme, so I chose a pair of short boxer-briefs.

My eyebrows jump as my gaze roams over Kourtney's outfit. "You look incredible."

A black leather bustier hugs her curves, with lace accents around the edges of her breasts. Black lace panties are clipped to black thigh-high stockings, complete with a pair of black kitten heels. She looks elegant and sexy as hell.

Kourtney wraps her arm around Celeste's waist. "We need to wear these at home."

Celeste grins. "I knew you'd say that."

Celeste's outfit is less demure than Kourtney's, no surprise to anyone. Her breasts spill over a see-through lace bra, with her piercings glinting through the fabric. She's wearing a black lace thong, complete with a thin leather collar wrapped around her neck and matching thigh-high leather boots.

My dick hardens as I look at the two of them together. Leather and lace, sweet and salty. I want them both. Care for them both.

Our contract is over at the end of the week, and not one of us has brought it up to the other. I think we're trying to pretend like it's not happening, as if we can stop time by ignoring it. I don't know what's going on in Celeste's head, but I know what Kourtney and I want. And we're going to have to sit down and talk to Celeste about it at some point.

For now, we'll enjoy each other and let our bodies do the talking.

Victoria points to the window. "Jason, I want you to stand straight and

tall. Ladies, you can kneel in front of him, facing him, and clasp your hands behind your backs.”

We do as she says, and she fluffs out the girls’ hair. “Pop those booties like a Cadillac, ladies. Arch your back. Yes, perfect.” We’re illuminated by the flash of her camera. “Feel free to move and change your poses however you want. This is your photoshoot. You can take control.”

At the sound of Victoria’s permission to move, Kourtney leans over and kisses Celeste.

“Yes!” The camera clicks and flashes as Victoria praises us. “Amazing.”

The girls switch positions around my legs for several shots. Then I hook my finger through the silver loop on Celeste’s collar, yanking her up while my other hand wraps around Kourtney’s neck, pulling her to her feet at the same time.

Our hands roam freely, gripping and squeezing each other while our mouths collide, barely aware of Victoria’s presence as she snaps each shot. It’s a frenzy of lips nipping and sucking like we can’t get enough of each other.

Celeste pulls back and flashes us a devilish grin. “Your turn, boss man. Get on your knees.”

I lower myself to the floor. It’s a place I’d gladly stay, worshiping them at their feet and giving myself to them. Wholly and completely.

Kourtney lifts her leg and rests her heel on my shoulder while Celeste grips my hair at the back of my head like she’s serving Kourtney to me to feast. Not being able to do the things I want to do them, the prolonging of pleasure, makes this even hotter.

Victoria gestures to the black velvet chaise lounge chair across the room. “Let’s move to the couch.”

Celeste lies down on her back, and Kourtney wastes no time lying between her legs with her back against Celeste’s chest. Kourtney spreads her legs, hanging one over the back of the couch, and she reaches for me. I kneel

at the foot of the couch and slide my hands up Celeste's legs while I drag my lips along Kourtney's thigh. I can smell her arousal through her thin panties, and it turns me on even more knowing that she's wet throughout this photoshoot. I bite the inside of her thigh and she arches her back, letting out a small moan.

"Yes," Victoria encourages. "You can talk to each other. Stay connected in the moment."

I crawl up Kourtney's body and nip at her bottom lip. "I can't wait to get home." I lean over and slide my tongue over Celeste's mouth. "And you're keeping this collar on for me."

Victoria snaps shot after shot, and then we move to the couple's photos. My dick is rock hard, between watching Kourtney and Celeste pose together, to being in the frame with each of them.

My favorite shot is when Kourtney gets onto all fours while Celeste kneels behind her and grips a fistful of Kourtney's hair, yanking her head back. They're natural and unrestrained, giving in to the moment.

Victoria fans herself with her hand. "I feel like I'm going to need a cigarette after this."

For the individual shots, Victoria instructs us each in a different way: Kourtney spread out on a bed with black silk sheets; Celeste crawling along the windowsill with the city as her backdrop; and me against the brick wall.

I watch as Kourtney drapes herself off the edge of the bed, hanging upside-down with her hair cascading down to the floor in a dark river.

"If you're comfortable with it, you can take off your top and cover your breasts with your hands," Victoria says. "I can always edit out anything that's showing."

Kourtney unhooks her corset and covers her chest with her forearm while letting the corset dangle from her other hand.

Celeste lets out a whistle. "Yeah, Kourt!"

My heart swells with pride and desire. She comes alive in front of the

camera, bold and free, letting her hands roam over her dips and curves, her legs spread wide.

That's *my* fucking wife.

When it's my turn, I take my spot in front of the bricks.

"Okay, Jason. Same goes for you," Victoria says. "Feel free to face the wall and drop your boxers."

Celeste claps. "Show us that spectacular ass."

I spin around and push my boxers down. I brace one hand on the bricks while the other wraps around my length so that to the camera, it looks like I'm jerking off.

"So hot," Kourtney mutters.

Each of us are turned on, unable to do the things we really want to do, and having to hold out until we're finished.

After an hour, Victoria flips her camera around to show us some of the thumbnails. "What do you think?"

"These are incredible." Kourtney beams. "Thank you so much."

"I can't wait to get these up on the website," Celeste says.

"It was a pleasure working with you three." Victoria shakes each of our hands. "I'll send you everything once I'm done editing. Should be within the week."

We say goodbye to Victoria, and then we head home. The second we get through the door, we're stripping out of our clothes and reaching for each other.

"Leave your lingerie on," I say to both of them. "I'm fucking you just like this."

Kourtney clasps our hands and leads us into the bedroom. I set up the tripod while Kourtney pulls the covers off the bed. We each pull on our masks.

Celeste walks up behind me and presses a trail of kisses along my back while I clip my phone into place. "I have an idea I'd like to try for the next

video. I want Kourtney and I to sixty-nine, and I'll lie on the bottom so that you can fuck her from behind.”

I turn around and tug on her collar, claiming her lips in a deep kiss. “First, you're going to get on your knees so I can fuck this mouth of yours.”

Celeste shivers before dropping to the floor in front of me. She flicks her eyes up to mine as she opens her mouth and sticks out her tongue, waiting for me.

I keep my finger looped through the ring on her collar as I free myself from my boxers with my other hand. Kourtney rounds the foot of the bed with her phone, getting down on her knees next to Celeste so she can film from a better angle.

I push myself inside Celeste's mouth, and give her collar a tug to pull her over my cock. Her tongue wraps around me, and she sucks me down as far as she can go.

“That's it, *kókkino*,” I murmur, fucking her mouth in long, slow strokes. “What a good girl you're being for me.”

She hums at my praise, swirling her tongue over my crown before swallowing me down again. The sight of this strong, stubborn woman on her knees for me with a mouthful of my cock and a collar around her neck is enough to bring me to the edge. Couple that with my wife on her knees beneath me, reaching her hand inside her panties because she's so turned on?

I'm ready to blow and we've only just begun.

I pull out of Celeste's mouth and yank her up by her collar, crushing my mouth to hers before reaching for Kourtney to ravage her mouth. “Get on the bed.”

All three of us scramble out of our underwear, and Celeste lays back on the mattress and spreads her legs wide, still in those sexy as sin leather boots. Kourtney climbs on top of Celeste to sit on her face. She moans as Celeste slides her tongue over her pussy. Then she drops onto all fours and buries her tongue between Celeste's legs.

I make sure the camera faces them and has a good view of what I get to enjoy. My dick bobs between my legs, swollen and throbbing with need as I watch them taste each other. I wait to join them. I could watch them together like this for the rest of my life.

But when Kourtney reaches out for me, I can't deny her.

I kneel over Celeste's head, and gaze down at Kourtney's plump ass in the air. Celeste reaches up and wraps her hand around my cock, licking me from base to tip, getting me nice and wet for my wife. Then she lines me up so I can push myself inside Kourtney's tight, warm pussy. And I feel Celeste's tongue as she drags it over where Kourtney and I are connected.

Kourtney cries out and arches her back as I plunge inside of her. I gather her hair into one hand, and grip her hip with my other hand, giving myself leverage as I drive in and out of her. I lose myself in a punishing rhythm, finally able to release what I've been holding in since the start of our photoshoot.

Kourtney breaks first, coming hard and loud. Once she finishes feasting on my wife, Celeste then tips her chin and sucks my balls into her mouth from under me. I see stars, and I can barely hold it together.

I slow my thrusts, needing to gain control so I don't come before Celeste. But then Kourtney plunges two fingers inside of Celeste, and sucks on her clit. Celeste moans, letting out a string of curses, and she goes over the edge. Not a second later, I spill my release inside Kourtney.

We climb off each other, panting and gasping for breaths as we collapse onto the pillows beside one another.

"I don't even have the energy to stop the camera right now." I tuck Kourtney under one of my arms as I reach for Celeste to pull her close. "I'll get up when I can feel my legs again."

Celeste chuckles as she pats my chest. "That was only round one. You've gotta build up your stamina."

"Round one?" I open one eye as I gaze down at her. "You have more

ideas for another video?”

“I might. We have to get in as many videos as possible. Our contract ends on Friday.”

Kourtney’s body tenses at the reminder, but she says nothing.

And there it is. The elephant in the room.

I run my fingers through their hair. “Well, then I guess we’d better make the most of it.”

KOURTNEY

THE DAYS LEADING up to move-out day are incredible and difficult at the same time.

We make impromptu videos for the website, mostly because we can't keep our hands off each other, so we have sex under the guise of the website. We lie in bed and scroll through our social media comments, laughing and celebrating all the recognition we've been drumming up with our photos. We cheer for Jason at his games, and we fall asleep wrapped around each other.

All the while, we're waiting for our impending expiration date.

But tonight, we can't ignore it any longer. It's our last night together.

Celeste's apartment is mold-free and ready for her to move back into.

I've thought of about a hundred different things I want to say to her to make her stay, but I already know what her answer will be.

We had a deal, and now it's over.

Only, I don't want it to be over. Neither does Jason. And I honestly feel like Celeste doesn't want it to be over either.

I just don't know if she'll ever admit it.

So tonight, Jason cooked a three-course dairy-free meal, and we're enjoying it one last time together.

"This looks incredible." Celeste lowers her nose to her plate and inhales a deep breath. "I love a good steak."

“Wait until you try the mashed potatoes.” I squeeze Jason’s hand. “It’s his mother’s recipe.”

Celeste’s eyes light up. “She used to make the best mashed potatoes.” She brings a forkful of potatoes to her mouth, but pauses. “I’m sorry I wasn’t there when she passed. I would’ve been there if I’d known.”

Jason smiles, but it doesn’t meet my eyes. “It’s okay. We were in different places back then.”

“She was always so sweet to me when we’d hang out at your house after school.”

Jason runs the back of his hand over her cheek. “My mother loved you both.”

I attempt to eat, but my stomach is in knots. I opt for wine instead, and raise my glass. “To our last night together.”

Celeste coughs out a laugh as she raises her glass. “You act like we’re never going to see each other again.”

Jason glances at me before looking at Celeste. “It’s our last night living together. Being together...this way.”

“It was fun.” Celeste clinks her glass against mine before gulping down half of her wine. “I definitely didn’t expect it to be, but it was.”

Fun. That’s how she wants to spin this.

“It *was* fun.” I down the rest of my wine and Jason already has the cork off the bottle, ready to pour me another glass. “I know you had your reservations about it in the beginning, but I’m glad you changed your mind.”

“Me too.” Celeste cuts into her steak and pops a piece into her mouth. “Everything came together for the website, and the videos look amazing. I can’t wait to see what happens when the website launches next week.”

Everything surrounds the website, as if this was nothing more than a business transaction to her.

I clear my throat. “I was talking about more than just the website, Celeste.”

She pauses with her fork halfway to her mouth. “Oh, yeah. I wasn’t sure how this was all going to work, but it was...fun.”

“Fun,” I echo.

“I hope my apartment doesn’t smell like chemicals when I get back there. I’m glad we moved all of my clothes out of there. Good call on your part, boss man.”

“I’m sure they got rid of any foul smells.” Jason dabs the corner of his mouth with his napkin. “Otherwise, you can just come back and stay here with us.”

“Please.” Celeste laughs. “You guys will be happy to have me out of your hair.”

My chin jerks back. “Is that what you think?”

She shrugs. “Yeah, I mean, aren’t you happy to get back to normal now that this is over?”

Normal.

Over.

Her words pierce my heart like sharp knives.

“Celeste, we don’t want you to go.” The words bubble out of me before I can stop them. “You’re acting all nonchalant like this isn’t a big deal, but it is, and I’m upset and I don’t want you to go.”

Celeste’s eyebrows pinch together. “What do you mean? Our agreement is done. Three weeks—and we pushed it to four with Erika’s surgery. My apartment is ready and now I have to move back.”

“Do you though?” Jason asks. “Do you *have to* move back?”

“Of course I do.” Celeste sets down her fork and folds her arms over her chest. “I live in my own apartment, and you two have yours.”

“So, you’re not bothered at all that this thing between the three of us is over? You won’t miss any of it?” I can’t help the accusatory tone in my voice, but I’m fighting back tears and there’s a lump burning at the back of my throat.

“I...I mean, it was fun but—”

“Stop saying it was fun!” I slam my palms on the table, and the silverware clangs against our plates. “This wasn’t a game. It wasn’t a party. It was us, and it was more than just a good time.”

Anger flashes in her eyes. “What do you want me to say, Kourt? Did I enjoy myself? Yes, very much so. But it’s over, and now we have to go back to our normal lives outside of fantasy land. You got what you needed from me, so now you have to let me go.”

My bottom lip trembles as tears threaten to brim over my lids. “What if we don’t want to let you go?”

Celeste’s eyes bounce between me and Jason. “That isn’t up to you.”

“You’re right, it’s not,” Jason says. “It’s up to you. But we’re letting you know where we stand so that there isn’t a shadow of a doubt in your mind. We don’t want this to be over, and I’m not talking about the website. I’m talking about the three of us being together. No contract. No videos.”

Celeste is shaking her head before Jason can finish his sentence. “No way.”

“Why not?” I swipe at a tear as it escapes down my cheek. “Why can’t you even entertain the possibility of being with us?”

“Because this isn’t what people do, Kourt.” Celeste shoves away her plate. “This isn’t what you want. You’re married and you two have a beautiful life together. Right now, I’m the shiny new toy that you want to play with, but it’ll get old. Why wait until then to call it quits? Why not stop it now while we still have a friendship to salvage?”

“Why are you selling yourself short?” I ask. “You’re so much more than a novelty. Haven’t you felt *anything* while we’ve been together these last few weeks?”

“Of course I’ve felt it. We have great chemistry, and we enjoy fucking each other. Let’s not confuse that with something more. You and I have been down that road before and it didn’t work then. It’s not going to work now.”

Her words sting like a slap to the face.

“I think you can agree that things are a lot different now than they were back in college.” My husband’s calm voice washes over me, giving me hope that maybe he can get through to her. “You were in different places then. You wanted different things.”

“Yeah, I wanted her and she wanted to marry a man so she didn’t have to look her parents in the eyes and tell them that their perfect daughter is in love with a woman.” Celeste huffs out a sardonic laugh. “And you still don’t have any plans on telling them about us, do you? So what is the point of all of this? You make this beautiful dinner and propose what, exactly? To continue what we’re doing but only so long as no one finds out? I’ll just be the shameful secret locked away in your belltower so you can take me out when you feel bored.”

