

A photograph of a very muscular man's torso and arms. He is wearing light blue denim jeans with a black belt and a watch on his left wrist. The image is framed by a decorative red border with floral patterns in the corners.

*The*

# LIBRARIAN

AMAZON BESTSELLING AUTHOR  
LENA LITTLE

# **THE LIBRARIAN**

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## STEAMY SHORTS: BOOK 2

# LENA LITTLE



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Also by Lena Little

## PREVIEW

I've been obsessed with Jenna since the moment I laid eyes on her.

I don't think she notices me, which is fine because I'm nothing but a librarian with the looks of a lumberjack. Someone as perfect as her doesn't deserve someone like me.

But...

My obsession with her has already taken root, shocking me down to the marrow of my bones, and there's nothing I can do about it. Nothing but stare at her from afar, flooded by visions of her writhing as I'm pumping her full with my seed, binding her to me.

So when she comes to the library after a party looking for me...all thoughts fly out the window. All sensible, logical thoughts. Who cares? I'll be a fool if I waste this one shot with her.

And now that I've gotten a taste...

Let's just say...it's easier to gnaw off a limb than let her go. She's f\*cking mine. Anyone who disagrees can go straight to hell.

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JACOB

**M**y hand immediately goes to the bulge in my pants the moment I spot her, desperate for the swelling to go down. Not here. Fuck. Please not now.

But I know there's nothing much I can do. My body goes haywire when she's around.

And there she is. Sitting on her usual seat with three books spread out before her, her pink unicorn pencil tucked on the side of her mouth.

Her chestnut brown hair is tied in a messy bun, tendrils of it framing her small face. As always, she wears no makeup, and even all the way from here, I can see the tiny mole on the bridge of her nose.

Her blue eyes dart from one page to another, her forehead creasing in concentration. When she's in this mood, she barely notices the other students, occasional hushed conversations, or the creaking of wooden chairs.

Now someone hovers in front of her, and she looks up, her full lips lifting at the corners.

My heart stops and I forget how to breathe.

Jesus Christ. Jenna Shepherd is a vision. Her beauty rips the soul clean off my body every single time I lay my eyes on her. The first time, I thought for sure the floor disappeared from underneath me. The second and third time, it was the same thing.

It's been weeks since my obsession with her has taken root, and I can't shake it off. I'm not sure I even want to. Something draws me to her, and I don't know how I managed to live the past three decades without seeing a glimpse of her. Without breathing the same air as her.

The sturdy oak desk at the center of the library is my favorite spot because I get an unobstructed view of her perfection. Whenever she's around, I pretend to be busy but I'm hyperaware of where she is at all times, what she's doing, and who she's with.

There's this guy who follows her around but clearly isn't here to read or study, and I resist the strong urge to make him swallow his own teeth, rage flowing through me like lava.

Am I worried she'll notice? I doubt that. Someone like Jenna will never look at someone like me unless she has no choice.

After all, I am the librarian. She has to talk to me if she needs help. And she almost always does.

I'm grateful she finds me worthy to be spoken to, but sometimes, her questions go over my head because I can't help but stare at her, unable to believe someone like her exists.

She waves to the other girl and stands, one palm resting on the table. After nodding to her, Jenna tucks a stray hair behind her ear and ambles to me, her pink flower dress hugging her curves, hips swaying slightly.

I stiffen and sit straighter, trying to remember how to breathe, a flush of adrenaline pumping through me.

"Uhm, hi."

I clutch the book on my desk and struggle to maintain control as I lift my head and find Jenna smiling softly, her dimples peeking. She chews on her bottom lip and slowly drags her tongue along it.

Oh hell.

My blood rushes south, and I slide the seat further under the desk, trying to hide the tent in my pants. How fucking embarrassing if she sees. And it might

scare her away from me.

Can't have that now, can we?

"Yes?" My voice comes out gruffer than usual, and I clear my throat. "Can I help you?"

A flush creeps along her cheeks, and she giggles. "Yes. I'm looking for *The Social Construction of Reality*. Can't seem to find it."

"Okay, sure. Give me a sec."

I input the book's title and try to get a hold of myself because my brain cells seem to have died, and I have to delete and re-type because of all the typos. Fuck me, I'm acting like an idiot. Like a lovestruck schoolboy.

Normally, I'd write the aisle and number and send her on her merry way. But this is Jenna. The woman of my dreams. The one I jack off to day in and day out, sometimes multiple times a day. The voice I hear in my head before I go to sleep. The one I want to marry. The one I want to bear my children. Just the thought of her flat stomach stretched taut with my seed growing inside her. Jesus. It drives me insane.

So I stand up to my full height, easily towering over her small 5'2" frame. Well aware of my erection, I pull my shirt lower and turn my back on her. "Follow me."

Adjusting my horn-rimmed glasses, we walk towards the section for textbooks, just a few steps away from the desk. She could've easily found it on her own, but of course, I wouldn't let her. These moments are all I have.

The smell of books fills my nostrils, and I welcome the distraction because my skin tingles at how close she is.

I find the shelf and reach for the book, thankful that this spot is deserted. Jenna's standing behind me, and I turn around to hand the book to her.

When she grabs it, her fingers brush mine and electricity zaps down my spine. My loins tighten, balls drawing up. The air between us crackles. As I lift my gaze to hers, Jenna's eyelids flutter and her mouth is slightly open.

Her breath hitches, and she wets her lips.

Fuck. Is it possible? Does she feel that too? But no way. There's no way. Jenna attracted to me? That's as realistic as finding T-rex remains right from under me.

Apparently, I'm no longer in control of my body because before I have time to think about it, I'm already closing the distance between us. She's so much shorter than me so she has to tilt her head to meet my gaze.

My heart slams against my ribcage, and I drag in a deep breath.

What am I doing? I have a very slim chance of making her mine, and I'm blowing it all to bits by what I'm about to do.

Jenna is the most popular girl in college. Everyone knows her. Everyone seeks her approval. Everyone wishes to be her friend...or more.

And if that's not enough, she's also ultra-rich. Her father owns a chain of hotels all over the globe, while her socialite mother is constantly traveling and being spotted in the company of Hollywood A-listers.

I know because I did my research.

So why would she—someone who can have any guy she wants—even spare me a glance? A paleontologist and part-time librarian in his mid-30s who looks like a lumberjack on a good day.

No. She's too pure and innocent for me. I don't deserve someone like her. I don't even deserve to be this near. To be...

My thoughts become an incoherent mess, my head full of cotton, when she rests her small hand on my arm.

Oh, fuck.

My pulse kicks into overdrive, a groan rippling in my chest. Her touch burns me, and I summon all my willpower to stop myself from claiming her here and now. She doesn't deserve that. I'd lay her on a bed of roses if I could.

God, I am not built for this. I am a man who loves paperwork, cold hard facts, and digging fossils. I am not someone who almost comes just because of a simple, innocent touch.

She stands on her tiptoes but still doesn't come up to my shoulder.

I can't move. Because if I will, it will be to smash my lips to hers to find out if she tastes as sweet as she looks.