Celeste spits her words like venom, and they course through me like poison.

She’s not wrong.

Of course she doesn’t want to stay with us. What do I have to offer her? A life of secrecy because I’m too scared to admit to my parents what I truly want.

Jason waits for me to say something, watching me with those keen emerald eyes of his.

But my shoulders slump forward in defeat. “You’re right. I’m sorry I even brought it up.”

I can’t bring myself to look at Celeste, not wanting to face the hurt behind her eyes like the coward I am.

Celeste’s chair scrapes across the floor as she pushes out of it. “I’m going to pack my things. No point waiting until tomorrow.”

Jason moves to stand. “Let me help.”

“No.” She holds out her palm. “Please, just let me do this on my own. You can carry my shit downstairs when I’m all set.”

My husband glances at me one last time, looking for some kind of sign that I want him to stop her.

But I can't.

So she packs her things, and then she's gone.

And I let her go.

I toss and turn, unable to fall asleep.

Aside from everything that happened with Celeste eating away at me, Jason hasn't come to bed since she left.

At midnight, I wrap the comforter around my body and shuffle into the living room.

Jason's face is illuminated by the light of the television screen, but it's on mute.

His eyes shift to mine when he spots me. "What are you doing up?"

"I couldn't sleep." I swallow, taking tentative steps toward the couch. "Are you upset with me?"

He sits up straight. "Upset with you? Never. Why would you think that?"

"I don't know. Because you didn't come to bed... because I'm upset about Celeste leaving... because maybe you're disappointed in me for not being able to tell my parents the truth about us."

He holds out his hand. "Come here, baby."

I snuggle against him as he tucks me under his arm, resting my head on his chest. My muscles relax with his soothing touch, and I take a deep inhale of his familiar scent.

"I'm upset about Celeste leaving too, but I am not disappointed in you. I could never be. You have to be comfortable with the choices you make, and I'd never want you to do something you weren't ready to do."

I lift my head to look into his eyes. "I don't want you to think that you're

not enough for me. I don't want you to think that we aren't good now because Celeste left. Because that isn't true."

Jason presses a kiss to my lips. "I know that, baby. I'm not worried about your love for me."

"Good, because I love you so much."

"And I love you. More than all the blades of grass, and all the sand on the beach." He runs his fingers through my hair. "But I also know that we both aren't okay with missing the third piece to our puzzle. I know that we don't want to go back to being without Celeste. And I know that you're beating yourself up because you can't bring yourself to tell your parents the truth, and I don't know how to help you with that."

A tear rolls down my cheek. "Why is it so hard? Why can't I just tell them?"

"Because we want our parents to love us unconditionally, and we're terrified to find out that they don't." His chest rises and falls as he sighs. "But maybe life isn't about meeting everyone else's expectations. Maybe it's about meeting your own, and living a life you're proud of."

"And what if my parents don't want to be a part of that life?"

"Then that's their choice to make." He pauses a moment before continuing. "You have to ask yourself: Who's life are you really living if you're making choices based on other people?"

"And to think I thought you were just a dumb jock when I met you."

He digs his fingers into my ribs and I laugh.

"Let's throw a holiday party," he says. "Your parents are out of town. Why not get the team together and invite all our friends over to celebrate? That'll lift your spirits."

My eyes widen. "I love that idea."

"And maybe..." He tucks a strand of hair behind my ear. "Maybe you can tell everyone about your website."

My mouth flaps open. "What?"

“I understand not wanting your parents to know about a porn-based dating site. But your friends aren’t going to judge you the same way, and you should be proud of what you’re doing. I think they’d be happy to hear about it.”

My mind whirls again. “And what about Celeste?”

“I think you should tell them about what we’ve been doing with her too—but you’d have to talk to her about that first. Make sure she’s okay with everyone knowing.”

I suck in a deep breath. “That’s a scary thought.”

“I think you’re just braver than you realize.” He presses a kiss to the tip of my nose. “And I think it’ll help you to know that you have your friends’ support.”

I nod. “I’ll think about it.”

CELESTE

THE ALARM CLOCK READS 1:37AM.

I spent entirely too long creating a bio on *FreeMe* the second the website went live.

Then I deleted everything I wrote and kept it short and simple, which might come off as boring, but I did upload some damn good pictures of myself, so that has to count for something.

The problem is, I don't *want* to find someone to date.

I don't *want* to fall in love with anyone.

My heart is already split in two—one jagged and bruised half belonging to each of my best friends.

My best friends.

How did I get here? How did I allow our friendship to get this convoluted? They're the only real family I have, and I went and fucked it all up by agreeing to this insane plan. I knew it would hurt when it ended. I knew Kourtney wouldn't be ready to tell her parents about us.

So why does it hurt so bad?

I guess expecting to get shot doesn't take away the pain of getting shot. The wound sears and bleeds whether you saw it coming or not.

My eyes bounce around my apartment. It feels cold and empty since I moved back, but it never felt this way before. I loved my apartment. I loved

being on my own.

Or was I just used to it, so I had to love it?

I rub my temples in small circles and let out a long breath through my lips.

Get it together, Celeste.

The best way to get over someone is to get under someone new.

As if the thought summoned the universe to help me, a message request pops up on my screen.

BossMan94 wants to chat.

I arch a brow and glance up at the ceiling. “Seriously, universe? You couldn’t have sent someone with a different username?”

I click on the guy’s profile, but he hasn’t uploaded photos or filled out any of the information.

BossMan94: You’re beautiful. That 3rd pic is my favorite.

Me: Wish I could say the same to you, but you haven’t posted any pictures of yourself.

BossMan94: I’m not ready to put myself out there yet.

Me: That’s what this website it all about. It’s the one place you can be yourself.

BossMan94: Is that why you’re here?

Me: I don’t really know why I’m here honestly...

BossMan94: Are you looking for love?

Me: More like looking for a distraction.

BossMan94: A distraction from what?

Me: Let's call it a complicated situationship.

BossMan94: Someone break your heart?

Me: I broke my own heart.

Me: I knew it was going to end badly, and I did it anyway.

Me: They call that stupidity, right? When you do something you know you shouldn't.

BossMan94: Why did you do it then?

I stare at his question as my fingers hover over the keyboard.

Why did I do it? Why did I say yes to Kourtney's proposition? I could've easily said no. I *did* say no initially. I could've held my ground, and none of this would've happened.

BossMan94: I think you did it because you wanted to.

BossMan94: Because there's a part of you that has wanted to indulge in the fantasy of being with the two most important people in your life.

Whoa, who the hell is this guy?

I stare at his username and then realization clicks into place.

I'm a fucking idiot.

Boss Man. He could've have made it any clearer.

Me: Sometimes, a fantasy should stay just that.

BossMan94: And sometimes, a fantasy can become reality.

Me: That's the problem with reality. It's too real for some people.

BossMan94: She's struggling with it, Celeste. Outing herself to her

parents is a huge deal for her.

Me: And I get that. Which is why I took myself out of the equation, so she doesn't have to do something she's not ready for.

BossMan94: Maybe that's not what she needs you to do. Maybe she needs you to be there for her. Maybe she needs to feel like she doesn't have to choose between you and her parents...that you'll be there for her through his, however long it takes.

Me: That's not fair to me.

BossMan94: It's not, but love isn't fair. Love isn't running away whenever something goes wrong. It's standing with the person you love and fighting for them.

Me: Well, maybe I need someone to fight for me for once.

BossMan94: I will fight for you every day.

BossMan94: I'm not giving up on us.

Tears well behind my lids.

God, I miss him.

I miss the way he'd look at me. The way he always knew what I needed. The way it felt in his arms—to feel safe, to feel cared for.

To feel wanted.

BossMan94: I miss you, kókkino.

BossMan94: Come back to us.

As much as my heart is screaming at me to run to him, to them, my head stops me in my tracks.

I can't wait around, hoping for the day when Kourtney tells her parents

about us. I can't be someone's hidden secret. I want more than that. I want more for myself.

If Kourtney truly wants this, then she'll find a way to make it happen.

But I won't be sitting here waiting for her.

KOURTNEY

IT'S LAUNCH DAY, and I'm sitting in my parents' bedroom helping them pack for Italy.

Jason has an away game, and Celeste and I haven't spoken much since she moved out.

This isn't the way I envisioned the first day of our website going live. I should be elated that my dream came to fruition. I should be with Celeste, scouring the site for new accounts and watching for videos that might pop up. We should be *together*.

"Why do you keep checking your phone?" Mom asks. "Is everything all right with Jason?"

I set my phone down on her nightstand. "Yeah, he's fine."

"Are *you* fine?" She tucks a pair of pants into her suitcase and pauses to look at me. "You seem distracted."

I force a smile and nod. "I'm good. Just tired. I haven't been sleeping well lately."

It's not a total lie. I've been having a hard time falling asleep since the fight with Celeste.

As if Dad can read my mind, he tosses his bag of toiletries into his suitcase and asks, "How's Celeste doing? Is her apartment fixed?"

"Yeah, she's back in her apartment and it's all good."

“Is she dating anyone?” Mom asks. “I never hear either of you talk about her going on any dates.”

“She’s had a lot on her plate recently with the apartment and losing her job. She hasn’t really had much time to meet anyone.”

Dad nods. “She’s a sweetheart. I’m sure she’ll meet a nice man one day and settle down.”

A man. Because in his world, a woman has to end up with *a man*.

Mom laughs. “You know, I used to think she was into *you* when you were in high school.”

My stomach bottoms out and my head whips up to look at her. “What?”

“You two were attached at the hip, and she always gazed at you with this look in her eyes, like...” Mom shrugs as she tries to find her words. “Like she was in love with you.”

Dad shakes his head. “You’re crazy. I never saw that look before. And kids don’t gaze at each other. You’re reading too many of those romance books.”

Mom scoffs. “Are you telling me that you didn’t gaze at me when we first started dating?”

“Men don’t gaze.” He puffs out his chest. “I saw you and thought you were beautiful, so I sat down and talked to you.”

Her eyes go wide. “You definitely gazed at me. I’ve seen it. Remember when you used to save me a seat on the bus? You’d gaze at me as I walked down the aisle. You were like a lovesick puppy.”

“I was not!”

I interrupt their walk down memory lane. “If you thought Celeste was in love with me, why didn’t you ever bring it up to me?”

Mom waves a dismissive hand. “I didn’t want to put that idea in your head if it wasn’t true.”

“Did you think I reciprocated those feelings?”

“There were a few times I wondered if you were, you know, a lesbian.”

She puts air quotes around the word *lesbian*, as if it isn't a real thing, and something about that spikes my anger.

"And what if I was?" I plant my hand on my hip. "What then, hmm?"

Mom's head jerks back. "You were in high school. You were too young to know anything about that."

"I wasn't too young. Kids know about their sexual orientation from a young age."

Dad puts out his hand. "There's no need to raise your voice over something that isn't even true. What's gotten into you lately? I feel like every time we have a conversation, you find something to snap at us for."

Get it together, Kourt.

Tears sting my eyes, but I will them away. "It's nothing. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to shout."

My mother rounds the foot of the bed and places her hand on my shoulder. "Honey, I'm your mother and I know when something is wrong. Please, tell me what's going on. You're starting to scare me."

"I'm sorry." I blink up at the ceiling, my heart thundering in my chest like a stampede of wild horses. "I'm fine."

My voice cracks, like it's unable to push out the lie any longer.

I'm not fine.

I'm far from fine.

And my mother knows it.

She rubs my back in soothing circles. "You can talk to us, sweetheart. Please. Are you in any kind of trouble?"

I shake my head, and a tear springs free. "No."

"Is everything okay between you and Jason?" She pauses. "You know, marriage isn't always easy, and it's normal to go through some difficult times. Plus, he's always traveling and—"

"He didn't cheat on you, did he?" Dad stalks around the edge of the bed to stand in front of me. "You say the word and I'll be on the first flight out of

here.”

“No, no. It’s not Jason. God, no. He’s...” I fight to swallow past the ball of emotion lodged in my throat. “He’s the most amazing man I’ve ever known.”

“Well, that’s good.” Mom wipes the tear rolling down my cheek. “Then what is it honey? What has you so upset?”

A wave of emotion crashes on me and all of my walls come crumbling down, like a dam breaking from the pressure.

The pressure I’ve put on myself.

The pressure society has put on me.

The pressure my parents have put on me.

“I have some things to tell you.” My bottom lip trembles as I fight to get the words out without breaking down. “And they’re going to be a little shocking.”

Mom lowers herself onto the mattress. “Okay...”

Dad remains standing, like he’s bracing himself for whatever I’m about to say.

I sit on the bed beside my mother, and wring my hands in my lap. “In high school, I...I was in love with Celeste.” I glance at my mom. “You were right about the way she was looking at me, but I was looking at her the same way. Only, I hid it from you because I was ashamed of feeling that way. I was afraid of what you’d think of me if I told you that I was into a girl.”

Mom’s mouth falls open. “But you were with Jason in high school.”

“I wanted them both. I just didn’t understand why I was feeling that way about Celeste, so I shoved it down and pretended like I didn’t feel anything for her. But...then we got to college. In college, we dated for four years.” Another tear rolls down my cheek. “We were in love, and it was *everything*.” I close my eyes and my chest fills with warmth at the memory of those precious years. “But then she went to Seattle and I chose not to go with her. I couldn’t allow myself to be with her because I didn’t know how you’d both

react and I was too scared to find out.”

Mom snuffles. “Oh, honey. You’ve been holding that in all this time?”

I nod. “I was heartbroken when she left, and I went through it alone because I didn’t know how to tell you.”

“But then you got back together with Jason,” Dad says, his eyebrows pushed together. “You married Jason.”

“I did.”

Mom tilts her head, recognition settling in. “But then Celeste came back.”

“Then Celeste came back.” My hands shake. “And all the emotions came back with her.”

Dad shakes his head like he’s confused. “So, what are you saying? Are you leaving Jason to be with Celeste? Because that’s crazy. You can’t—”

Mom silences with him with her hand. “Let her speak, Jerry.”

I lift my eyes to my father, looking into the same brown eyes as mine. “I’m not leaving Jason. But I think...I think the three of us are going to be together.”

Mom looks like a deer in headlights, stunned into silence.

My father waves his hands in front of him. “Now, hold on a second. What the hell is that supposed to mean? You’re married. You can’t be with Celeste too.”

“Yes,” I whisper, barely able to get out the rest of my sentence. “We want to be together, the three of us. And we already have been.”

Mom clamps her hand over her mouth.

“What do you mean you already have?” Dad plants his hands on his hips. “The three of you have *been* together?”

I nod. “It happened while Celeste stayed with us last month. The three of us, we have a connection.”

“You can’t do that.” Dad says it like he’s making a decree. “That’s illegal, Kourtney. There’s no such thing as having a husband *and* a wife.”

“I know that. But Celeste doesn’t have to be our wife. We don’t need

legal titles or a piece of paper to define our love. We can just...be.”

“This isn’t love,” he spits. “This is absurd.”

My heart cracks like he hit it with a baseball bat.

I lift my chin and summon the courage to continue. “I know this is hard for you to understand. I know—”

“No, this isn’t hard for me to understand.” He jabs his finger in the air. “You’re the one who seems to not understand how the world works.”

“Enough, Jerry.” Mom finally speaks up. “Stop yelling at her.”