The noise around us fades as her mouth gets closer. I meet her halfway because if she wants this, who the hell am I to say no? I don't even have it in me to pull back and walk away. She tells me to jump, I ask how high. She orders me to walk on fire, I'll do it with a smile.

Her hand curls behind my neck, and she runs her fingers through my hair. This may very well be a dream. But fuck if I won't take advantage.

I lower my head to hers, time moving so damned slowly.

"Jenna! There you are!" a hushed cry sounds behind us.

She might as well have thrown a bucket full of iced water on us because Jenna and I spring to opposite sides of the aisle so fast that I'm surprised I don't slam against the bookshelves.

"Oh my god. You won't believe what I'm about to tell you."

Spinning on my heel, I leave them alone, unable to look Jenna in the eye and refusing to listen to her friend.

I got that close to her. That's more than enough. Well, it better be because I doubt there will be a next time.



JENNA

**M**elissa keeps chattering about the upcoming party at the sorority house, and I tune her out.

I'm still reeling from what happened between me and Jacob Jameson, the librarian and the only reason why I keep coming back here even if I have a copy of all our textbooks at home.

"God, he's such a creep," Melissa cups a hand to my ear and whispers.

"Who?"

"The guy you were just with. The librarian. I mean, he looks like he doesn't belong here, to be honest. I'm surprised the school allowed him to work at the university. He can easily take advantage of students like you. He's almost as big as the door!"

I feel a flash of irritation, and I whip my head to her, frowning. "What do you mean?"

She rolls her eyes and pulls my arm, leading me to the massive double doors and casting furtive glances at Jacob. The moment they close behind us, humidity wraps around me like an unwelcome, uncomfortable blanket.

Ugh. I'm so not a fan of this weather. I'll take heavy downpours and snow any day.

Squinting my eyes against the harsh sunlight, I lift a hand to shield my face from the heat and mentally chide myself for forgetting my sunglasses...again.



Melissa hisses, “Don’t tell me you don’t notice him always stealing glances at you? Or how he always accompanies you to grab the book you want? It’s like he wants to be alone with you. Ew.”

My pulse races, excitement bubbling in my veins. Really? So he notices me? He doesn’t do that to everyone? I always think he finds me annoying because he has that perpetual crease on his forehead when he sees me. Sometimes, he talks to me like he’s angry or pissed off at something.

But maybe...

Without thinking, I run a finger along my lips. We almost kissed. He was so close. If Melissa didn’t arrive, would he have...?

“He definitely looks dangerous. He’s so tall and broad. If he decides to corner one of us, we can’t do anything about it. And when you think about it that way, he’s kind of a security threat.”

I whirl around so fast that she widens her eyes and staggers back, her shoulder bag sliding to the crook of her elbow.

“What is your problem, Mel? He’s not even doing anything. You drop these accusations based on your assumptions. You think he’s dangerous? Well, how about Todd and his frat brothers who forced me to drink liquor when I already said no? You still hang out with him, right? So you basically have a skewed sense of what’s dangerous.”

I don’t wait for her reply because I turn my back on her and sprint to my next class. My beige leather crossbody bag bounces with each hurried step, with the sun beating down on my back mercilessly. Sweat slides down my spine, and I’m pretty sure I’ll end up semi-soaked with perspiration when I arrive in the hall.

God, I have no idea why I’m still hanging out with Mel or her clique.

She stuck with me on that first day of school, and I went with her because I wasn’t good at making friends. I like to keep to myself, but I thought Melissa was cool.

Yeah, right.

Raw anger shoots through me at the way she described Jacob. She doesn't even know him, hasn't talked to him. But she thinks he's dangerous? What the hell? I've never felt safer than when I was with him, even if it's just a quick walk to the next shelf.

I mean, sure, Jacob's 6'4" height and brick wall frame looks scary and intimidating at first. But I remember how he's always gentle when handling books, how careful he is when pulling one from the shelf, or the almost-loving way he runs a finger along the spines.

And his eyes...

Oh god. Whenever he looks at me, I almost melt into a lusty pile of mess on the floor. It's like he sees through me. Each time he pays attention to what I'm saying, I almost trip over my words because how can anyone stay sane while he stares?

Melissa thinks he's just another librarian. Well, she's wrong. He's a well-known paleontologist with several published books under his name.

Honestly, I don't know why he works at the library. It doesn't pay a lot and the job itself seems beneath him. Then again, I don't care because if he stopped working at my university, I wouldn't know what to do with myself. I can't not see him. I'll go crazy.

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WHAT AM I DOING HERE? I have no idea. All I know is that the music at the sorority house was too loud and I felt a headache coming. I can still feel the vibrations inside my head. Not to mention the strobing lights some genius brought and set in the middle of the living room.

Melissa was off doing her thing with her boyfriend. Todd was being his annoying self, forcing another drink on me, smiling his trademark smile that I know won't lead to anything good.

It was so chaotic that I longed for the peace and quiet the library provided.

*Ha-ha, Jenna. Very funny.*

Who am I kidding?

I'm here because I need to see him. Need, not want. I feel the longing all the way to my toes, and I can't rest until I see even a glimpse of him and his massive silhouette.

The wind picks up and my hands automatically go to the edge of my skirt, holding it down and trying to stop it from being lifted higher and exposing my panties. Melissa thought it would be fun to organize a costume party just because, so I'm dressed in a skimpy teacher outfit. I don't know why I let Mel talk me into wearing this, but here I am.

I should've stopped by the apartment and changed into something more appropriate, but when I looked at the time, it was an hour before closing and I didn't want to waste a single second anymore.

Yep, I got it bad. Real bad for this man.

I don't remember crushing so hard on anyone like this. At this point, I'm convinced I'm actually already falling for him.

Crap. Is this what an unrequited love feels like?

Taking a deep breath, I grasp the brass handles and push the heavy doors open. The hinges creak softly, and I sigh as the cool air grazes my skin. Yet another reason to love the library.

I'm not surprised to find it almost empty, with only a few students scattered in the study nooks and long tables. The only sounds are the faint hum of the air conditioner and the occasional soft rustling of pages.

The doors swing closed behind me, and I wince, preparing myself for the loud thud. But none, just a muted swish. Thank god for small mercies.

The service counter is empty but the librarian's desk is full of the usual clutter—a vintage lamp with red and green glass shade, a small pile of books, a scattering of ballpoint pens and highlighters, and a computer monitor with a keyboard on the side.

I try to ignore the hollowness in my chest.

Doesn't he normally wait until everyone has left? Or maybe I spooked him

with my behavior earlier that he went home early?

My ribs grow tight. It's stupid of me to come here. He probably has other plans. I mean, I'm sure someone who looks like him has no shortage of women dressed in sexy outfits asking him to attend parties with them.

Stupid. Stupid. Stupid.

"You're looking for something?" His rich baritone voice from behind me makes my core clench and my breath quicken.

I turn slowly to find him leaning against the wall, partly hidden by the bookshelf. He's changed to something more casual, maybe because it's almost closing time.

His dark blue plaid shirt with its sleeves rolled reveals his muscular forearm and big, veiny hands, and I curb the urge to whimper. God, he's so sexy it physically hurts me to look at him.

His black-rimmed glasses slide down his nose and he pushes it back up, squinting at me as he does so. I'm about to say the first book that came to mind when his hot eyes rake up and down my body. Jacob's eyes glaze over, pupils blown wide.

In turn, my body responds by throbbing with raw need, wet heat blooming between my thighs. I cross my legs and clench, scared of being too obvious.

But my god, he sees it.

His eyes narrow, and his Adam's apple bobs, the muscles in his throat flexing. With his huge hand, he scrubs it across his well-trimmed beard.

Sparks zip through my belly, my breath coming in short pants, and he hasn't even done anything. He's not even near me.

He stays in place, but he's gritting his teeth, a muscle ticking in his jaw.

Maybe it's the alcohol from earlier, but I suddenly feel bold. I want to see where this goes. I want to know if what happened before wasn't a one-time thing. If he denies me and pushes me away, then at least I tried. It doesn't mean my heart won't break into a million pieces.

I stroll to him, the soft rubber soles of my doll shoes gliding across the polished hardwood floor.

He still doesn't say or do anything, but his breathing is labored, his face contorted like he's in pain.

Maybe this is a mistake. Maybe I'm making him uncomfortable. Maybe he doesn't know how to reject a university student. Maybe—

The thought leaves me as he grabs me by the waist, pulls me to him, and crushes his lips to mine.

Oh. My. God.

I've dreamed of this so many times I lost count. But dear god, it's so much better than I thought. His kiss is urgent and demanding like he wants to take as much as he can before we come up for air.

One hand snakes behind my back, his huge hand cupping the back of my neck, his thumb caressing my pulse—my pulse that has gone wild.

I clutch his collar as his tongue invades my mouth, plunging in and out, his beard tickling me.

A long moan leaves my lips, and it horrifies me, afraid of calling attention to us, but he swallows it and sucks my bottom lip between his teeth.

When he pulls back, his breathing is harsh and so is mine, his eyes flaring with naked hunger. My skin twitches at his touch, and I want more of him. More of whatever this is.

He can probably read my mind because he takes my hand and leads me deeper into the 'Special Collections' section. Light is dimmer here, and I almost sneeze at the dust motes floating in the air. We go deeper into the area, trying to maneuver around uneven tiles, until we reach the back.

Jacob stops in front of a bookshelf full of paperbacks, some with yellowed pages, others with torn covers.

He turns to face me, face cast in shadow. "Are you trying to kill me or getting me to kill someone?"

It's the last thing I expect him to say. "W-what?"

He tilts his chin at my outfit and I shift from one foot to another, this feeling of uncertainty and self-consciousness quite foreign to me. "You coming here dressed like this. I'm not sure if I'm having an aneurysm because I get to see your gorgeous legs, but if someone else is looking at that, I might have to wring their necks."

Oh. Oh.

My body flashes hot with that revelation. It's savage, a little caveman...but for some reason, I like it. I really like it. And it bolsters my courage. "You like what you see?"

He growls through clenched teeth. "You have no idea."

Jacob pinches the bridge of his nose, huffing in exasperation. "Listen, Jenna. You need to leave. I don't know why I brought you here. And I don't know what I'll do if you stay here any longer."

The way he says my name is a shock to my system, and I almost rock on my heels. Why does it sound so sexy? I'm playing it on a loop in my head. "Why?"

"You're short-circuiting my brain. I'm not even sure why you let me kiss you. I pounced on you like an animal. I'm sorry."

"S-sorry? You're sorry you kissed me?"

He rears back and looks like I've just slapped him. "What? No. That's not what I mean. God, Jenna. Kissing you is a dream. I can die a happy man right now."

"Then what are you sorry for?"

"That maybe that's not what you came here for."

Oh, he doesn't know. He has no idea how obsessed I am with him. "It is."

He cocks his head to the side as if I'm speaking another language as if he can't believe what I'm saying. "You like me?"

"Yes. Do YOU like me?"

Jacob lets out a harsh laugh, running his hands through his short dark hair. “Like you? That doesn’t even begin to describe what I feel for you.”

Am I dreaming? Is it possible I passed out at the party and my mind conjured all these up? But he feels too real. Everything seems too real.

Squaring my shoulders, I smirk. “Then show me.”





JACOB

**S**he doesn't have to tell me twice.

I claim her mouth like a starving man devouring a full spread of his favorite foods. I'm out of control, operating on instinct, and hell-bent on giving her all I've got.

I don't know what I did to deserve her, but she's here, taking all I'm giving her. And I'm giving her everything.

Sawing in and out of her mouth, my hands run over her delicious curves. It's like every part of me knows this is a rare gift—being with her, touching her, pleasing her. And fuck if I'm gonna waste any second of it.

I back her against a shelf, careful to cup the back of her head so she doesn't bump anywhere.

Jenna whimpers when I pull back, and I chuckle, loving how responsive she is, making sure to tuck every moment into my memory so I can go back to it and replay it as often as I want.

My lips graze her cheek, the shell of her ear, her jawline. Then, I start my trip down—the column of her throat, her exposed cleavage, and down, down down.

Her fingers are yanking my hair, and I welcome the sting. She can rip all my hair out if she wants.

Sitting on my haunches, I'm at eye level with her pussy. I look up back at

her, and she has her eyes closed, chest heaving with exertion like she just ran a marathon.

“Eyes here, Jenna.”

She snaps her eyes open and stares back at me, eyes glassy with lust.

Without breaking eye contact, I run my rough, calloused hands on her stockinged thighs. I don't like them. I don't like anything that separates our skin.

So I rip it, the sound of tearing reverberating in this corner. I have no idea how many students are left, but the last thing I want is to get interrupted, so I will myself to go slower, be extra careful.

I don't want to break this moment with her—a moment I may never have again.

I press a kiss to one smooth, creamy thigh, and she shudders. That's it. I'm on a mission to please her so good she'll want a repeat of this.

I trail kisses upward until my mouth is just an inch away from her mound. Her white cotton panties are soaked through, and I can smell her arousal.

Fucking ready. Ready for me. Only me.

My hand shakes when I reach for her panties and hook it to the side, trying to stifle my groan at how pretty her glistening pussy is. Almost dripping.

I stick out my tongue and drag it along her slit, feeling the fluttering of her folds. She sucks in a sharp breath and clamps her lips tightly to stop the moan from escaping.

Good girl. She doesn't want us interrupted too.

Her long fingernails dig into my scalp as I flatten my tongue on her sensitive nub, alternating between licking a stripe and flexing it on her hard button.

Not enough.

Jenna scrambles for purchase when I drape one leg over my shoulder, then the other. I stand and bring her with me, her head almost reaching the topmost part of the shelf. She's attempting to hold onto anything, accidentally

pushing books in the process.

A couple of paperbacks fall to the floor, but the sound is so soft, I'm sure nobody else heard it.

"I-I'm sorry about that. I—"

I don't even let her finish her words as I drive my tongue inside her tight walls. She clenches around me, and I almost howl in satisfaction. I have my hands on her thighs to keep her steady, but she still writhes and thrashes, pushing her hips forward and letting me go deeper.