“Well, someone has to get through to her,” he says. “What do you have to say about this, Madeline? Our daughter just told us that she’s involved with her best friend and her husband, and you think this is okay?”

Mom throws her hands up. “I don’t know. I don’t know what I think, but I know that you need to stop yelling because it’s not helping.”

Dad shakes his head. “This is disgraceful, Kourtney Ann. You’re a Catholic child of God.”

“No, Dad. I was *raised* Catholic. Those are *your* beliefs. Not mine.”

“Kourtney,” Mom hisses.

“I’m sorry, Mom. But it’s the truth. I don’t choose to blindly follow a faith where people believe that everyone isn’t loved and equal.”

Dad’s face reddens. “Is this because of that tranny, Erika?”

“Dad!” I shoot up from the bed. “You can’t say things like that, and no, this has nothing to do with Erika. I know this is hard for you to believe, but this is one-hundred percent me. No one made me this way. No one influenced me. That’s not how it works. This is the way I was born.”

He crosses his arms over his chest. “Well, I don’t accept that.”

Another crack to my heart.

My voice quivers when I say, “Then you don’t accept *me*.”

He clears his throat and turns away as he walks over to his suitcase. “Your mother and I need to finish packing for our trip.”

“Jerry, please.” Mom hiccups as she swats away a tear. “Let’s talk about

this.”

“I have nothing left to say. If this is the decision she wants to make, then she can make it without my blessing.”

I suck in a breath and stand tall, waiting for the final blow to my chest. “What are you saying, Dad?”

“I’m saying you should leave.”

It doesn’t hurt as much as I thought it would. Maybe because I already knew in my heart that this would be his reaction. But it kills me to leave my mother upset like this.

I pull her in for a hug, and whisper in her ear. “I love you, Mom. Have a great time in Italy.”

And then I’m out the door.

CELESTE

“Do you have any idea what this is about?”

Jason shakes his head. “I don’t know.”

I chew the inside of my cheek as I pace the length of the living room in Kourtney and Jason’s apartment. “Where was she today?”

He shrugs. “My flight landed early this morning. I just got home about an hour ago and she wasn’t here.”

I pull out my phone and glance at the text I got fifteen minutes ago.

Little Mouse: Meet me at the apartment. It’s an emergency.

Worry twists my insides.

“If it were a real emergency, she’d have told us to meet her at the hospital. What kind of emergency could it be?”

Jason thrusts his hand through his hair, pulling at the roots. “I don’t fucking know.”

The poor guy looks like he’s about to tear down every building in the city to find his wife.

I clasp his hand and squeeze it. “We know she’s alive because she texted

us. It's probably something to do with the website. We're reading too much into her text."

Finally, the front door clicks as Kourtney pushes her way inside. Her eyes are swollen and red, and tears stream down her face.

Jason rushes over to her, beating me there with his long-ass legs. "Baby, what's wrong?" He holds her out in front of him, inspecting her body parts and looking for any sign of injury. "What happened?"

She buries her face in his chest and sobs. "I just got into a fight with my parents, and it was awful."

My stomach falls from my body and drops onto the ground.

Oh, fuck.

"Your parents? Why?" Jason wraps an arm around her and leads her to the couch.

I stay rooted to the ground, my heart thumping like a bass drum against my chest.

Kourtney glances over her shoulder and locks eyes with me. "I told them about us."

About *us*.

Jason's eyebrows collapse. "You did what?"

Fresh tears stream down her face. "I told them about how Celeste and I were together in college...how we were in love...how I was too much of a coward to admit it to anyone." She chokes back a sob. "And I told them that I wanted to be with you both—that the three of us are together."

She did it. She told them.

Jason's eyes widen. "And what did they say?"

She snuffles. "My dad told me that he doesn't accept it, and then he told me to leave."

That snaps me out of my shocked trance, and my feet carry me over to Kourtney.

I wrap my arms around her and hold her tight against me. "I'm so sorry,

Kourtney. You didn't have to upset them. You didn't have to do this for me."

"I did it for *us*. For the three of us. I want us to be together, and I don't want to hide it." She pulls back and reaches up to touch my cheek. "I'm the one who's sorry. You deserve so much more than what I've been able to give you all these years. Someone who could've been proud to call you her girlfriend. Someone who would've screamed it from the rooftops. Someone who would've fought for you. I'm so sorry, Celeste. I know I hurt you, but please tell me that we can start over. Tell me that you feel the same way Jason and I do. Please tell me that you want to be together, for real this time."

I flick my watery eyes up to Jason. "Is this what you want, boss man? Are you okay with all of this?"

"Of course I want this." A lone tear rolls down his cheek, and he lifts his hand to caress my face. "You've been ours from the beginning, *kókkino*. We've just been waiting for you to believe it."

I close my eyes and lean into his touch. "I've been too scared to let myself believe that this could be real...that you'd both want me."

"You don't have to be scared." Kourtney wraps her arms around each of us. "Not anymore."

But I pull away from the both of them. "I can't let you do this, Kourt. I can't be the reason you're cut off from your parents. I can't ask you to do this for me."

"You're *not* the reason. Their stubbornness and narrow-minded beliefs are the reason for this." She swipes a tear with the back of her hand. "A parent's love shouldn't be conditional. You've survived this long without yours. I can survive without mine."

"My parents don't give a shit about me because they're selfish pricks who shouldn't have had a child in the first place. But your parents aren't like that. They're loving and kind and generous." I shake my head. "There's still a chance for you to fix this with them."

Kourtney closes the gap I created between us. "It's not going to be easy.

The world might not understand us. My family might never accept us. But as long as we have each other, we can get through anything. All that matters to me is right here in this room.”

I close my eyes and let Kourtney’s words soak deep into my bones. It feels like I’ve waited forever to hear her say this. When she married Jason, I thought she’d made her choice. I never expected there to be another option—one where we could create our own rules and have a second chance.

Sometimes the love you find doesn’t look exactly like the love you once envisioned for yourself. But that doesn’t mean it’s wrong. That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t jump in with both feet and give it everything you’ve got.

And you sure as hell shouldn’t let the world tell you what to do with your life.

“If you’re sure this is what you want...” I clasp Jason’s hand and hold onto Kourtney with the other. “I’m all fucking in.”

Kourtney throws herself at me, jumping into my arms and pressing her lips against mine. I stumble backward, wrapping my hands around her waist. Jason engulfs us from behind, steadying the both of us. That’s how it is between us—I’ll always catch Kourtney when she falls, and Jason will always make sure we get to the ground safely.

He’s our protector.

He’s ours.

He’s *mine*.

Emotion constricts my throat as I set Kourtney down and turn to face Jason. I reach up and cradle his face, looking into those bright emerald eyes of his.

“*S’agapó.*”

He blinks as his lips part, like he can’t believe what I just told him.

So I say it again. “I love you, Jay. I’ve always loved you. Even when you weren’t mine to love.”

“I’ve always been yours. It just took you this long to realize it.” He wraps

me in his arms and speaks against my lips. “I love you, *kókkino*.”

He clutches my jaw, claiming me in an all-consuming kiss.

Kourtney’s hands roam over my body from behind me, sandwiching me between the both of them.

Right where I was meant to be.

I turn around to face Kourtney, gripping her face and peppering her with kisses. “I’m sorry about your parents, but I’m so damn proud of you. You don’t know how much it means to me that you finally stepped out into the light and let yourself be seen. For me, for us...for yourself.”

“I’ve loved you since we were fourteen.” She snuffles as she rests her forehead against mine. “All I’ve ever wanted was to have the both of you, exactly like this. And now that I have you, I’m never turning back.”

“My brave little mouse.” I brush my lips against hers. “I love you.”

Kourtney takes our hands and leads us into the bedroom. She stands in front of us, and pulls off her clothes, baring herself to us and showing us what she needs.

I drop to my knees in front of her and trail delicate kisses along her hips, across her stomach, and down her thighs. She shivers as I kiss her most sensitive spot, and reaches out for Jason. He stands behind her, letting his hands skate over her breasts, the both of them gazing down at me as I go down on her.

I take my time, dragging out her pleasure in slow, languid strokes while Jason licks her neck and toys with her nipples. We devour her and bring her to the edge until her hips rock faster and she’s panting for more.

Jason’s hand comes to the back of my head. “That’s it, baby. Make her come.”

I work my tongue faster, and relish in the burn as Kourtney grips a fistful of my hair and cries out, shuddering against my mouth.

Jason carries her to the bed, and lays her head against the pillow. Kourtney reaches for me, and pulls me down until I’m lying between her legs

with my back against her chest. Her fingers glide over my clit, and I let my knees fall apart so Jason can get a good look.

“She’s so wet,” Kourtney murmurs. “Look how turned on she gets when she’s eating my pussy.”

Jason stands at the foot of the bed, watching as I roll my hips against Kourtney’s fingers and moan. It’s not long before he’s crawling across the bed toward us, his eyes darkening as he prowls like a tiger who’s spotted its prey. He leans over the both of us, caging us in with his arms on either side of our heads.

Kourtney takes his cock and rubs it over my pussy, and Jason lowers his forehead to mine, releasing a low groan.

I cup his face and look into his eyes. “Make love to me, Jay.”

His body stills, emotion swirling around in the intensity of his gaze.

“Please.” I roll my hips against him. “I want to feel you inside me. Make me yours.”

With Kourtney behind me, Jason pushes his cock, slow inch by slow inch.

“Fuck.” I widen my legs, trying to accommodate his size. “You’re so big.”

“You can take it.” He takes his time to work himself into me, and then he hisses as he lets himself settle inside. “God, you feel good.”

I hum, running my fingernails along his broad back while Kourtney nips at my ear.

“Keep playing with her pussy, baby,” he tells her. “Let’s make our girl see stars.”

Kourtney obeys, her fingers sliding over my clit as Jason pulls out and thrusts back into me.

And the final wall I’ve kept up around my heart crumbles at our feet.

Jason takes turns kissing us while he fucks me, and I tilt my head to kiss Kourtney too. We pour our love into each other, finally unrestrained and unchained from the secrets we’ve tried burying for over a decade.

Jason gazes down between us, watching as he plunges into me. I'll never forget this look on his face, dark brows pinched together, a wild desire darkening his eyes, lips parted as he groans with each thrust.

"You're ours," Kourtney whispers in my ear. "We're forever. We're going to love you and care for you, and make you feel so good for the rest of our lives, baby."

Hearing her talk like this spurs me on, and I let out a loud moan as my hips buck up to match Jason's rhythm.

Jason hikes up one of my legs, tossing it over his shoulder. He claims my mouth, swallowing my cries as he drives himself even deeper inside me.

Memories from our past flash through my mind. All the times the three of us stayed up late watching movies in Jason's bed in high school; the times we laughed until we cried; the way Kourtney curled up in my arms when she'd fell asleep in college.

Kourtney's right.

We *are* forever.

We always have been.

I break apart, coming hard, my body at the mercy of the two people I love most in this world.

"That's it, *kókkino*. Come for us." Jason pounds into me, each thrust deliberate, like he's trying to make sure that I'll never forget the feel of him inside me.

My body shakes, one hand holding onto Jason's shoulder while the other reaches behind me to grip the back of Kourtney's head. I scream their names, as if I'm claiming them to the universe, letting everyone know that they're mine.

And I'm theirs.

KOURTNEY

“THIS PLACE IS BEAUTIFUL.”

I grin as I gaze out at the Kittatinny mountain range from our balcony. “Are you happy with your surprise now?”

“Very happy.” Celeste slips her hands around my waist from behind me. “I can’t believe you remembered that I’ve wanted to come here since high school.”

“Of course I remember.” I lean my head back against Celeste’s shoulder. “Your parents promised to take you to Crystal Springs with them, and you were so excited, you talked about it for two weeks straight.”

“But of course they cancelled at the last second because my father had a business meeting.” She heaves a sigh. “I wonder how many times he lied about having a business meeting so they could go on vacation without me.”

I spin around in her arms and settle my hands at the back of her neck, looking into her eyes. “They missed out on everything you are, and I feel sorry for them that they don’t get to know you.”

“Don’t waste a second of your time on them.” Celeste touches her lips to mine, dancing her fingertips down my spine. “We have more important things to focus on.”

I smile against her mouth. “We don’t have time for those things right now. We have dinner reservations in ten minutes.”

She squeezes my ass. “I can make you come in five.”

I push her away despite the fact that wetness pools between my legs. “It’s on the other side of the lodge, so we have to get changed and leave now.”

Celeste pouts as she drags herself over to her suitcase on the bed. “Fine, but I’m fucking you in that hot tub later.”

“You can count on that.”

Jason is at an away game for the weekend, so I decided to surprise Celeste with an impromptu trip just the two of us. After the fight with my parents, and the awkwardness of having to see my father at work all week, I needed this getaway as much as I wanted to do this for Celeste.

We hold hands as we make our way over to the restaurant, and keep our fingers laced on the table once we’re seated inside. Now that my parents know the truth about us, it feels good to not have to hide our relationship. I’m an affectionate person, and I want to be able to touch and kiss Celeste whenever I want, without the worry of being caught, as if we’re doing something wrong.

“This is the best seat in the house.” Celeste’s eyes widen as she sets her gaze out the floor-to-ceiling window beside our table.

“I called ahead and asked for this so we can watch the sun as it sets behind the mountains.” I smile. “Remember when we used to watch sunsets at the beach in high school?”

“Yes, because you insisted that the moon gave us special powers.”

“It doesn’t give us *powers*.” I wave her off. “The full moon gives off healing energy. It’s a scientific fact. Google it.”

Celeste purses her lips. “You also liked to blame everything you said on Mercury being in retrograde.”

“Mercury in retrograde is totally a real thing.” I gasp. “Oh my god, do you remember when we snuck into the school gym because we thought it was haunted?”

Amusement sparkles in her eyes. “We screamed so loud when Jason

jumped out of the custodian's closet. I can't believe we didn't get caught."

"I still don't know how he knew about our plan. We didn't tell him we were sneaking into the school because he would've tried to stop us."

Celeste chews on her bottom lip. "I might've tipped him off."

My mouth drops open. "It was you? But why?"

"Because I wanted him to scare the shit out of you."

"But he scared you too."

She hikes a shoulder. "It was worth it to see the look of sheer horror on your face."

I cough out a laugh. "Rude."

The candle between us illuminates her face in a soft glow. "I would've gone along with any crazy plan you had because I couldn't tell you *no*. I loved seeing you happy."

"Being with you made me happy. Still does."

"Can you believe we're here, after all this time?"

My thumb smooths back and forth over the top of her hand. "It's like a dream. It doesn't seem real."

"I'm so proud of you, Kourt. You're taking control of your life and going after the things you want."

"I wish it didn't take me so long to get to this point." I shake my head. "I think about all the time I wasted, breaking up with Jason and letting you go to Seattle. I was so scared, I let the people I love walk right out of my life."

Celeste squeezes my hand. "Don't think about that now. There's no point in looking back and wishing you could change the past. Everything worked out the way it was supposed to. Everything led us back to each other. So, let's just enjoy what we have right now."

I lift her hand brush my lips against her fingers. "I love you."

"I love you too."

After the waiter comes and takes our orders, we sip on our cocktails and relax as we watch the sun dip behind the mountains.

“Have you talked to Marc about your apartment?” I ask.

“He said there are a few people coming to look at it this weekend. If he finds a new renter, then I can break the lease agreement.” She sets her martini glass on the table. “I can’t wait to have access to your shower and bath tub any time I want.”