Fuck. What I'd do to have my cock inside her instead.

My hands cup her ass, helping her along and guiding her in and out of my tongue. When her thighs tighten around my head, trapping me, I realize there's no better way to die.

I don't need to breathe. Fuck. I need her more than breathing.

"Oh. Oh god. Yes, yes, yes."

She's whispering, but from out of nowhere, she grabs my head and arches her back, and I know she's almost to the edge. I keep my rhythm until she locks her legs at the ankle and grinds her hips. She's riding my face, and I love it. I love everything this girl does.

Seconds later, her whole body stiffens. When I look up, her lips part in a silent moan, her eyes snapping shut, legs quivering.

In that moment, I want to clench my fists and crash them repeatedly against my chest, feeling like I just conquered something...or someone.

Her stomach continues to shudder when I lower myself and help her down. She stands on wobbly knees, and my arm automatically goes to her waist to support her.

I did that. She came apart with nothing but my tongue inside her. Imagine if it had been my staff, hitting all her spots.

My mouth still glistens with her come, probably my beard too, and her eyes widen as she gapes. She grabs a small handkerchief tucked in her tiny breast

pocket, stands on her toes, and wipes my mouth.

Some student gets up to leave. The sudden scrape of chair legs against the floor causes Jenna to jump in startled surprise.

I think this is it. This is when she'll awkwardly thank me and tell me she's not looking for anything serious, that she got carried away, and maybe I shouldn't mention what happened to anyone.

I'm mentally preparing myself for the eventual rejection when she peers at me from under her long lashes and smiles. "Want to take me home?"

At first, I'm not sure I understand her correctly. I mean, a girl like her hooking up with me is unbelievable. But she also doesn't mind being seen with me?

What's going on?

"Of course. Let me go get my things and lock up."

I have never gone through the closing checklist as fast, locking up in record time because I don't want her to get tired of waiting for me and changing her mind.

She's standing outside, still flushing, when I finally lock the doors. The wind teases her extremely short skirt, and she smiles sheepishly as she clutches that tiny piece of clothing delicately.

I hold her arm, still in disbelief at how casually I can touch her, and lead her to my seven-year-old white sedan. What must she think of me? Her friends most likely have newer cars than me. It's never bothered me before, but Jenna in all her perfect glory just doesn't suit this rusty, old vehicle.

Maybe if she wants to hang out again, I'll finally touch the money sitting in my bank account for more than a decade. I live a modest life because that's enough for me, but with Jenna, I'm gonna shower her with everything. Whatever she wants, I'll give it to her.

I grab the handle and the door to the passenger side opens with a creak. After making sure she's settled comfortably, fanning her skirt around her toned legs, I head to the other side and slide into the driver's seat.

The car smells of polished leather and old books because of course, I have hardbounds on the backseat.

“Where do you live?”

She tells me and I almost laugh. I know where she lives, her floor, and her apartment number. I also know she lives alone with no roommate. But I don’t want to creep her out by revealing everything I found out about her. I don’t want to push my luck.

I’m well aware that Jenna is way out of my league. But tonight, she gave me a gift. A gift I’ll always be grateful for. A gift I’ll keep revisiting when I jerk off to her.

The roads are mostly empty. Lampposts with banners of recently concluded events line the walkways and cast pools of light while branches of towering trees filter the moonlight. Some lightbulbs flicker, while some bulbs are totally out, leaving us to pass through a few patches of darkness.

I drive slowly, being mindful of the drunk students milling about or chatting by the road, dressed in different costumes. I don’t know what the party’s about, but it might as well have been Christmas because I just received my gift. Christmas came early for me.

The air inside the car is thick and charged. We’re silent throughout the drive, but my body’s fully aware of her nearness, and this thread of awareness keeps winding tighter and tighter. We’re about five minutes away when I start to slow down. Five more minutes. Five minutes until the best night of my life is over.

“Jacob.”

I will never get over the fact that she knows about me aside from being the librarian. My name on her lips has me stiff in seconds. I don’t know how she does it, but Jenna royally fucks up my head, and I’m not even complaining.

“Yes, Jenna.”

“What happened earlier...”

Ah, of course.

I give her a small wave, pretending I don't feel something acidic rise up my throat. "It's fine, Jenna. I understand. You don't want me to tell anyone about it, right? I won't."

"Wait, what?"

I spare her a quick glance, her mouth slightly open and her eyebrows pulled together. Suddenly, I'm not so sure I'm right. "I mean, you're a popular girl in school. I'm just a scary-looking librarian. I understand if you don't want people to know we know each other...intimately."

"This is me."

I don't even realize we're already here, so I pull over to the side, just across her apartment building, and turn off the engine.

It's where all the rich kids stay. Not as luxurious as the city apartments but still different from the cramped dormitories on the other side of the campus.

The exterior is a mix of red brick and glass. They have balconies, for Christ's sake—big enough for hammocks and small lounge chairs. Soft lights glow in some of the windows, but her room is dark. Obviously.

It's too quiet inside, the air stifling, the tension so palpable.

"Jacob..."

Her voice is full of uncertainty, but I don't want to make it harder for her. Will it kill me that she doesn't want to see me again? Sure. But I understand. I'll do anything she wants. Anything for her.

I turn to face her, leaning my back against the window.

God, she's beautiful. I can stare at her for hours every day until my last breath and still be knocked out by her beauty. And she let me touch her.

"Jenna, I understand. Trust me. I've been obsessing over you for weeks, so I know your friends. I know who you surround yourself with, and I know I don't fit anywhere in your life."

"Y-you like me that much?"

"God, baby. You don't know the half of it. I was supposed to just work in the

library for a week, but I moved heaven and earth so I can stay indefinitely... for you.”

Her hands fly to her mouth, tears welling in her eyes. What did I just say? Is that too much for her?

“Baby, please. Fuck. Please don’t cry.”

I cup her face and wipe the single bead of tear sliding down her cheek.

“I’ve been obsessing with you too. I don’t even usually go to the library.” She chuckles and shakes her head.

Well, thank you, Jesus.

I lean forward, ready to kiss her senseless, when I hear a loud rap on the window.

“Open up!”

I shift around to find who I thought before was Jenna’s boyfriend. Todd or Tate something. Beach blonde hair. Blue eyes. Looks rich. Likes to remind everyone he’s a jock by wearing his varsity jacket everywhere. Doesn’t matter if it’s a hundred degrees out. He’ll wear it just in case anyone forgets.

I wait until he steps back before I open the door and step out. He’s almost the same height as me, but I’m a lot broader and I pack more muscle. Can’t blame him. He probably goes to the gym. I don’t. I spend most of my free time in my cabin, chopping wood and building stuff.

“Why the fuck are you with her?” His eyes flare and he’s pointing an accusing finger at me.

“Why do you care?”

He straightens his spine and sets his stance as if preparing for a fight. Does he think he can intimidate me like this? He’s a boy. I can send him to dreamland without breaking a sweat.