“Oh, is *that* the reason you’re so excited about moving in with us?”

She grins. “Among other things.”

My gaze travels to an older couple sitting a few tables down. The woman nods her head in our direction, and her husband turns to look over his shoulder.

My initial instinct is to pull back my hand and stop showing Celeste affection. But I resist the urge. We’re not doing anything wrong.

“What’s wrong?” Celeste glances to her right to follow my line of vision.

“That couple is staring at us.”

Celeste rolls her eyes. “Let them. They’re just jealous they haven’t gotten laid since the nineteenth century.”

My shoulders shake as I laugh. “Imagine if Jason were here?”

“They’d call all their friends when they got home: *The gays are taking over New Jersey!*”

The smile fades from my face as I steal another glance at the couple. “Do you think it’ll always be this way?”

“I don’t know. I think there might always be people in the world who don’t support our love. It’s easier to stay close-minded than it is to go against everything they’ve been raised to believe.” Celeste leans forward and brings my attention back to her. “What matters is that you don’t let them steal your happiness.”

I smile at that.

Because with Jason and Celeste by my side, nothing could take my happiness away.

CELESTE

“AND WHO IS this ravishing beauty you’ve been hiding from me?”

Erika rolls her eyes as she smiles. “You must be McKinley.”

He grins and opens his arms wide. “The one and only.”

I raise my champagne flute. “Thank God for that.”

He feigns offense and clutches his chest. “Words hurt, Celeste.”

I smile. “Only if you let them, Mac.”

“I’ll cheers to that.” Cassidy’s friend, Aarya, clinks her glass against mine. “I’m so glad you’re here. It’s so boring when I’m the only single friend at these parties.”

“You’re not here with Krum cake?” I nod my chin in Krumkachova’s direction. “What’s going on there?”

“Nothing is going on.” Aarya downs half of her glass like it’s a shot. “Why does everyone keep asking me that?”

“Oh, I don’t know. Maybe because the captain of the hockey team made a scene on public television when you took off his jersey at a game and wouldn’t put it back on.”

Aarya curls her top lip. “That was months ago. Are we not over that?”

“I don’t think he is.” McKinley chuckles as he glances at his teammate. “I’m surprised you’re not into him though. He’s Alexander Krumkachova. Women throw themselves at him.”

“I throw myself at no man.” Aarya plants her hand on her hip. “I don’t care who he is or what he’s the captain of.”

“What about you, Erika?” McKinley nudges her with his elbow. “What are your thoughts on the male species?”

“Considering I used to be one before I changed out my hardware, I don’t think they’re half-bad.”

I throw my head back as I laugh. “That’s the perfect answer.”

Erika shrugs as she gazes up at McKinley. “And for the record, I think the right man is worth throwing yourself at.”

He swings his arm around her shoulders, and pulls her close to his side. “Now *that’s* the perfect answer.”

I grin and tug Aarya’s elbow to give them some privacy. “Looks like it’s just the two of us tonight.”

“You sure about that?” she asks, following my line of vision toward Kourtney and Jason on the other side of the room. “Because your eyes say otherwise.”

My head snaps over to Aarya. “What? Oh, no. I was just making sure they didn’t need any help.”

“Uh-huh. Wanna try that again with a little more conviction?”

I roll my lips between my teeth. “Listen, we’re going to need some more alcohol before we have this conversation.”

“Well, what are we waiting for?” She lifts the jug of sangria from the counter and pours two full glasses before handing one to me. “Let’s get Christmas wasted.”

Kourtney scurries over to us. “Did I hear someone say wasted?”

I give her my glass. “Here, take mine.”

Her eyes dart around the room like a scared animal as her shaky hand wraps around the glass.

I smooth my palm down her back. “Hey, it’s okay. Take a deep breath.”

The poor thing has been a nervous wreck all day leading up to this party.

She plans on telling all of our friends about the three of us and our relationship. I don't think she'd be this nervous if her father hadn't reacted the way he did over the news, but I've tried to explain to her that not everyone will have the same response.

Aarya tilts her head. "What's wrong, Kourt?"

"I, uh...I have to..."

She's not going to be able to get through this. I need to do something before my best friend has a full-blown panic attack at our Christmas dinner.

I lift a nearby knife and clink it against my glass. "Hey, everyone. Can I have your attention for a minute?"

Kourtney tugs on my elbow. "Abort. Abort. I can't do this."

"Yes, you can." Jason stands behind her and wraps his arms around her waist, whispering in her ear. "We've got you."

With everyone's eyes on me, I clear my throat and lift my glass above my head. "I wanted to take a minute to thank you all for coming here today. Everyone in this room is important to us, and it means a lot to be able to celebrate this holiday together."

A few of Jason's teammates whistle and cheer.

"We also have something that we'd like to tell you." I pause, glancing at Kourtney and Jason.

I'm not good with my words, but I think the best way to do this is to rip it off like a band aid.

Fuck it.

"Kourtney, Jason, and I have been fucking for the last month, and now we're in a relationship together. So, Merry Christmas everyone."

"Jesus," Jason mutters.

And then the room erupts in chatter.

"What?"

"What does this mean?"

"You're fucking Kourtney's husband?"

“How did this happen?”

But the loudest voice of all comes from Cassidy. “I knew it!”

Trenton looks down at his wife. “What do you mean?”

She pumps a triumphant fist in the air. “I knew there was something going on between you three. Oh my God, this is fantastic news.” She rushes over to me and pulls me into an embrace. Then she grabs Kourtney’s wrist and yanks her into our hug. “I’m so happy for you guys. You’re beautiful together.”

Kourtney pulls away, eyes wide. “You’re happy for us?”

“Of course I’m happy.” Cassidy’s eyes bounce from Kourtney to me. “I thought there was something going on between you two for a while, but I chalked it up to you being so close. Then I saw the way Jason looked at you when you wore his jersey to the game that night, and I felt it in my gut. It was the same way Trent looked at me the first time he saw me wearing his number.”

Kourtney’s big brown eyes well with tears as she glances around the room. “I know this isn’t typical, but the three of us are in love. We’ve known each other since we were kids and I think, on some level, we loved each other then too.”

Jason slips his hand inside mine. “Our commitment to each other isn’t recognized by the state, or any, for that matter, but I hope this team can recognize us regardless.”

Krumkachova is the first one to walk over and clap Jason on the back. “We support you, brother. It’s not even a question.”

Erika squeezes through the team surrounding us and hugs Kourtney. “I’m so proud of you, baby girl.”

Kourtney sniffles as she pulls back and wipes her cheeks with the backs of her hands. “I wish my parents would’ve had this same reaction.”

“They’ll come around one day.” I stroke her silky hair. “And if they don’t, just remember all the love you have in this room.”

Jason beams as he glances down at Kourtney before addressing our friends. “There’s one more thing we’d like to tell you. My incredible wife has started her own business.”

The room quiets down again, and Kourtney tucks a strand of hair behind her ear. “As you know, I’ve been working for my parents’ catering business for a while. But I’ve had a dream to create a dating website unlike any other out there. It’s a subscription-based platform where people can buy and sell adult content—videos, pictures, live streams—while getting matched with people who have the same sexual interests.”

Judging by everyone’s open-mouthed stares, they seem more shocked by this than the whole threesome thing.

McKinley whips out his phone. “What’s the name of the website?”

Everyone laughs and Jason shakes his head. “It’s called *FreeMe*.”

McKinley’s thumbs fly across his phone as he searches for the site, and Aarya glances over his shoulder to see as she searches for it on her phone.

Krumkachova leans against the counter. “Does Coach know about the three of you?”

Jason shakes his head. “I haven’t told him yet. Not sure how he’s going to want to handle it if this goes public.”

“Look at what happened with Wellington,” Trenton says, referring to a gay NHL player we’re all familiar with. “He came out and the world embraced him.”

“Coming out is a little different than being in a threesome.” Jason rubs the back of his neck. “And you of all people know what it’s like when there’s a scandal in the tabloids.”

“I do, but I got through it.” Trenton squeezes his shoulder. “With the help of my team.”

Pride swells in my chest. Trenton is right. Regardless of what the world says about us, we have the support of our team—our friends.

It won’t be easy, but we’ll be together.

After everyone leaves, I help Jason and Kourtney clean up the kitchen and then we plop on the couch to relax.

“How do you feel, Kourt?” I pull her foot onto my lap and dig my thumbs into her heel. “Everything is out in the open now. No more secrets. No more sneaking around.”

“A weight has definitely been lifted off my shoulders.” She glances at Jason who’s snuggled behind her. “I’m a bit nervous about the rest of the world finding out. The paparazzi, the tabloids. All of our privacy will go right out the window.”

“Only for a little while.” Jason presses a kiss to the top of her head. “Until the next scandal to pull everyone’s attention.”

“I’m just glad we didn’t tell them that we’ve been posting on *FreeMe*.” Kourtney shudders. “You know McKinley would watch every one of our videos.”

I cringe as I cough out a laugh. “He totally would.”

Jason chuckles. “I agree. I think it’s best that we keep that dirty little secret to ourselves.”

I take Kourtney’s other foot and start massaging. “Speaking of McKinley, it looks like he and Erika hit it off.”

Kourtney hums. “They were adorable together. I hope he’s good to her.”

“He’s a good guy deep down,” Jason says. “He has a big heart.”

“Krum cake is a good guy too.” I arch a brow. “I can’t figure out why Aarya pushes him away.”

Jason and Kourtney shoot me blatant stares.

My head jerks back. “What? I don’t push people away.”

They blink.

I roll my eyes and wave a dismissive hand. “Whatever.”

Jason grins as he sits up and eases out from under Kourtney. “It’s

midnight. You know what that means.”

Kourtney’s eyes light up. “Present time!”

I shake my head. “What are you, five?”

She bounces on the couch cushion as Jason crouches down by the tree. “It’s our tradition. We exchange presents at midnight on Christmas.”

I flash Jason a devilish grin. “Jay, why don’t you take off your shirt and put on that Santa hat over there? Give us a little Christmas strip tease.”

He laughs as he returns to the couch with a small box in his hand. “Open your present first. Then we’ll talk about a strip tease.”

My eyebrows shoot up. “My present? You didn’t have to get me anything.”

He places the box in my lap. “It’s from the both of us.”

My eyes flick between the two of them before I reach for the present. I tear at the corner of the shiny red wrapping paper and peel it away, revealing a black velvet box underneath.

I shake my head as I stare down at the box. “Whatever’s inside this, I can assure you: You did not have to spend your money on me. I don’t need jewelry or anything fancy. You should know that by now.”

Kourtney offers me a soft smile. “Just open it.”

I lift the top, and my mouth falls open. “What is this?”

Jason leans forward and plucks the two rings out of the box, holding up the ring with the thin band and the giant diamond sitting on top of it. “This one is your engagement ring. I picked it out for you, the same way I picked out Kourtney’s.”

“And this one...” Kourtney takes the band from Jason and holds it up. “Is your wedding band. It matches the one Jason and I wear.”

“But why?” Emotion clogs my throat as I try to speak. “Why would you spend all this money on me? You know we can’t get married.”

Kourtney and Jason slide off the couch and each of them gets down on one knee in front of me.

“We might not be able to get married by law, but we’re married in our hearts.” A tear rolls down Kourtney’s cheek. “You are a part of us. These rings symbolize that you belong to us, and we belong to you.”

“We’re committed to you, *kókkino*. This is more than friends with benefits. This is more than some agreement for a website. This is forever.” Jason takes my left hand and hovers the ring in front of my ring finger. “Will you marry us?”

Tears blur my vision as I choke out a sob. “Yes.”

He slides the ring onto my finger, and then Kourtney pushes the band over top of it. I throw my arms around them and tackle them onto the floor.

“Now you can stop referring to me as your best friend’s husband.” Jason claims my mouth and sucks on my bottom lip. “Call me *your* husband.”

Kourtney pins me on the floor and straddles me, rolling her hips against me as she tears her shirt over her head. “And call me *your wife*.”

The truth is, it doesn’t matter what you call it.

Husband. Boss Man. Best friend.

Either way, they’re mine.

My family.

JASON

“YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, COACH?”

Coach waves me into his office. “Come in, Jason. Close the door behind you.”

I step into his office but my feet falter when I spot our General Manager sitting in one of the chairs in front of Coach’s desk.

“Mr. Fitzgerald.” My eyes dart from Coach to the GM as I step into the room. “It’s nice to see you, sir.”

Randy Fitzgerald stands and clasps my hand. “Happy New Year.”

“Happy New Year.” Nerves trickle into my stomach as I take the seat beside him. “What can I do for you both?”

Coach lets out a long sigh and slides a manila envelope across his desk. “Mr. Fitzgerald received in interesting package in the mail over the weekend.”

My eyebrows pinch together as I stare down at the envelope. “Okay...”

Fitzgerald takes the envelope and pulls out a single sheet of paper. “It’s a letter from an anonymous person stating that you, your wife, and another woman have been having sex online in exchange for money.”

My stomach bottoms out.

Fuck.

He pulls out a flash drive from the envelope next. “This person was also

kind enough to send me a file containing some explicit videos from the website.”

“We haven’t watched them,” Coach says. “But Mr. Fitzgerald’s lawyer was able to confirm that it looks a lot like you in those videos.”

I lift my chin and look him in the eyes. “Yes, sir. It’s me, and this person’s claims are true.”

Coach scrubs his hands over his face. “What the hell were you thinking, Jason? Why would you be so careless as to post your personal life on the internet?”

“My wife…” I clear my throat and start again, trying to find the best way to explain this. “My wife built a website that’s like a dating app and a livestream service all in one. We were trying to drive traffic to the website, and we had a little fun with it. We wore masks and tried to make it as discreet as possible.”

Let’s face it, athletes have gotten into some stupid shit over the years. Whether it’s drunk college football players, or pro baseball hall of famers. This isn’t the first time explicit pictures or videos have ended up on the internet, and it won’t be the last. What Kourtney, Celeste and I did was consensual and legal. Sure, it’ll be a shitstorm with the press for a while, but it shouldn’t be cause for more than an apology and a slap on my wrist.

“Do you and your wife have sex with other women regularly?” Fitzgerald asks. “Did you have this other woman sign an NDA?”

“The woman in the videos is in a relationship with me and my wife.” I shift in my seat and sit up tall. “We’re together, the three of us.”

“Look, son. I don’t care what my athletes do in their personal lives—as long as they keep it private. But you broadcasted it on the internet.” Fitzgerald rests his ankle on his opposite knee. “And now, a lot of people are going to have a lot to say about it.”

I nod. “I understand. I knew going into this that there could be repercussions for my actions. I’m prepared to make a statement, and do

whatever else is necessary to smooth this over.”

Coach folds his hands on the desk as he leans onto his elbows. “It’s not going to be that simple, Jay.”

My chin jerks back. “What do you mean?”

Coach looks at Fitzgerald like he’s volleying my question to him.

“The person who sent this anonymous tip threatened to send this information to a reporter in exchange for money.” Fitzgerald turns to face me head-on. “While we’re not going to negotiate with the demand, we’ve decided to trade you before word gets out.”

“What?” I can’t help the boom of my voice.

Coach keeps his gaze pointed down at his desk.

“The NHL is a business, Jason, and we have to do what’s in the best interest of the business.” Fitzgerald adjusts his tie. “We think California will be better able to field this kind of headline.”