“Because Jenna’s mine! The fuck you think you are driving her in your piece of shit car!” He probably thinks I’m slow so he demonstrates it by swinging his leg to the side and winces when his shin hits the fender.

Damn. Must be so fun hanging out with this guy. Looks like he has one active brain cell that's dangerously close to dying.

"Stop it, Todd! God, you're embarrassing me!"

Jenna slams the door and rushes to him, slapping his chest.

"Jenna, babe. What has he done to you? Did he hurt you? Should I call the cops? Tell me. I'll give him a lesson he'll never forget."

I can't stop myself from barking out a laugh. He'll teach me a lesson? I'd like to see him try.

He turns back to me and sneers. "You think that's funny, you loser? My father knows people. He can have you—"

"Shut the fuck up, Todd!"

"Stop defending him, Jenna. I know you're innocent and all, but he could have taken you anywhere and hurt you."

"Why are you acting like this?"

"Because I'm your boyfriend!"

"No, you're not. He is!"

Jenna points at me, and my blood freezes solid. Did I hear her right? Seems to me I've been having problems with my hearing all night. I'm not sure I imagined the things coming out of her mouth.

Todd's face changes. He flicks his eyes from her to me and back to her. It takes him a good while, but eventually, understanding dawns on his face and he opens his mouth to laugh. He doubles over, hands clutching his stomach. "Oh fuck. Shit. I get it. I get it now."

Jenna backs to me and I cup the back of her neck, sliding my thumb along the side. If this asshole tries anything funny, I don't mind slamming his face against the concrete road.

Todd dramatically wipes the tears from his eyes and collects himself. With his hands on his waist, he shakes his head and chuckles. "Damn. Wasted a year on you, Jenna. Had no idea you were like this. I mean, I knew you were



playing hard to get, but you end up with him? Does he fuck you good? Because I promise you, my dick's big—”

I lunge forward, grab him by the throat, and slam his back against my car. He rears his arm back and tries to get in a punch, but I catch his fist and clench it. Hard.

His tendons stand out in his neck, eyes blinking rapidly, as he realizes he's in big trouble.

“You talk to her like that, disrespect her, and I have no trouble smashing your skull with my bare hands.”

His eyes are wide as saucers, and he's clawing my hand on his throat.

“I'm gonna let you go and you're gonna apologize to Jenna. You're gonna stay as far away from her as you can because if I see you anywhere near her, even your Daddy can't help you.”

I slam him one more time, knocking his breath out of his lungs, and he kneels to the ground, taking big gulps of air.

“Apologize.”

His smug and cocky look is replaced by raw fear. His breaths burst in and out, and he looks around, probably for reinforcement. Realizing he's alone, he hangs his head and slowly gets up.

My arm reaches for Jenna, shielding her if he goes crazy, but he runs a hand across his mouth and sighs. “Listen, Jenna. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. You left me at the party. One minute, you were there. The next, you were gone and not responding to my texts.”

“I'm not your girlfriend, Todd. I never was. I never led you on.”

He grabs his hair and looks up at the sky. “I know that now. Again, I'm sorry for being a jackass. Won't happen again. I'll stay away from you.”

Jenna doesn't reply, just nods. He opens his mouth to say something, but at the last minute, his gaze shifts to me and he snaps his mouth shut.

He waves at her before turning around and jogging back to where he came

from.

Both of us don't move, not until we lose sight of him. The night air carries sounds of laughter in the distance and strains of music. That's probably where Jenna was before. At a party with all the popular kids in school. Her friends. Yet she chose me.

She wraps her arms around her tiny frame and hunches her shoulders. I don't like seeing her like this—afraid, unsure, not herself.

Hooking a finger under her chin, I force her to look at me. "You okay, baby? I'm sorry you had to see that. I'm not usually aggressive and violent."

She gives me a soft smile. "I know. It's the first time someone came to my defense is all."

My eyes narrow. "What do you mean?"

"No one ever stood up for me. Not even my own parents."

She digs the toe of her shoe to the ground, not meeting my eyes. "Thank you."

I grab her shoulders lightly and press a kiss on her forehead. "Don't thank me, baby. I'll always protect you and keep you safe...if you let me."

Her cheeks redden. "If I let you?"

"You've already given me a gift earlier. But if you let me, I'll spend the rest of my days making you happy."

Her small hand reaches to touch my cheek, and I lean into it. "Then take me to your place."



JENNA

I don't know why I said that. I have no idea where I found the confidence to be this upfront with him. Am I going crazy? Maybe. Then again, I've been lusting after him from afar for so long that I just can't let this opportunity slide.

The drive to his cabin is quick, even if it's half an hour away. Maybe because we spent it talking about my future plans, my life at home, his career, how he got into paleontology, what I want to do after college, and all that stuff. The entire time, Jacob's holding my hand and running his thumb along my knuckles, igniting tiny sparks zipping through my lower belly.

He turns off the main road onto a winding, rugged path, gravel crunching beneath his tires. Tall trees loom overhead, and I can already make out a small rustic cabin in the distance.

Just then, raindrops begin to fall, pattering softly against the windshield. Something blooms in my chest. Ever since I was a kid, I've always loved the rain. Even until now. While everyone runs for cover, I stay rooted to the spot, head tilted back, enjoying the feel of cold raindrops on my face.

With my face pressed against the window, I watch as the rain begins to intensify, drumming on the roof and echoing through the car's interior. It's so soothing, so relaxing, like everything is where it should be.

"Stop the car, Jacob."

His forehead furrows, but he steps on the brake, and the car lurches to a stop.

I beam at him before I open the door and step out into the heavy rain.

I kick off my shoes and laugh at the feeling of the wet forest floor, my bare feet sinking into the cool, muddy earth.

It doesn't take long before I'm drenched, and with my arms outstretched, I step in front of the headlights, smiling at the stunned man inside.

I crook a finger and beckon him to come out.

He steps out slowly, probably unsure if he just brought someone cuckoo into his home. With one arm on the roof of his car, he shakes his head and laughs. God, I love that sound.

The raindrops soak him as he approaches me, his shirt now sticking to his skin, molding the fabric to his broad, muscular frame.

Oh my...how sexy is he? The shoulders, his chest, the arms. Everything about him has me wet.

His boots sink into the mud with each step, but he doesn't even seem to mind it.

When he's in front of me, I smile at him. "I've always wanted to be kissed in the rain."

A split second after saying those words, I feel his paws on my underarms, lifting me and looping my legs around his waist.

He grabs one side of my face and electricity thrums in my veins when he molds his lips to mine. My arms go around his neck, and his hands keep running down my back, along my legs.

Jacob wraps my hair around his fist and tugs it gently, forcing my head back. My face is to the sky, rain falling on us, but my body's on fire.

He tickles me with his beard as he runs his mouth along the side of my neck, sucking on a spot on my collarbone. With my fingers tangled in his hair, I arch my back, hoping to press my crotch against his.

With a growl, he realizes what I'm doing, pulls back, and presses our forehead together. "What is this, Jenna? I can only have so much control

before it snaps.”

“I want you. Take me, Jacob. I’m yours.”