“California?” I feel like a fucking parrot repeating him, but I’m in shock and can’t form full sentences. “What do you mean *this kind of headline*?”

“Polyamory, Jay.” Coach spells it out for me.

Fitzgerald continues. “This team doesn’t want to send the message that we condone this kind of behavior, and if we keep you on the team, that’s the message we’ll be sending.”

This kind of behavior. “We’re in love, for fuck’s sake. We’re not hurting anybody.”

“No, but you made this public and now you have to deal with the ramifications.” Fitzgerald heaves a sigh. “You’re a public figure. You represent this team. When a player’s actions no longer support the vision for this team, then he gets traded. You know how it works.”

“My *actions* have supported this team for years. Look at my stats.” My eyes bounce between the two of them. “It’s a mistake to trade me.”

Coach rubs the back of his neck, once again biting his tongue and letting Fitzgerald field my outrage. His hands are tied, and I don’t blame him for his

silence.

“The team in California already has a gay player. They’re more open about this stuff. I think it’ll be a better fit for you in your situation.”

Is this guy fucking serious? “Let me get this straight: You’re worried about the team’s image because I’m in a consensual relationship with two adult women, so you’re trading me—one of your best players—to make a show of denouncing the LGBTQ+ community?”

“We’re not denouncing the gay community.” Fitzgerald waves me off as if I didn’t restate exactly what he just said. “We’re simply—”

“We’re getting the first-round draft pick in exchange for you,” Coach blurts out. “California has wanted you for the last couple of years, and they’re down a defenseman. Your sex tape scandal just made it that much easier for the team to let you go.”

They’d rather take their chances with a rookie than deal with the press. Meanwhile, I have to move my wives across the country, away from our home.

I jab my finger in the air. “This is bullshit.”

“That’s the way it goes in a trade, son.” Fitzgerald tucks the letter back into the envelope and slides the flash drive inside. “None of this would be happening if you hadn’t posted what you did on the internet. Hopefully, you learn a valuable lesson about your behavior when you’re representing a professional sports team.”

“No, none of this would be happening if the rich men who run this industry weren’t a bunch of single-minded, discriminatory, hateful pricks.”

I’m yelling now, and I can’t stop myself from spewing my frustration onto the men in front of me.

“That’s enough, Jason.” Coach rises from his chair. “You still have a career to think about. Why don’t you take the day and let this sink in.”

Fitzgerald nods. “We can continue this conversation after you’ve calmed down so we can discuss the logistics.”

I snatch the envelope from Fitzgerald and dangle it in the air between us. “What’s on this file is nothing more than three people in love. It’s not a scandal. It’s not a disgrace to the team. It’s love and it’s beautiful, and I refuse to be ashamed of it.”

I toss it onto the desk and storm out of Coach’s office.

And I barrel right into my teammates.

“What’s going on?” Krumkachova asks.

“They’re trading me because someone found out about my relationship with Kourtney and Celeste.”

Trenton’s head jerks back. “They’re trading you over *that*?”

“The fuck they are.” McKinley shoves past me and storms into Coach’s office.

Trenton and Krumkachova follow.

I appreciate their support, but it’s no use. The owner of our team will get what he wants. Fitzgerald was right: The NHL is a business, and I am nothing more than a transaction to them.

No matter how many years this team has been my family, it’s time to say goodbye.

“This is all my fault.”

I cup Kourtney’s face and lift her watery eyes to mine. “None of this is your fault.”

“This wouldn’t be happening if it weren’t for my idea with the website.” She shakes her head. “We should’ve cut out our faces totally. It was foolish to think the masks would hide our identities.”

“Stop blaming yourself, baby.” I swipe a tear from her cheek with my thumb. “Sure, I should’ve been more careful being that I’m in the public eye. But I don’t regret what we did, and I wouldn’t change a thing. And I won’t

let you regret creating this website and following your dreams.”

“But you love this team.” Her bottom lip trembles. “Now, you’re being forced to leave your friends and your home.”

“I could’ve been traded at any time in my career. You know this. It’s a risk we take as pro athletes. The people in charge play us like pawns.” I suck in a deep breath. “I know it sucks having to uproot our lives for this, but as long as I have the both of you with me, it doesn’t matter. Nothing does.”

Kourtney glances at the bedroom door. “Celeste has been quiet all night. She’s never quiet. What do you think is going on inside her head?”

“Only one way to find out.” I press a kiss to her forehead. “Come on.”

Kourtney takes my hand as we slip out of bed and pad down the hall.

Celeste asked if she could use my office two hours ago, and we haven’t heard from her since.

I tap my knuckles against my office door and peek my head into the room. “Can we come in?”

“Of course.” Celeste barely looks up from her laptop, her fingers flying across the keyboard.

“What are you doing?” Kourtney takes tentative steps toward the desk. “You haven’t said more than two words since Jason got home earlier. Are you...are you upset about moving to California?”

“Nope.” Celeste’s phone dings, and she glances at it before returning her attention to the computer.

Unease trickles into my gut.

Please don’t push us away.

Kourtney’s head tilts. “So, you’re okay with what’s happening right now?”

Celeste snorts. “Fuck no.”

Kourtney plants her hands on her hips. “Then what’s going on with you?”

“I’m trying to fix this.”

“Look at me, kókkino.” I spin her chair to face me, forcing her eyes and

hands off the electronics. “There is no fixing this. Fitzgerald made it crystal clear. They don’t want me on the team when our story goes public.”

“Oh, boss man.” Celeste crosses her legs, rubbing her foot against the inside of my leg. “You have such little faith in me.”

Kourtney scoots closer to her and squints at the laptop. “What are you doing?”

A slow smile stretches across Celeste’s face. “You can take the girl out of the PR agent, but you can’t take the PR agent out of the girl.” Her blue eyes meet mine. “Do you trust me?”

I nod once. “With everything I have.”

“Then let me handle this right now, and trust me when I say: I’m fixing this.”

For a moment, I feel bad for Fitzgerald and anyone else standing in Celeste’s way.

My wife is coming for them.

JASON

“WHOSE PHONE KEEPS BUZZING?”

“I don’t know.” Kourtney scrunches her nose as she blinks through the sleepy fog and reaches for her phone on the nightstand. “Shit, it’s mine.”

I sit up straight. “Is everything okay?”

“I have all these notifications from the website.” She scrolls through the notifications. “Holy shit.”

Celeste buries her head under the pillow. “I’m trying to sleep over here.”

I lean over her and crane my neck to see her phone. “What’s going on?”

Her hand clamps over my mouth. “Baby, you have to see this.”

I take her phone, and my eyes go wide. “Is that...”

“Click on the other video underneath it.”

My lips part. “No fucking way.”

Kourtney rips the pillow off Celeste’s head. “This is what you were doing last night?”

“Uh-huh. Now reward me by letting me sleep.”

“Trenton and Cassidy are on here too.” I tilt the phone so Kourtney can see it. “The whole fucking team is on here.”

Tears spring into her eyes. “Celeste, how did you convince them to do this?”

She groans as she pushes herself off the mattress and leans back against

the headboard. “I didn’t have to convince them of anything. I told them about my idea and they jumped at the chance.”

“This is fucking genius,” Kourtney murmurs.

Several of the Goldfinches made a video of themselves either jerking off or having sex with their significant others, and then posted it on *FreeMe*. Some of them edited out their faces and labeled the video with their real names, while others looked straight into the camera.

They jeopardized their careers, and posted something so vulnerable they’ll never be able to take it back for the rest of their lives. Their families, their friends...everyone will know about it. It’ll be on the internet forever.

“What’s Fitzgerald going to do now?” Celeste asks. “Trade half the damn team?”

I shake my head. “They shouldn’t have done this. They’re going to be in so much trouble.” My eyes flick to Kourtney. “Can you delete these videos? Do you have the ability to do that since it’s your website?”

“I’m *not* deleting the videos.” Her eyebrows collapse. “Your friends are making a stand here, babe. This is amazing.”

“This is foolish.” I snatch my own phone off the nightstand. “Maybe nobody has seen it yet. Maybe I can stop this from getting out.”

But my phone buzzes in my hand with the name *Coach* illuminating the screen.

“Fuck.” I pinch the bridge of my nose before swiping my thumb to answer the call. “Yeah, Coach.”

“Fitzgerald is calling an emergency team meeting. Be at my office ten o’clock sharp.”

I squeeze my eyes shut. “Yes, sir.”

Coach hangs up before I can say anything else.

I toss my phone onto the comforter and stare down at it. “Team meeting at ten.”

Celeste huffs out a laugh. “Fitzgerald is probably shitting his pants as we

speak.”

“It’s going to be okay, babe.” Kourtney smooths her hand down my arm. “Let your team stand with you. They could’ve chosen not to post a video. They could’ve chosen to sit in silence while you got traded. But they didn’t. They did this for you.”

For me.

They did this *for me*.

“I can’t let them do this. They’re not thinking this through.”

“It’s okay to not be in control of this one, boss man. We’ve got you.” Celeste squeezes my leg. “You’ve always been in my corner. It’s my turn to return the favor.”

I run my knuckles along her cheek. “With you in my corner, I could never lose.”

A smile blooms across her face, and it takes all my strength not to kiss her senseless and ravish both of my wives right here and now.

But I’ve got an important meeting to get to first.

I arch a brow. “Got any more surprises up your sleeve, *kókkino*?”

She grimaces. “Yes.”

I suck in a long inhale and hold my breath for a few seconds before blowing it out. “All right, let’s hear it.”

“I may have texted a few of my journalist friends.” She takes my phone and types something into the browser. “Fitzgerald was so set on keeping our relationship a secret until you got traded, so I figured why not get the story out there now while you’re still a Goldfinch?”

Kourtney leans in and her eyebrows jump. “Oh, boy.”

“Your parents already know about us.” Celeste clasps Kourtney’s hand. “Now the world is going to know about us too.”

“I don’t want to hide anymore.” Kourtney’s big brown eyes lock with mine. “I’m not ashamed of us.”

My heart swells in my chest. “Neither am I, baby.”

Celeste beams. “So then let’s go tell Fitzgerald to eat a bag of dicks.”
I shake my head. “You are *not* coming to this meeting.”

The guys are waiting for me outside the stadium before the meeting.

I push my sunglasses onto my forehead. “Well, I’ve seen entirely too much of you all this morning.”

McKinley grins. “Don’t act like you didn’t watch my whole video.”

“I didn’t.” I cringe. “There was only so much of your pasty-white ass I could take.”

He chuckles as he nudges Trenton. “I see your girl has the moves to back up all the raunchy shit she writes in her romance books.”

If looks could kill, pretty sure Trenton would strike McKinley dead where he stands. “I’m going to pretend you didn’t just say that so I don’t have to rip out both of your eyeballs.”

Krumkachova places his hand on McKinley’s shoulder to stop him from whatever he’s about to say. “We need to be prepared for what we’re about to walk into in this meeting.”

My stomach ties itself in knots. “If you delete your videos and apologize, I think you guys should be fine. Chalk it up to sticking up for your friend. Everyone will understand that.”

“Apologize?” McKinley shakes his head. “Fuck that. We’re going in there guns blazing.”

“You’re making a mistake. Those videos will follow you for the rest of your life. What were you thinking?”

“Players get traded all the time. It’s the name of the game.” Krumkachova shoves his hands in his pockets. “But to trade you because he doesn’t support your polyamorous relationship? That’s what’s fucked up here.”

“You’re their captain,” I say. “You need to think long-term, and lead your

team—not make rash decisions based on one player.”

“I *am* leading my team. We’re going to stand with you, and everyone else that this sport has shunned.” He lifts his chin. “And the captain goes down with his ship.”

Trenton nods. “Think about all the guys we’ve met along the years. How many of them were gay and had to hide it? Or how many black men skated alongside us, but were treated as less than? Or how willing the administration is to cover up and condone players sexually assaulting women, yet they won’t condone a healthy relationship like yours? No one talks about the discrimination and inequality in this sport, and I think it’s about time we started.”

McKinley claps me on the back. “Let’s go make some fucking noise.”

With my team behind me, it feels like I’m floating into Coach’s office. Even Fitzgerald’s unimpressed glare can’t shake me now.

“Well, I’m sure you boys are all pleased with yourselves,” Coach begins. We all look to one another and shrug.

Fitzgerald presses his lips into a thin line. “This was a foolish, immature way to react to a simple trade. You’re all over the news. You’ve embarrassed yourselves, your team, this game, and your families.”

“You’re the only one who’s embarrassed here,” Krumkachova speaks up first. “So, spare us the lecture on how we *should* be feeling. We know exactly what we’ve done, and we chose to do it so we can make a statement.”

“And what statement is that?” Fitzgerald tilts his head. “Because your all you did was show the world that hockey players behave like perverted frat boys. You made a mockery of this sport.”

“People like you make a mockery of this sport.” McKinley stabs the air with his finger. “What we do in our private lives should have no effect on our careers, as long as it’s legal, and who we choose to fuck shouldn’t matter as long as it’s consensual.”

“You’re hockey players, not porn stars,” Fitzgerald spits. “You have no

place on a filthy website like that.”

I lean forward in my chair. “Watch your mouth when you’re talking about my wife’s website. You don’t know the first thing about what that website is doing for the people who need it.”

Trenton slides his phone across the table. “You want to talk about what we did? Take a look. Star quarterback Troy Manahan just released a statement that he’s gay.”

McKinley holds up his phone. “David Kushev—one of the best hockey players to ever live—said he’s bisexual, and was made to hide it for years during his career.”

My phone buzzes with text after text from Celeste as countless pro athletes come out to the world in support of what’s happening with our team.

“It’s ignorant and discriminatory to exile players when they don’t fit into your old-fashioned mold,” I say. “I think you’re about to learn that the world is more tolerant of diversity, and less tolerant of people like you.”

Fitzgerald glances at Coach. “This team is clearly lacking leadership. Maybe you’re part of the problem here.”

Coach’s face reddens. “This is exactly the kind of leadership I’ve exemplified. To stick together, to think and move as one. To support each other, on and off the ice.”

Fitzgerald’s eyebrows shoot up. “You’re condoning this insanity?”

“No, I’m not condoning it.” Coach shoots us a glare and arches a brow. “And I think you’re all nuts for putting your dicks all over the internet.” He swings his gaze back to Fitzgerald. “But I also don’t stand by your decision to trade one of our best players because he’s in a relationship *you* don’t approve of.”

“Shit,” I mutter. “Coach, you don’t need to stick out your neck for—”

Coach holds up his palm to silence me. “I’ve bitten my tongue so many times in this position, I’m amazed that I have anything left in my mouth. I’ve watched good men, good players, get the short end of the stick because of a

narrow-minded decision from the higher-ups, and for what? Money and image.” Coach jerks his thumb at us from across the conference table. “These boys are the heart and soul of this team. Without them, we have nothing. And if you don’t open your mind and hear what they’re saying, we’re going to lose them.”

Krumkachova sits up and squares his shoulders. “So, you can keep Jason on our team, or you won’t have a team left to manage.”

A thick vein bulges out of Fitzgerald’s left temple as his eyes flick around the table. “You’re willing to throw away your careers for this? For him?”

“We’re not throwing away our careers.” I lift my chin. “We’re setting the standard for the change we want to see in the sports world.”

Fitzgerald chokes out a laugh. “As if this will change anything.”

“We’re counting on it,” Trenton says.

Coach leans back in his seat and folds his hands on the table. “Now, if you’re ready to move forward, the team has a list of demands, as well as a plan on how we’re going to handle this in the media.”

My head whips to him. “Demands?”

He shoots me a wink. “Your wife is one hell of a PR agent.”

Celeste.

My wife.

Warmth explodes in my chest, spreading over me and soothing every nerve, every bone, every ache in my body.

Some people go their entire lives without finding true love, and here I am having found it twice.

Coach reads the email Celeste must’ve sent him late last night, and my head spins. How she managed to think of everything in such a short amount of time blows my mind and makes my dick hard at the same time. She’s a force to be reckoned with. This is her calling. It’s what she’s good at. And while she enjoys helping Kourtney run her website, I think she’s missing that spark of joy she had when she was working in public relations.

And maybe I can help her with that.

KOURTNEY

JASON and the rest of the Goldfinches have a press conference today.

They opted to hold it outside the Hudson Pride Center—an LGBTQ+ social services center—right on John F. Kennedy Boulevard. Celeste set the whole thing up, her first official event as the team’s new PR manager.

She preferred *manager* over *agent*, of course.

She’s been running interference for the team since our news came out, and spinning every awful thing people said about us into a positive light. She’s in her element, working under pressure and dealing with the media. It’s incredible to watch.

Throngs of people crowd the street in support, bundled up in scarves and gloves after the first snowfall of the new year. They hold rainbow-colored signs and cheer for each of the players as they get out of their SUVs and take their place at the podium.

There are people shouting obscenities at them too, of course. But the security team is in place, keeping them at a safe distance so they don’t put a damper on today’s message.

The crowd goes wild as my husband steps up to the microphone first. His green eyes find mine, and he reaches out his hands, gesturing for Celeste and I to stand beside him.

“This wasn’t part of the plan,” Celeste whispers as a police officer helps

us weave through the street.

“I think he’s nervous,” I whisper back.

When we reach Jason, he laces his fingers with ours, each of us on either side of him. His chin lifts, his chest puffs out, and he stands a little taller with us by his side.

“I want to thank everyone for being here with us today, and for the incredible outpouring of support we’ve received since the news about the three of us came out.” Jason clears his throat. “I didn’t think twice about falling in love with two women, the same way I didn’t think it had the potential to kick me off my team. My heart and mind are open to love of all kinds, regardless of what it looks like. I feel the same way about hockey. Athletes should be diverse. That’s what makes sports so amazing. Different people from all walks of life show up with the most incredible talent and give it their all. Gender shouldn’t matter. Race shouldn’t matter. Sexual orientation shouldn’t matter. What matters is that we get to play the sport we were born to play.

“I’m the luckiest man alive, and not because of some sexist, misogynistic belief over the fact that I get to have two women at once. I love Kourtney and Celeste because they’re the most loving, caring, smart, beautiful souls I’ve ever known—and that’s what makes me lucky. I would’ve fallen for them regardless of the bodies they were in, or the genders they identify with, because *that’s* what true love is all about. Love is the connection, not the gender.”

Everyone cheers, and as I gaze out amongst the people standing before us, it hits me.

I’m standing here as a bisexual woman in front of camera crews and reporters and cell phones recording this for the world to see.

I’m standing here, proud to be in a relationship with Jason and Celeste.

I’m standing here as my true self for the first time in my life.

And I don’t feel scared or ashamed of what the world is going to think,

because there's a place for me in this community. Regardless of all the hateful bigots, of all the people who will judge me or misunderstand me, I'm choosing to focus on the people who support me.

People like Erika, who's beaming up at me in the front row right now, and Jason's teammates standing behind us.

Maybe my parents will never come around. Maybe I've lost them for good. And that deeply saddens me. But I choose to surround myself with the people who love me unconditionally.

Life is about choices.

We can choose to open our minds and educate ourselves...or we can choose to stay rooted in the beliefs we've been fed all our lives. And that choice isn't always easy to make. But if we fight hard enough, we can make a change for the better.

And that's what today's press conference is about.

Jason delivers an incredible speech from his heart, and several other athletes take the podium after him. I expected the outpouring of love and support for these superstars.

What I didn't expect was the love and support for *me*.

Women of all ages line up along the sidewalk to talk to me, congratulating me and thanking me, as well as asking questions about my relationship with Jason and Celeste.

"Hi, my name is Dominique." A woman who looks to be in her twenties reaches out to shake my hand.

"It's nice to meet you, Dominique." I squeeze her hand and smile. "Thank you for being here today."

"I've been having such a difficult time coming to terms with what I'm looking for in a partner. Dating apps ask if you're looking for males or females, and I honestly don't know. One person for the rest of my life feels so constricting. And whenever I think about choosing one over the other, I can't help but think, *Why?* Why do I have to choose? Why are we limiting

ourselves to one person for eternity?” She gestures to me. “Then I see someone like you, and I feel hopeful that maybe I can find more than one person to spend my life with. Maybe I’m not so crazy after all.”

“You’re not crazy.” I shake my head. “Go after what you want. You’re not alone. There are other people out there who think the way you do.”

Another woman behind Dominique leans forward to enter our conversation. “It’s incredible to see you ladies embracing your sexuality. There’s always a double standard. It’s acceptable for a man to have as many women as he wants, but it’s not as acceptable for a woman to choose as many partners as she wants.” Her top lip curls. “It’s unfair and it’s pig-headed. We can be just as sexual as men, and there’s nothing wrong with that.”

Celeste raises her hands above her head. “Amen to that.”

It’s a whirlwind of a day, and the three of us are exhausted by the time we get home.

“I’m going to spend an hour in that shower warming up,” I say as we step off the elevator on our floor. “I can’t feel my toes. I wonder if—”

My words are cut off as my eyes land on the person standing by my front door.

“Mom.” The word leaves me in a rush. “What are you doing here?”

She shrugs like she isn’t sure herself. “I watched the press conference on TV.”

“You did?”

She nods. “Celeste called me this morning to tell me about it.”

I swallow around the lump in my throat, glancing at Celeste. “Why?”

Celeste laces her fingers with mine, tugging me the rest of the way toward my mother. “I thought she’d be happy to see how many people were out there supporting her daughter.”

“I was, Kourtney. It was wonderful to see people standing with you like that.” Mom swipes a tear forming at the corner of her eye. “I want...I want to stand with you too.”

Disbelief keeps me from throwing my arms around her. “What about everything Dad said?”

“Dad will need more time to come around. But I’m not here for him. I’m here for you.” Her eyes bounce between Celeste and Jason. “For all of you.”

My heart twists inside my chest as tears brim over my lids. “I don’t want you to fight with him. Won’t he be upset with you?”

“Don’t worry about your father and me. I told him where I stand, and he’s well aware that he can’t change my mind.” My mother chokes back a sob. “You are my baby girl, and I will always stand with you no matter what. I’m sorry it took me so long to come and tell you that.”

I fling myself at my mother and wrap my arms around her in a tight embrace. “I love you, Mom.”

“I love you too.”

Jason unlocks the front door for us, and we all step inside, shedding our coats and boots. He busies himself in the kitchen boiling water for tea while I take a seat between Celeste and my mother at the table.

“I’m sorry your father reacted the way he did.” Mom heaves a sigh. “I know it doesn’t mean as much coming from me, but I need to say it nonetheless.”

“I understand that it’s a shocking thing to hear.” I hike a shoulder and glance around the room. “Our relationship isn’t the norm, and it goes against the monogamous life we’ve all been bred to follow.”

“It was definitely a shock.” Mom huffs out a laugh. “But that doesn’t mean it’s a bad thing. You have two people who love you more than anything in this world. I can’t allow myself believe that that’s bad.”

She slides her arm across the table and cover’s Celeste’s hand. “I’ve loved you like a second daughter since you were fourteen-years old. That’s not going to change now.”

Celeste blinks back the tears shimmering in her eyes. “You were there for me more than my own mother was. I’ve loved being a part of your family,

but I don't want to cause a wedge between it. I don't want to be the reason —”

“You're not the reason,” Mom says, cutting her off. “The only thing that breaks up a family is the people inside it who let it get broken up. And that's not going to happen here.”

We're quiet, letting that thought sink in.

Jason sets three mugs in front of us, and then he leans against the counter blowing on his own mug.

Mom lifts Celeste's hand, letting her rings sparkle under the light. “You should have a wedding.”

My eyebrows lift. “There isn't a state in the country that would legally marry us.”

“You don't need the state to officiate it. You can still have a ceremony, and pledge your love to one another.” Mom smiles. “Love is always cause for a celebration.”

A wedding.

Celeste and me in white dresses, standing with Jason in a tux, reciting our vows of undying love to each other.

Warmth spreads throughout my body, sparking anticipation and excitement into my veins.

Only to have it crashing down at the thought of my father refusing to walk me down the aisle like he did once before.

But that's the stereotypical wedding that's been fed to us since we were children. Maybe our wedding doesn't have to look anything like that. Maybe it's time I stop looking at *everything* like that.

I flick my eyes up to Jason, and then to Celeste, ideas already forming in my mind. “Let's do it.”

KOURTNEY

“IS THAT CHAMPAGNE?”

Cassidy laughs as we push aside the curtain. “I keep forgetting you’ve never been in this suite before.”

“It’s a WAGs-only zone,” Celeste says. “PR agents don’t get access to the cool club.”

I gesture to her hand. “That sparkling ring on your finger makes you an official hockey wife now.”

Celeste holds up her hand and gazes at her ring. “Isn’t it beautiful?”

“You’re beautiful.” I press a chaste kiss to her cheek before turning to Cassidy. “Thanks for agreeing to sit up here for the game tonight. I know you prefer to be down in the crowd, but I promised Jason we’d stay up here until everything calms down.”

“Of course.” Cassidy gives my shoulder a squeeze. “I don’t mind.”

After the press conference, going out in public has been nearly impossible. Paparazzi and fans bombard us with questions and pictures wherever we go. But the other day, Celeste and I were approached by a group of men shouting rude comments and slurs. We’ve had to up the security at our building, and travel with a bodyguard for each of us. So, Jason made us promise to watch his games from the suite so he can concentrate on the game instead of our safety.

The other wives greet us as we make our way to our seats. I introduce Celeste to anyone who hasn't met her yet, and try to ignore their curious stares.

"I'm so glad you ladies are joining us," Tracy says. "It's been a whirlwind since the press conference and we have to catch up."

Nerves twist my stomach. I've been dreading today's game, knowing I'd have to face the WAGs. These women are kind, and I've never had a problem with them before. But I know they'll have questions, and I fear any judgments they might make about me. I don't want people to look at me differently just because I'm in a relationship with two people.

I'm still the same person I've always been.

We get settled in our seats, and I welcome the glass of champagne Tracy hands me.

"I'm so happy Jason didn't get traded." Tracy's eyes widen. "That was some stunt the guys pulled off, posting themselves on your website."

I nod. "We're so thankful for their support."

"Thomas wanted to post a video and I told him over my dead body am I making a porno." Elizabeth chuckles. "I don't know how you do it, Kourt."

"Seriously, knowing all those people are watching you?" Miranda scrunches her nose. "I don't even have sex with the lights on."

My cheeks heat with how openly everyone is talking about this. "It's definitely not for everyone."

"Maybe if I had a body like yours, I'd be more comfortable flaunting myself on the internet." Jaqueline leans over in her seat. "Your ass is amazing, Kourt. You have to send me your workout routine."

"Has anyone heard anything about where the anonymous tip came from?" Cassidy asks, and I shoot her a grateful smile for trying to take the attention off my bare ass.

Tracy shakes her head. "Someone with nothing better to do with his life."

"I don't know how they even knew it was you," Elizabeth says. "I

couldn't tell."

Miranda gasps. "You watched their videos?"

Elizabeth scoffs. "Of course I did. Don't act like you didn't."

"I didn't." Miranda cuts me a glance. "No offense against you. Porn just isn't my thing."

"That just means you haven't been watching the right kind of porn," Celeste says as she shoots her a wink.

Jaqueline nods. "I can only get off to lesbian porn. Matt and I watch it together. He's been trying to convince me to find another woman to add to the mix, like you guys did. I've heard it really spices up your marriage."

My stomach lurches. "We didn't do this to spice up our marriage, Jackie. We're in love. The three of us. We're committed together."

"But won't you want your own husband one day?" Elizabeth asks Celeste.

Jesus Christ.

"Jason and Kourtney are my spouses," Celeste says with ease. "I'm not a spare, or an extra. I'm an equal part of the relationship."

My heart soars with her response. I hope she truly feels this way, and isn't just saying it for the sake of the conversation, because it's the truth.

The women don't know that the questions they're asking are rude. They're not trying to hurt our feelings. This is the reality of what many people think, that this is just a phase to spice up a marriage. It'll take time for our friends to fully understand the way our relationship works as they see us together.

For now, our conversation dies as the game starts.

The first period is intense, and neither team scores. The second period is a battle for dominance. New York's offense is strong, but so is our defense. Jason stops shot after shot, intercepting passes and not letting anyone get near his goalie. The Goldfinches move like a well-oiled machine, anticipating each other's moves and outmaneuvering their opponents.

The way this team has come together off the ice shows by their precision on the ice tonight.

As the timer ticks down, two of New York's players break away and lead the puck into our territory.

Celeste covers her mouth. "Fuck, it's an odd man rush."

Cassidy's leans closer to me. "What's odd man rush?"

I gesture to Jason who's the only Goldfinch defending the goal at the moment. "It's when multiple players from the opposing team skate toward the goal with the puck, but there's only one defenseman there to try to stop it."

One of the players fires the puck like a bullet, but Jason stops it. The crowd goes wild, and we're all on our feet as we cheer. Jason quickly passes it to McKinley on the other side of the rink, who's in prime scoring position. He fires the puck into the back of the net and the buzzer sounds.

"Score!" I throw my arms around Celeste as we jump up and down and scream.

"So, odd man rush is like two against one," Cassidy says, confirming her understanding of the play.

"Yup." Celeste waggles her eyebrows. "And we all know how much Jason loves a little two-on-one action."

Cassidy throws her head back and laughs.

Tracy chokes on her spit.

And I pull Celeste close for a kiss, not giving a fuck about who's watching us.

THE FUTURE

Six Months Later

EPILOGUE

Celeste

“THIS IS like prom night all over again.”

Kourtney stifles a laugh as she yanks on my zipper. “It’s stuck on the material. What’s with you and zippers?”

“Maybe you’re the problem in this equation.” I arch a brow at her in the mirror. “I never have problems when I zipper shit.”

Kourtney scoffs. “It’s not me.”

“Let’s call in reinforcements.” I stomp over to the door separating our rooms, and smack my palm against it. “Get in here, boss man.”

“But cover your eyes,” Kourtney adds.

The door cracks, and Jason sticks his head through the opening, clamping his hand over his eyes. “What’s going on?”

“Kourtney fucked up my zipper.”

Her eyes go wide. “It wasn’t me!”

Jason grins and steps into the room as he looks down at the floor while shielding his eyes. “It’s like prom night all over again.”

“That’s what I said.” I turn around and brace my hands on the dresser.

“Come on, work your magic.”

For our wedding ceremony, Kourtney opted for a simple cream-colored dress with thin straps and a draping cowl-neckline. The satin hugs her body, tempting me to smooth my hands along her curves.

Kourtney eyes me in the mirror. “You keep looking at me like that and we’re not going to make it to the ceremony in time.”