He pins me with an incredulous look. “Jesus, Jenna. I can’t take you here. You don’t deserve—”

“It’s what I want. I want my first time with you out in the rain.”

His eyes look like they’re about to bulge out of their sockets. “First time?”

I nod. Does it turn him off? The fact that I have zero experience and might not know how to touch a man? How to touch him?

“Oh, fuck, fuck, fuck.”

He buries his face in the crook of my neck, and I feel an ache in the back of my throat. Is he going to take me back to the apartment? Please no.

“I’m a fast learner, Jacob. Tell me what you want and I’ll do it.”

“What are you talking about?”

I look away and bite my lip. “It bothers you, right? That I’ve never done it before? That I might not know how to please you?”

Jacob cocks his head to the side and chews the inside of his cheek. “That’s what you think? God, Jenna. I’m still coming to terms with the fact that I might not let you go once I claim you.”

Oh.

“I don’t know why you chose me, but I won’t question my luck. I will give you the world if you ask for it. But I will be your first. It’s a fucking honor, Jenna. But I’m warning you, I will be your only and your last. You’re never getting away from me after.”

That’s all I want, but I’m rendered speechless by what he just said. So instead, I tighten my arms around his neck and lightly bite his top lip.

He growls again, palms my ass, and rips my panties off.

Oh my god.

Jacob reaches between us, and my whole body wracks with pleasure when his finger touches my clit and slides it along my pussy.

“Fuck, Jenna. Fuck, you’re so wet for me. Is this mine, baby girl? Are you dripping for me? Because you want my cock inside your tight pussy?”

I didn’t know this side of Jacob existed, but I love it. I love it.

“Y-yes,” I pant, desperately needing him to relieve this terrible ache in me.

“Are you mine, Jenna? This pussy belongs to me now, you hear?”

“Yes, yours. Yours.”

He holds me with one arm while his other hand unbuttons his pants and pulls his zipper down. I cannot see it, but when he wedges the tip at my entrance, I know he’s just as big down there.

Jacob’s big *everywhere*.

I hiss when he stretches me. “I-I don’t think it will fit.”

His chest rumbles. “It will, baby girl. I’m made for you. This is made for you.”

Inch by inch, he pushes into me until he meets the barrier. The rain slows down, the drops becoming lighter.

“Jenna, baby.”

I whimper in response when both his hands rest on my hips. He slips his tongue inside my mouth, and when I let him in, he rams forward, the sting almost blinding me.

His arms go behind my back, one hand massaging my nape. “Baby, baby, baby. I’m sorry. So sorry. There’s no other way.”

“Don’t stop, Jacob. Don’t stop.”

He groans raggedly before he takes me in slow, deep strokes. God, he’s massive. It takes a few breaths before the pain fully subsides and is replaced by pleasure. And god, what pleasure.

Jacob grips my thighs and takes me right there and then, gritting his teeth, nostrils flaring. He's struggling for control.

But I don't want him in control. I want him to snap. Just like he did at the library. I want that savage side of him. Want it so badly.

Taking my arms off him, I fumble for the buttons on my tight top, slide it off my shoulders, and toss it to the muddy ground. I shiver involuntarily, the biting cold caressing my skin, my tits bouncing in front of him.

His eyes gleam wickedly. I have him. "Fuck, Jenna."

He lowers his head to my chest, swiping his tongue along my taut nipple, taking it between his lips, and sucking. His other hand wraps around my other breast, kneading it, pinching the nipple. Then, his thick girth jerks inside me, and I take that as a cue to ride him.

I move my hips, rotate it, and grind. I've never done it before but it's as if my body knows how to do it. I hear a hoarse sound from him, and he's squeezing his eyes shut, inhaling a huge breath and exhaling forcefully.

Jacob throws his head back and swallows hard. Mesmerized by the sight, I clench my inner walls, and he swings his gaze back to me, watching me from beneath heavy lids.

His whole body is strung tight under my hands, and I know he's about to come. I am too. His grip on me tightens and, with a low grunt, pumps into me hard and without mercy.

Yes!

My wet flesh is slapping down on his massive member, and I'm moaning and whimpering and crying out his name.

Spots of color dance behind my eyes, and orgasm rolls through me in a rush, my whole body shaking with pleasure. I fall forward and rest my forehead on his chest, feeling boneless.

When I open my eyes, I watch him bare his teeth, thrusting upward. His hand goes to the back of my head, and he bruises my lips with the force of his kiss.

"I'm coming. Fuck, Jenna. Fucckkkkk!"



He drives deep into me, hot jets of come coating my walls, dripping out of me.

“Jenna, I—”

“This is perfect, Jacob. Everything’s perfect.”



JACOB

I'm inside her as we continue the short drive to the cabin. Still inside her as I kick open the front door, her body wrapped around me. Still inside her as I lower her to the bed.

Unbelievable.

I came so hard inside her, but I have no idea why I'm still sporting a half-chub, enough that my member doesn't even slip out.

Jenna lies on her back, smiling up at me, eyes twinkling and face flushing with the afterglow of our quick fuck.

I physically ache at having to pull myself out, but I need to see her fully naked and that pathetic excuse of a skirt is in my way. I unzip it and toss it to the floor. Might not return it and just keep it as a memento of our first night together. Might even frame it just because I want to.

And there she is.

My girl.

My woman.

My soon-to-be wife. Because like I said, letting her go is no longer an option. Not unless she wants me to.

And while I took her quick and hard outside, I now force myself to go slower and worship every inch of her.

---

I DIDN'T WANT to bring her home because if she so much as showed any signs of disgust, I'd be devastated.

I have a couple of million dollars in my bank account from working for petroleum companies over the years, but I've always lived within my means. I don't plan on working in the field any longer because it's physically exhausting, and it takes a toll on me mentally.

Since I live alone, I didn't see the point in buying something grand. So when my folks passed away, I fixed up my childhood home, making sure there was running water and solar power, and it was comfortable.

I've always loved it, but I wonder how it will look from Jenna's eyes. It's a far cry from the luxurious living she's probably used to. I bet her apartment is more expensive than my entire property. Doesn't mean I can't spoil her rotten because that's exactly what I intend to do.

One of the things I refused to change was the exterior. It's made of sturdy logs and has obviously stood the test of time. There's a wide covered porch with one three-seater chair. If she decides she likes to sit on it, I'll build a second one for her. Just for her.

Jenna turns to me as we head out of the bedroom and smiles that soul-crushing smile of hers. "It's lovely."

I smile without saying anything. I don't want to disappoint her. I really don't.

With her hand in mine, we walk to the small living room with a stone fireplace on one side and a flat-screen TV on the other. I have exactly one photograph on the mantel—from my high school graduation with my parents on either side.

Jenna steps closer, picks up the frame, and runs a finger along the glass cover.

From out of nowhere, I'm flooded by visions of her and our children. Of dozens of photographs filling the mantel—our wedding day, her pregnancy, kids' first birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year.

There's no future without her. None.

"Are you hungry?"

She giggles. "It's almost midnight."

"So that's a yes?"

"Okay."