“It’s not my fault you look so sexy.” I bite my bottom lip, letting my gaze drift over to Jason in his tan suit. “You too, boss man.”

His hands slide up the bodice of my lace dress, his green eyes meeting mine in the mirror as he brings his lips down to my shoulder. “You look beautiful.”

My skin heats. “It’s bad luck to see the bride before her wedding day, you know.”

A smirk tugs at the corner of Jason’s mouth as he drags his lips along my neck. “They didn’t say anything about fucking her though.”

I let out a small moan as he bites my neck. “You think you can make us both come before the ceremony starts?”

“I know I can. Now lift your dress so I can fuck you in it.”

I hike up my dress, bunching the material in my fists. Jason flattens his palm against my back, pushing me down so my ass is sticking out away from the dresser.

He leans in and devours Kourtney in a kiss, gripping onto the back of her neck. “On your knees, baby.”

She drops to the floor and positions herself in front of me, skimming her hands up my thighs. My hips jerk when I feel her tongue on me. Behind me, Jason frees himself from his pants, and slides his cock between my legs. Kourtney runs her tongue over the both of us, making Jason and I let out simultaneous moans.

And then he plunges inside me.

Kourtney licks my clit while Jason fucks me hard, and I grip onto the

dresser for support. One of his hands snakes around my throat and squeezes as he locks eyes with me in the mirror, holding me captive with the intensity emanating in that emerald gaze of his.

We're loud and unrestrained, losing ourselves in each other the way the three of us always do. With Kourtney in front of me and Jason behind me, they surround me, giving me everything I need to make me feel good.

I'm surrounded by them, and it's in more than just the physical sense. They're embedded into the fibers of my soul. Together, we're complete.

Looking at how far we've come since prom night, how life sent us down separate paths and then brought us back together, I can't help but believe in fate. Regardless of what we've been through, regardless of the pain we've each endured, we were destined to end up here, having an intimate wedding ceremony on an island in Greece.

If you told me on prom night all those years ago that this is where we'd be, I never would've believed it.

Pleasure mounts in my core as Kourtney's tongue laps me up, and I place my hand at the back of her head to hold her there. "Fuck, that feels good."

Nothing compares to the feel of her tongue while Jason's cock is buried deep inside me.

Jason tightens his hold on my neck as I move my hips faster. "That's it, *kókkino*. Come for us."

And I tip over the edge, my body shaking as I call out their names, again and again.

As soon as Jason pulls out of me, he yanks Kourtney up and sweeps her into his arms. In two long strides, he's at the bed, lowering himself onto the mattress and bringing her down on top of him. She sinks onto his cock, taking him all at once, and he groans loud.

I crawl onto the bed behind Kourtney, dipping my hand inside the neckline of her dress so I can run my fingers over her breast and toying with her nipple.

“I’m going to marry the fuck out of you today, little mouse.” I nip at her earlobe. “You’re going to be mine forever.”

“Forever,” she breathes out.

Jason watches as Kourtney turns her head and claims my lips, kissing me while she’s fucking him, and I hear him groan when my hand slips down between her legs.

“You hear that, baby?” I whisper in Kourtney’s ear as I rub circles over her clit. “He’s watching me play with your pussy, and it’s driving him crazy.”

He clenches his jaw as he thrusts up into her, and I’ll never grow tired of seeing this wild look in his eyes.

“You’re going to have to come for us now, baby.” I swirl my fingers faster. “Show our husband how well that pretty pussy soaks his cock.”

As the words leave my mouth, Kourtney detonates as if she was waiting for my permission to come. She cries out with her head thrown back, and her hips bucking. It brings Jason over the edge, and he grips her hips as he buries himself as deep as he can go while he spills his release inside her.

We’re panting, sweaty messes as we collapse onto the bed to catch our breaths.

Jason entwines his fingers with Kourtney’s before covering my hand with theirs. “*S’agapó.*”

I smile. “*S’agapó.*”

We originally planned on eloping, just the three of us.

But as my gaze sweeps out over the small gathering of our friends, I’m glad we decided to invite them to share this special day with us.

“Are you ready, *kókkino*?”

I slip my hand into the crook of Jason’s elbow and set my eyes on the beautiful woman at the end of the aisle waiting for me. “I’m ready.”

Kourtney was adamant about not walking down the aisle. She insisted that I have my movie moment since she already had hers when she married Jason the first time.

So, Jason asked if he could have the honor of walking me down.

Truthfully, I don't care who walks who, or that I'm standing at the edge of a beautiful villa overlooking the Aegean Sea. The only thing that matters to me is that I get to promise myself to the two loves of my life.

With Jason by my side, always so strong and sure, I walk along the pale-pink flower petals toward Kourtney. White drapes billow in the breeze, framing the intimate courtyard.

We pass our friends: Trenton holding Cassidy in his arms as she dabs at the corner of her eye; McKinley and Erika, both of them snapping pictures as we walk by; and Krumkachova standing beside Aarya. I do a double-take when I spot their linked hands.

"What the hell is that about?" I whisper to Jason.

A smirk dances at the corner of his mouth. "I'll tell you all about it later."

I crane my neck to turn around and get a better look at them. "Are they dating?"

"I said I'll tell you later." Jason leans close to my ear. "Let me make you my wife first."

Goosebumps skate down my body as I refocus my attention. "Okay, boss man."

We get to the front row of chairs, and I sneak a peek at Kourtney's parents. Though her relationship with her father isn't what it once was, they've been working on it. Kourtney made it clear that she wouldn't let anything ruin this day, and she gave him the invitation as a choice. The fact that he's here speaks volumes, and I'm thrilled that he was able to put aside his differences, if only for today.

It took Kourtney some time to come to terms with what she wanted with me, and with Jason. It took time for her to admit it to herself, and to her

parents. Her father will need time as well. All we can do is give that to him, and hope that his love for his daughter outweighs his personal beliefs.

Jason leads me to Kourtney at the edge of the balcony, and the three of us stand facing one another, clasping each other's hands. There's no officiant. No paparazzi. No one but us, reciting our vows to one another in front of the people who love us most.

Kourtney's voice trembles as she begins. "When you first meet someone, you can't tell what kind of impact they're going to have on you, or what part they'll play in your life. You don't know if they'll be there for a lifetime or for a season. Only a select few are meant to be in your life for the long haul. From the moment our paths crossed in high school, my life was irrevocably altered. I couldn't see it at the time, of course, the magnitude of what our love would become. But I was changed by knowing you. You engraved your names into my heart, and even while we were apart, I still carried you with me." Kourtney swipes a tear as it rolls down her cheek. "I never want to be apart again. I never want to walk through life without you by my side. I know it took me a while to stand up and fight for what we have, but now that I'm here, I'll never back down. I promise to stand by your side through all the joys and challenges that come our way, as you've stood by me through mine. We've found a love that goes beyond the confines of traditional relationships, and just because it's different doesn't mean it's wrong. Thank you for not giving up on me. Thank you for being patient with me. I love you both more than you'll ever know."

Jason wipes his eye with the back of his shaky hand before unfolding his speech from his pocket. "I've loved you both for what feels like a lifetime already. Kourtney, I love your kind soul, and the selfless way you take care of everyone around you. Celeste, I love your fierceness and your loyalty, and the strength in which you love someone when you open your heart. You two are my past, my present, and my future. I'm standing here today to promise you that I'll continue loving you with all that I am for the rest of our time on

this earth. I will always be your unwavering support; the shoulder you lean on in times of sorrow; your biggest cheerleader in moments of triumph; and the hand you hold through every challenge. You will never have to walk alone. You have me, my heart, and my soul. *Gia pánta*. Forever.”

I clear my throat before it's my turn to speak. “If you had told me six months ago that I would be standing here, making these vows, I wouldn't have believed you. We were friends and I was certain we couldn't be anything more. But you both opened my eyes to a kind of love that I never knew was possible, and you've shown me what family truly means. You are my safe haven. You're the reminder that I'm worthy of something in this world because you love me. I know the world isn't ready for us, and it might be difficult at times. But I'll be here to lean on, to lift you up, and to fight for us, because this love is worth fighting for.”

Jason pulls us close and holds us as we cry. It's an emotional release. A moment of *finally, we're here*. And yet, it's only the beginning of our journey together.

“Kiss the damn brides already,” McKinley yells.

We laugh, and each of us kisses the other.

Jason escorts us back down the aisle, and we head to the other side of the wrap-around balcony for an evening of dinner and drinks with our friends.

“Congratulations!” Cassidy runs toward us and wraps her arms around me before doing the same to Kourtney. “You both look so beautiful.”

“This view is beautiful too.” Aarya leans over the balcony and gazes out at the sparkling sea. “Look at this place.”

“It really is incredible here.” I turn my face up toward the sun. “We should buy a vacation home here.”

Kourtney gasps. “Yes, let's do it!”

“Not until this one's Greek gets better.” Jason wraps his hand around my waist. “Yesterday, she told the man at the fruit stand that she wanted to dance with two of his ducks.”

I jab him with my elbow. “At least I got the number two correct.”

“I’d love to learn a second language,” Aarya says.

Krumkachova comes back from the bar and hands her a glass of wine. “I could teach you Czech.”

She wraps her hand around the glass as she takes it from him, and my eyes go wide. “Hold the fuck up. What the hell is that?”

“What’s what?” Kourtney’s head whips around, and she follows my line of sight. “Oh my god. Aarya, is that...?”

Aarya holds up her left hand, and the diamond on her finger sparkles in the sunlight.

“Krum cake and I got engaged.”

THE END

*Want to find out what’s going on between Krumkachova and Aarya?
Check out this bonus scene [HERE](#) so you can read all the juicy details!*

*Haven’t read Heart Trick?
Keep reading to find out how Trenton and Cassidy went from neighbors, to
enemies, to fake dating, to he falls first!*

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Collision (Book 1) – Reverse grumpy sunshine

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Against the Odds (Book 4 – standalone) – MMA fighter workplace romance

Hating the Boss – RomCom standalone – Enemies to lovers workplace
romance

Back to You – RomCom standalone – Second chance workplace romance

Inevitable – Contemporary standalone – Bodyguard forbidden romance

What's Left of Me – Contemporary standalone – Best friend's brother
grumpy sunshine

Someone You Love – Contemporary standalone – Forced proximity grumpy
sunshine

Bring Me Back – Contemporary standalone – Next door neighbor cop
romance

Dear Santa – Fake dating holiday novella

Heart Trick – Fake dating hockey novella

HEART TRICK

by Kristen Granata

1. CASSIDY

THEN HE PENETRATES me with his cock.

“No, that doesn’t sound right.” I hold down the delete key with my index finger and start again.

He positions his tip at my entrance and slides inside.

“Entrance? What is her vagina, a portal?”

Delete.

He thrusts his shaft inside me and we cry out in pleasure as we embark on a journey of pure ecstasy.

“Jesus Christ, this is getting worse by the second.” I slam my laptop shut and glare at my bird. “This is hopeless. I’m a lost cause.”

Candy cocks her head.

“I’m really not in the mood for your positivity right now, okay? I’m wallowing. Let me wallow.”

She hops onto the bottom perch in her cage and pecks at her food, letting me go on my self-pity spiral.

“Not only did Sheldon break my heart, but he took my writing mojo with him.” I stab the air with my finger. “He’s off living his life, having tons of hot cheater sex. Meanwhile, I’m sitting over here and I haven’t so much as felt the touch of another man, let alone write about a fictional one. What kind of romance author has no romance in her life?” I let out a humorless laugh

and shake my head. “A pathetic one, that’s who.”

Candy tweets like she agrees.

“I should be writing the best book of my life, and get revenge on my adulterous ex-boyfriend. He should be seeing my face on all the billboards in this city and have to deal with the fact that he lost me because he’s the one who screwed it all up. And that would happen if I could just finish a damn book.”

It’s been a year-and-a-half since my last book release. It’s not for lack of ideas. I have dozens of half-baked concepts saved on my MacBook. But whenever I get to a sex scene, I freeze up. Who knew getting cheated on would be a perpetual boner-killer?

“No, you know what? Fuck this, and fuck him. I’m going to finish this book if it kills me.”

I open my laptop and try to start again, but voices in the hallway pull my attention.

I gasp. “It’s my new neighbor!”

I fly off my chair and bolt to the door, stretching on my tippy-toes to reach the peephole.

A large man stands beside Rupert, the bellhop in our building. I smush my face against the door, straining to see what he looks like through the tiny fishbowl lens.

“He’s very tall,” I whisper-yell to Candy. “He has dark hair.”

She chirps.

“I don’t know. I can’t tell if he’s cute. He’s facing away from me.”

The man speaks to Rupert, revealing a deep voice. “Thanks. I can take it from here.”

“Welcome to the building, sir. If you need anything at all, please let me know. My name is Rupert.” Rupert shakes his hand and then stuffs his hand into his pocket after he pulls back. “Thank you very much, sir. That’s very generous of you.”

Neighbor Man tipped him. That's promising. Points for him.

After Rupert leaves, the man wheels the luggage cart inside his apartment.

My shoulders jump as his door slams shut behind him. I won't count that against him though. These doors are heavy and take some getting used to.

"I miss Sherry." I turn around and walk back to my desk wearing a frown. "I hope she's doing all right."

The elderly woman who lived next door to me for the last five years was recently moved to a nursing home. Her memory was on the decline and I know it was the right thing for her family to do, but I can't help feeling sad about it.

I slump down in my chair and run my fingertips over the keyboard, willing the words to flow. "All right. You're a small-town girl who just inherited her wealthy grandfather's estate in the big city. You move up there to go through his belongings, and you meet the handsome billionaire who's running his company. He sweeps you off your feet and you fall in love. Now it's time to bone him, goddamnit!"

I stare at the blinking cursor for the next twenty minutes. Not a single word comes out.

Maybe I'm just not feeling a spark between these characters. The reviews from my last book bounce off the walls of my brain like a pinball.

One star: A lackluster plot with two-dimensional characters.

Two stars: This didn't feel like Quinn's previous work.

One star: DNFed this at twenty percent.

One star: The characters had no chemistry.

I can't blame the readers. I know it wasn't my best work. My relationship was on the rocks and I wasn't into the story. But it kills me that my readers could tell that from my writing.

My phone vibrates on the desk, pulling me from my intrusive thoughts.

I swipe my thumb across the screen. "Hey, Aarya."

“Hey, boo. What are you doing?”

I heave an overdramatic sigh. “Oh, you know, just sitting here writing the worst book in the history of mankind—no, wait. Scratch that. To write the worst book, that would mean I’d have to actually be writing.”

“Still no luck with the book, huh?”

“Nope. My creativity has dried up like an old sponge.”

“It’ll come back to you.”

“What if it doesn’t? What if the last book I published is it for me?”

“It’s not. You’re just in a slump. Sometimes you’re up, and sometimes you’re down. It happens to the best of us artists.”

I run my fingers through my hair and pull at the roots. “How are you? What are you up to today?”

“I just left the gallery. I want to get a workout in before dinner tonight. You feel like meeting me at the gym?”

“Hell yes. I need to blow off some steam.” I close my laptop and head to my bedroom. “I’ll meet you down there in ten.”

“Sounds good. Oh, and please don’t take that pre-workout again. You were like a feral squirrel last time.”

I scoff as I pull out a sports bra from my dresser drawer. “I was not.”

“You looked like you were on speed and washed it down with a Red Bull. Dump that shit in the garbage.”