Half an hour later, we're sitting on the wooden chair on the porch, blowing on our steaming bowls of ramen. Rain has stopped, and we listen to the crickets chirping, owls hooting, and frogs croaking in the distance.

It's peaceful, and that's exactly why I chose to live here instead of anywhere near the university.

Jenna's sitting cross-legged beside me, her knee pressing to my thighs, and I will myself to continue eating and not helping myself to her...again.

I don't know if this is my fate now. If I'm bound to be walking with a boner for all my days. Because the mere thought of the way she felt in my arms has my cock roaring to attention and begging for release.

"What are you planning to do after college, Jenna?" I ask her in between bites.

She puts down the chopsticks over the bowl, a faraway look in her eyes. "To be honest, I don't know yet. I studied sociology because it's interesting, but I'm not sure where I'm gonna work after. Maybe a nonprofit organization especially for kids."

I can see her doing that. "You like kids?"

A dimple peeks as she smiles softly. "Yes." She fidgets with her chopsticks before turning to face me. "Do you?"

"Depends."

"On what?"

"If it's ours."

Just like that, another sexual spell descends over us. We hastily set our empty bowls aside, and Jenna traps me between her thighs, straddling me.

She's wearing one of my shirts. Too big on her, and one side is falling over her shoulder. I'm in my sweatpants and white t-shirt, making it easy for her to reach inside my waistband and pull out my steel rod, with a few beads of pre-come at the tip.

Lowering my face, I tangle my tongue with hers, sucking and plunging in and out of her warm mouth. With a pant, Jenna wraps her hand around my cock and slowly slides herself on it, gasping when she's fully impaled.

My hands fly to her waist to help her along, but she digs her nails into my forearms and glares at me. "Don't move, Jacob. Let me do the work. I wanna ride your thick cock until we both come."

Well, fuck. Never expected Jenna's dirty mouth, but I'm all in.

I drape an arm over the back of the chair and watch her.

Her fingers clutch my shoulders, and she takes over. Jenna throws her head back and rotates her hips, squeezing her inner muscles while she does it. Her body does this little wave that has me struggling not to embarrass myself by coming first.

Shit. I am well and truly screwed. Literally and figuratively.

Jenna's nipples turn to little peaks, her eyes going a little hazy as she peeks at me. She's turning me feral, and I grope her ass, roughly pushing her against me.

She rides me faster, moaning loudly and calling my name.

I can't not do anything, so I sweep my tongue against hers and drag it along the tendons of her neck. But when her hips rock harder, I slam upward, driving as deep as I can go.

My climax begins to crest just as she stiffens and trembles. "Oh god, Jacob. God!"

I press my hard shaft flush to her one more time until I fill her.

Sweet Jesus. She goes limp in my arms, and I carry her inside like it's perfectly natural for us to go to bed together. Like it's where she's always supposed to be.

---

I WAKE up the next morning, the warmth of the sheets clinging to me while I yawn and stretch. I expect to find Jenna beside me, but her side of the bed is empty.

Blinking away the last remnants of sleep, I sit up and run a hand through my hair.

Last night was unreal.

She's burrowed herself under my skin for the past few weeks, but everything came to a head when she came home with me.

Home. With. Me.

I let that sink in.

With nothing but my loose boxers on, I make my way to the hallway. It's oddly quiet. Too quiet.

Something ripples through me, but I ignore it. My bare feet pad on the hardwood floor, the only sound inside. I scan the living room and the kitchen.

Empty.

It feels like my spine is in a vise, acid rising up my throat.

My legs feel like lead, but I trudge on, looking for her from room to room until the last one left is the porch. I refuse to believe it. I refuse to even acknowledge that little demon niggling in my head.

It's not possible. She couldn't have just left.

But what if she woke up and, in the light of day, realized she didn't want anything more from me? What if whatever sexual haze she looked at me last night has cleared from her head?

How can I move past this? If she doesn't want anything to do with me, I don't have it in me to force her. I'd rather gnaw my own flesh than be the cause of her unhappiness.

I had one night. And maybe that's all she can give me.

It should be enough. I was lucky she allowed me to touch her, claim her virginity, and sink my cock into her over and over again.

That should be enough.

But fuck. It's not.

Jenna.

Come back, baby.





JENNA

**H**as anyone ever died from heartbreak? Because I may be the first.

I haven't left my room in three days. My phone is ringing off the hook, but I don't have the energy to check the messages. I can't even find it in me to get up.

If I can, I'll just lie in bed forever.

My tears have dried up. I don't think I can shed anymore.

I still remember how I got up early in the morning in Jacob's cabin to prepare breakfast and found an open letter on the table.

*Mr. Jacob Jameson,*

*We are pleased to inform you that funds will be available in your account five working days after you arrive in South America. Your flight details, accommodation information, and itinerary for the first three days are also attached.*

*Looking forward to working with you.*

My hands trembled as I reached for the airline ticket. The date for his travel was in two days. Two days! And he's bound for Venezuela!

Oh my god. Why didn't he mention any of this? Granted, we'd been so busy pleasing each other that there was barely time to talk.

But...

Fact is, he was planning to leave. There was no return ticket.

So I left. I walked for an hour until I found a taxi to take me back to the apartment. All the while, I could feel pieces of my heart chipping off, falling to the ground like pieces of glass. And it's making me bleed.

When I think of the connection I felt with him, I was sure whatever we had was headed somewhere. I was sure of it! But now...

Maybe all he wanted was a one-night stand. Something to get him by for all those possibly lonely nights when he's working.

I bury my face into the pillow and scream for the thousandth time. I scream until I'm hoarse, until my throat feels like I swallowed a thousand thorns.

I'll move on from him. Maybe not now. Maybe not in the next ten years. But I will. I have to.

He's probably forgotten all about me. Maybe he even has someone waiting for him there.

In a week, I'll graduate and move as far away from here as possible. He's going to Venezuela? Then, I'm off to the opposite side of the world, wherever the farthest city is from him.



THE SUN SHINES BRIGHTLY OVERHEAD, with rows of folding chairs and colorful banners on the campus quad. All around me, the graduates are laughing, chatting, already making plans for tonight.

I look at my own cap, the tassel dangling on the side. It's supposed to be a happy day. I mean, I'm finally graduating. It's not that I hated school, but I didn't enjoy it either. It was a means to an end. I get my diploma, work, and won't need my parents' support anymore.

But I can't find it in me to celebrate. If...If he's here, maybe...maybe this day will be different.

He's not.

He's probably settling in Venezuela. I can picture him being busy with work, going home to a girlfriend, and them spending the night in...

I shake my head. Stop. This obsession needs to stop. He's gone. Far away from me.

We shared one night. That's all.

Except that night, I came alive for the first time in my life.

I doubt I'll ever feel that way again.

One by one, our names are called until it's my turn. I walk across the stage, almost dragging my feet. The university president hands me my diploma and shakes my hand, and we pose for a photo, a well-practiced smile plastered to my face.

I descend the stage and start to head back to my spot when I notice something in the corner of my eye.

I whirl around and see him.

Jacob.

Standing beyond the crowd, towering over everyone else.