“I don’t like your tone today.”

She laughs. “When do you ever?”

Several minutes later, I meet Aarya at the gym in our apartment building. We head to the ellipticals first.

“I’m assuming you didn’t write anything today?”

I pull my hair into a ponytail as I start pumping my legs. “I can’t get out of my own head. Every time I try to write, it’s like I’m staring at this blank wall and I can’t figure out how to get around it.”

“Every author experiences writer’s block once in a while. Maybe you’re

trying too hard. You can't force it."

"But the more I avoid it, the longer it's going to be until I can finish the book."

"Or the longer you obsess over it, the harder it's going to be to achieve. Take a break from it. Do something else. Get a hobby. You spend too much time with that serial killer bird of yours."

My eyebrows press together as I toss a glare her way. "She only killed one bird. She's not a serial killer."

"Fine. She's a plain old murderer then." Aarya scrunches her nose. "I don't know how you sleep with that thing in your home after what she did."

Five years ago, I found a fallen bird's nest out on the sundeck with two baby Cardinals in it. The mother was nowhere in sight and they looked hurt, so I nursed them back to health. But after doing some research, I learned that the mother wouldn't come back to take care of them if she smelled a human on them. Rather than send them back into the wild to fend for themselves and likely die, I bought a cage and named them Maggie and Wally. Everything was great until I came home one night and found Wally dead on the bottom of their cage. Maggie pecked him to death and sat there on her swing with his feathers sticking out of her bloody beak as if everything was fine.

I'll never know what the real reason for the murder was, but Maggie was pissed off about something and I can't blame her for that. Female Cardinals aren't as vibrant in color as the stunning bright-red males, so maybe she was jealous of her beautiful brother. Maybe he just shit in her birdseed. Regardless, I bought her a new cage and changed her name to Candy—after Candice Montgomery, the woman who axed her friend to death forty-one times and walked free.

I thought it was fitting.

"I love Candy despite what she did, like a good mother should. Plus, she's an excellent listener and—oh, look!" I hunch down and lower my voice. "There's my new neighbor."

The tall, dark-haired man stands with his back to us as he fills out paperwork at the front desk.

“Did you meet him already?” Aarya asks.

“No. I saw him through my peephole when Rupert moved him in. Couldn’t see his face though.”

Her eyes narrow as she strains to see him across the gym. “He’s certainly a big boy.”

Gray joggers hug his tree-trunk thighs and ass. His white T-shirt stretches from shoulder to shoulder across his broad back.

Come on, Neighbor Man. Turn around. Let’s see what you look like.

He takes what feels like forever filling out his gym membership forms, but then he turns and enters the cardio area.

“Damn,” Aarya murmurs.

Damn is right. Neighbor Man has a thick jaw covered in dark scruff. His messy hair falls in his eyes and curls around his ears. His nose has a slight bend in it, like it was broken at some point. He’s the walking definition of rugged. Between his size and his hardened expression, he looks menacing.

“How old do you think he is?” I whisper.

“Mid-to-late thirties maybe.”

I nod in agreement. He definitely looks older than me.

He skips cardio and heads straight for the squat rack, which is conveniently located directly in front of the row of ellipticals.

Aarya waggles her eyebrows. “Showtime, baby.”

I roll my lips together and avert my eyes. “He’s in front of the mirror. He can see you ogling him.”

“Don’t act like you don’t want to watch him drop that ass right now.”

I do. I really do.

“Fine. I’m going to watch one squat and then I’m going to work out.”

Once Neighbor Man racks the plates on either side of the metal bar, he ducks under it and positions it on his traps, squaring his feet hip-width apart.

I hold my breath as he squats down and presses back up.

Aarya hisses. "I'd let him bend down over my face like that and put his balls right in my mouth if he wanted to."

A loud laugh bursts from my throat, garnering the attention of several people nearby, including my neighbor. "Okay, that's it. I'm going to finish my workout far, far away from you."

Aarya keeps her eyes zeroed on his ass like a laser. "I'll be right here."

I shake my head and make my way to the dumbbells.

And I only check out my hot neighbor twice in the reflection of the mirror.

After I finish my usual routine for bis and tris, I say goodbye to Aarya as she heads for the sauna. I step inside the elevator, press the button for the sixth floor, and dab my forehead with my towel as the door slides closed.

Then a giant hand shoots out and the door slides open again.

Neighbor Man steps inside.

I smile up at him as I press my back against the cool metal wall to give him space, though he doesn't smile back because he doesn't even look at me.

He glances at the illuminated six on the panel before leaning against the opposing wall without a word, staring straight ahead at nothing.

Everyone in the building gives a courteous *hello* when they share an elevator. It's elevator etiquette. Common decency.

I suppress a groan. *Please don't be a dick.* Sherry was so sweet. She gave the best hugs, and even better advice. We spent every Tuesday and Thursday night together playing Rummy. I cooked and she baked. She was the greatest neighbor a girl could ask for.

Sadness sits on my chest like a weighted blanket.

I miss you, Sher.

After a loud ding, the door slides open. Neighbor Man doesn't move, allowing me to step into the hallway ahead of him.

So, he won't say hello but he displays a modicum of courtesy by letting

the woman step out first.

Interesting.

I can feel his presence behind me as we walk. He could easily pass me to get to his door, but he takes his time at a slow pace.

I reach my door and pretend to fumble with my purse as I get out my key card, allowing him enough time to get to his door on my left.

I glance over at him and act like I haven't realized he's been in the hallway with me this whole time. "Oh, hey. You're my new neighbor."

His dark eyes meet mine for a brief moment. "Looks that way."

Before I can stick out my hand and introduce myself, he swings open his door and steps inside his apartment, letting the door slam shut behind him.

Okay now that slam was on purpose.

2. TRENTON

I ROLL onto my stomach and slam the pillow over my head in an attempt to drown out the shrill noise floating through the wall.

Maybe I'll suffocate myself under here and I won't have to be subjected to my neighbor's off-key singing ever again.

I used to love the song *Africa*. Now, I'll cringe every time I hear it on the radio. The woman next door just ruined Toto for me along with my morning.

Since there's no way I can fall back asleep now, I fling off the covers and stalk into the bathroom to take a piss and brush my teeth.

My annoying neighbor is just the icing on the cake that is my new life.

Last year, my fiancé cheated on me. I could've dealt with that—honestly, I could've moved on. I had a great hockey career, and a team I loved being a part of. But she had to go and cheat on me with my teammate. It caused such a rift in the team that the General Manager traded me after the season ended. He might as well have put me out to pasture, because that's what it feels like. I'm the thirty-six-year-old on a new team, which doesn't bode well. They'll be pushing me to retire in no time. This is the beginning of the end for me.

And then what? What will I have without hockey?

I brush my gums so vigorously, I'm surprised I don't spit blood when I rinse out my mouth. I woke up feeling angry today, and it's more than the fact that my sleep was interrupted by a screeching serenade. I'm angry about

looking like a fool. About losing my teammates. About the way this whole thing went down. Kicked off *my* team. Forced to move out of *my* city.

I'm the one who got cheated on, so why am I paying for their indiscretion?

The worst part of it all? I went quietly. The news exploded all over the country and everyone's talking about the scandal. Yet I kept my mouth shut and left without a fight.

But the shock and denial have worn off. I'm in my anger phase now. The gym is one of the only places I can unleash it, so I change into my gym clothes and grab my duffle bag on the way out of my apartment.

I'm so absorbed in my own thoughts that I don't realize the singing bandit next door is exiting her apartment at the same time. She smacks into me and I almost barrel right through her. I catch her before she hits the ground, gripping her shoulders as I steady her.

She smooths down her hair as she blinks up at me. "Geez. Where's the fire?"

"Sorry. I didn't see you."

"Of course you didn't."

My chin jerks back. "What's that supposed to mean?"

She mutters something under her breath before she spins around and heads down the hallway. Judging by the spandex clinging to her body, she's headed to the same place I am.

Great.

We wait for an elevator, and when one opens up, she steps inside and presses the button for the gym level.

"Where are you going?" she asks.

I gesture to the illuminated G on the panel.

She nods and leans her hip against the wall as we descend.

She's hot. It's hard not to notice. Thick and curvy with long brown hair. Admittedly, I watched her ass sway in front of me as she walked to her

apartment door yesterday. I figure it was only fair since she and her friend were staring at *my* ass during my workout like I was on stage at a Magic Mike show.

I should be used to it after a decade of being in the spotlight, but everything has been different once the news about my fiancé cheating on me with my best friend got out. It's like an alert was sent out to single women everywhere: "Heartbroken Hockey Player Needs Healing." Puck bunnies have been throwing themselves at me worse than before.

So, when this woman smiled at me in the elevator yesterday, I counted the seconds until she asked if I was the person she thought I was. That's always how it starts. "You look familiar," or, "Are you Trent Ward?" Some women are bold enough to slip me their numbers and tell me how they can help me get over my ex—which is why I try to ignore everyone I can.

Today though, she doesn't smile at me. Maybe it's because I bulldozed her upstairs, or maybe she's just in a shit mood and it has nothing to do with me. But when the elevator door opens, she bolts like she can't get away from me fast enough.

She heads to the left and I make my way to the squat rack. I set down my water bottle and lift the bar to do a warmup set of bicep curls before adding any weight. Halfway through my set, my neighbor appears at my side holding a twenty-five-pound plate in each hand—glaring at me in the reflection of the mirror.

"Excuse me. I was going to use the squat rack."

Is she for real?

I arch a brow as I continue my set. "I didn't see anyone standing here when I got here."

"I went to get plates." She holds them up as if I don't see them.

"Well, it'll be all yours when I'm done."

Her cheeks redden. "It's Gym Etiquette 101: Don't use the free-standing squat rack for anything other than squats. You can do your bicep curls

literally anywhere else.”

I’ve lost count of how many reps I’ve done, but I won’t stop now. “Pretend I’m doing squats, and go do something else while you wait your turn.”

She grits her teeth as she storms away.

Who the hell does she think she is ordering me around? Are these the kind of self-righteous rich people who live in this building?

I’d be lying if I said I didn’t drag out my set a bit longer than necessary just to spite her.

When I finish, I spot her by the cables. She has the strap wrapped around her ankle as she swings her leg out to the side. Now, I *could* steer clear of her and go about the rest of my workout. I should. But something about her attitude today has me heading straight for her. It’s like I have an itch that needs scratching.

“They have machines for that, you know,” I say.

She glances over her shoulder and her eyes narrow on me. Then she lifts her chin and continues swinging her leg out to the side.

“I don’t need workout tips. I know what I’m doing.”

I fold my arms over my chest. “But you’re using the cables for people who are trying to do upper body.”

“Much like the dumbbells can be used for biceps, yet there you were, curling in the squat rack.”

“So, it’s okay only when you do it? That’s pretty hypocritical of you.”

She rolls her eyes. “This is totally not the same thing.”

I’m about to fire back but she swings her leg extra wide, her foot coming so close to my balls that I have to step out of the way.

She gives me a phony-ass sweet smile. “It’ll be all yours when I’m done. Now wait your turn like a good boy.”

Tell me why my dick twitches when she says that?

A frustrated growl bubbles up in my throat, but I say nothing as I walk

away. If she wants a reaction out of me, she won't get one.

Not even when she follows me to the elevator at the end of my workout and gets in beside me. We stand on our respective sides until the door opens and then walk down the hall in silence.

But when we get to our apartment doors, she speaks. "Since you're unaware of gym etiquette, let me give you another friendly piece of advice about being a good neighbor: If you hold onto your doorknob, the door won't slam so loud."

I turn my head to meet her pointed stare. "What?"

"You slam your door every time you walk in and out. It's a little jarring."

Now she's just fucking with me. She has to be. I've only been here for two days. How many times could I have slammed my door?

I prop my door open with my foot. "Speaking of jarring noises, I did hear something this morning. Does this building have a cat problem?"

Her eyes narrow. "A cat problem?"

"This morning I was woken up to the sound of what I assumed was a dying cat. But I suppose a cat wouldn't know all the words to a Toto song, so maybe I'm wrong."

Her cheeks turn a deep shade of red as she plants her hand on her hips. "I've never had any complaints before you got here."

"Maybe your last neighbor was hard of hearing."

She scoffs. "Well, she certainly didn't slam the door so hard that my entire apartment rattled."

This is ridiculous. How can one stranger have this kind of effect on me? I don't act like this to people, especially those I don't know. My PR agent would chew my ass out if she could see me. I'm supposed to keep my head down and stay out of the public eye, not draw more attention to myself. For all I know, this crazy woman could be recording me as we speak, and tomorrow I'll be all over the news cycle again.

Instead of continuing this any further, I end it by walking inside my

apartment.

And I may or may not let the door slam behind me on purpose.

“Do you have any questions?”

My eyes bounce around the locker room. “Do you have cold tubs?”

Coach nods. “We just had our facility renovated, and we offer hot and cold tubs in the training facility.”

“We upgraded just in time for you, Warden.” A man with coppery curls walks out of the shower area with a towel wrapped low around his waist. “Coach heard what a sweet facility you had in Seattle so he made sure to trick this place out.”

“Not true.” Coach heaves a sigh. “Trenton Ward, this is Stephen McKinley.”

I reach out to shake his hand, but he pulls me in for a hug. His towel slips and he makes no effort to reach for it. Coach snatches the towel off the floor and tosses it at him.

McKinley wraps the towel around the back of his neck. “Glad to have you on our team, man.”

“Jesus, Mac. Don’t scare off our new goalie with your giant monster dick between your legs.” Another man emerges from the shower, his towel tightly tucked around his waist.

McKinley grins. “Hey, I just wanted to show him that the carpet matches the drapes. People wonder about that.”

“Literally no one wonders about that.” He shakes my hand like a normal person. “Jason Stamos. Nice to meet you.”

I studied the players before arriving in Jersey City. Stephen “Mac” McKinley is a left wing forward, and Jason “Stams” Stamos is on defense. The team has an impressive starting lineup, and this season looks promising

for them.

For me as well now, I guess.

McKinley cups his hands over his mouth. “Hey, Krum Cake. Stop jerking off in the shower and get out here so you can meet our new goalie.”

Stamos chuckles. “Don’t piss him off, Mac. He’s in a shit mood today.”

“When is he not in a shit mood?”

Coach pinches the bridge of his nose. “Well, I’ll leave you to get acquainted with the boys. If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to come see me.”

“Thanks, Coach.”

He clasps my hand. “We’re happy to have you on the team.”

I nod. “Happy to be here.”

After Coach exits the locker room, a tall bearded man steps out of the shower and glares at McKinley.

Alexander Krumkachova. Team Captain and center. One of the best players currently in the NHL.

“Welcome to the team.” He shakes my hand. “Sorry about what happened to you. That’s some bush league shit if you ask me.”

Good, let’s address the elephant in the room and get it over with.

I hike a nonchalant shoulder as if being betrayed and then traded hasn’t crippled me. “It is what it is.”

Krumkachova shakes his head. “You don’t have to worry about shit like that here. You’re a Goldfinch now, and we’re family.”

I thought my last team was my family.

Look how that turned out.

“All I want is to play hockey,” I say.

“And hockey you shall play.” McKinley slaps his palms together. “It’s going to be a great season, boys. I can smell it.”

It will be a great season, and I’ll make sure of it.

I have everything to prove, and nothing left to lose.

Keep reading Heart Trick [HERE!](#)

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