My breath catches in my throat, and tears prick my eyes.

We stand there in suspended animation, everyone else fading into the background. I hear cheering and applause, the sound muffled, and I'm barely aware of the others tossing their caps in the air.

I don't know how long we stay like that, but I blink and he's standing before me. I'm so used to seeing him in denim jeans and plaid shirts that this formal look knocks me off my feet.

He's wearing a crisp, white shirt, sleeves rolled above his forearm and paired with dress pants.

Jacob shoves his hands deep in his pockets, uncertainty crossing his ruggedly handsome features.

“Hi.” His voice is like a caress, and tiny hairs behind my neck stand.

“Hi.”

“Congratulations.”

I nod, unable to say anything. Is this a dream? A hallucination? Did my desperation conjure up an image of him?

“Why are you here?” I blurt out, the first traces of anger flowing through me.

He stumbles back a step like I just hit him. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have come. I just wanted to congratulate you. Again, I apologize. It won’t happen again.”

He turns his back on me so fast I don’t have time to process what he just said. But his strides are so long that I have to run to keep up with him.

“Jacob, stop!”

I grab his arm and pull as if I can actually hold him back.

Jacob’s shoulders tense before he faces me like he’s bracing for an attack.

“I-I didn’t...” I shake my head. If I’m going to move on, then I should at least give him a piece of my mind. “Why are you here? Shouldn’t you be in Venezuela?”

He frowns. “What do you—”

He realizes what I’m talking about. His eyebrows inch upward, mouth forming an ‘O’.

“I saw the letter and your plane ticket. Why are you still here? Did they reschedule your flight?”

“Is this why you left without a word?”

I swallow past the lump in my throat. “Yes.”

He curses under his breath. “Jenna, I was never going to leave.”

My chest tightens, and all of a sudden, my gown feels too heavy, too constricting even though it’s flowing freely over my dress.

“W-what do you mean? I saw your ticket.”

Running his hand across his brow, he shakes his head in disbelief. “They did that to essentially force me to accept their offer. I was never gonna go because of you. I couldn’t imagine being away from you. Didn’t matter if I was gonna work at the library until you graduated. I need to see you. I need you the way I need air to breathe.”

Oh. My. God.

“Jenna, I thought you left because you regretted what happened to us. I’ve been waiting outside your apartment, waiting for even a glimpse of you. But if you don’t want to see me—”

I don’t want to hear anymore, so in full view of everyone, I launch myself at Jacob and kiss him.

His arms automatically wrap around me, lifting me off the ground. Neither of us cares what others think. One week of not seeing him and I’m a shadow of my past self. But with him now, it’s like he breathed new life into me.

I’m alive again.

He is mine and I am his.

That’s the first and last time we’ll ever get separated.

He pulls back from me, an uncertain smile on his lips. “I need to ask you something.”

My forehead scrunches. “Okay. What is it?”

“I fell in love with you the moment I saw you. I’ve never felt that way before and will never feel it again unless it’s with you. I love you, baby. Will you marry me?”

There’s ringing in my ears as his question echoes inside my head. Is this for real?

Then, Jacob sinks to one knee, pulling out a tiny red velvet box from his pocket and opening it. A massive diamond ring sits inside, and I watch it in awe.

“Jacob...”

“Believe it or not, I bought this ring on that same day I first saw you. I told myself, if somehow you give me one shot to prove to you I can make you happy for the rest of your life, I’ll take it and give it a hundred percent. So, baby. What’s your answer?”

“Yes! Yes! I’ll marry you.”

Jacob slips the ring into my finger and kisses me with a passion that makes my toes curl. “I love you, Jenna.”

“I love you too, Jacob.”

# **EPILOGUE**



JENNA

### Five Years Later

**M**y whole body is shaking, tears in my eyes, blurring my vision.

I'm standing in the dimly lit bathroom at 5 AM, the soft glow of the morning sun peeking through our bathroom window.

Two small plastic sticks sit on the counter, my hands braced on either side of it. Two faint lines appear on the first one, while the second one has a plus sign on the tiny result window.

Warmth spreads throughout my body as emotions crash through me—happiness, excitement, anticipation, nervousness, anxiety, dread. But above all, happiness. Unexplainable happiness.

We're pregnant. We're having a baby.

Five years after our wedding and countless pregnancy tests, it's finally happening.

I close my eyes and mutter a thank you to the universe for giving us this blessing, for the little miracle growing inside me.

I jump when I hear a soft knock. "Baby? Are you okay? You've been in there for half an hour. Is everything alright?"

Everything is perfect.

Someone once told me that sometimes so many things could happen between waking up and going to sleep. This is one of those. Life isn't going to be the same. We've prayed for this, dreamed of this moment.

Now, it's happening and I can barely believe it.

I open the door and slip through the gap, clutching both sticks and hiding them behind my back. Jacob's forehead is creased with worry, and he scans my whole body quickly, assessing and wondering if I'm hurt.

Without another word, I flip the sticks to show him both displays. It takes him a few seconds to realize what he's looking at.

And I wish I could bottle his reaction, so I could visit it over and over again in my head.

A smile spreads across his face, the creases around his eyes deepening. He grabs me by the waist and pulls me into a tight embrace before he loosens his grip and peppers me with kisses. "Shit. Sorry. Is the baby alright?"

I can't help but chuckle. "Jacob, it's still super tiny. Like maybe the size of a grape."

"Nah, baby. We can't be too careful. I need to start modifying the house, make sure there's no sharp edges or slippery floors. And for the next few months, you're not gonna lift a finger."

I pull back and poke his side. "No way! I'm not gonna be bedridden for nine months. Besides, I'll need some exercise too."

Jacob groans and massages his nape, knowing full well he's gonna lose this battle—like every single time in the past. "God, baby. What am I gonna do with you?"

I chuckle again. "Just hope the baby doesn't take after me. You wouldn't want two of us bossing you around."

This time, he laughs and buries his face in my hair. "Boss me around all you want. You know I'll do anything for you."

"I love you, Jacob."

“I love you, Jenna. My wife. The mother of my child. My life. My everything.”

# **EXTENDED EPILOGUE**

JACOB

I am one possessive motherfucker, and I make sure my wife knows it every single day.

Right now, she's cheering for our two boys at a baseball game, wearing something short enough for every male gaze to wander toward her.

I wonder how their wives would feel if I came to each one of them and gouged their eyeballs out. I'm not above doing something violent when it comes to protecting Jenna.

"Hot damn. If I had that as a wife, I wouldn't even let her leave the house. We'll stay in bed all night long."

"Say that one more time, shitface, and I'll make you choke on your own spit while I watch with glee."

The asshole whips his head to me, and his face drains of color. His buddy drops the can of Coke he's holding and lowers his gaze to the ground.

Pathetic.

"I see you stray your eyes to my wife, even look at the soles of her shoes, I'll make good on my promise. You hear me?"

He nods repeatedly and so does his friend.

Jenna stands a few feet away from us, and I take long strides to reach her. She notices me and beams in my direction, making something flip inside me.

Can't blame these fools for looking. My wife is beautiful. Fifteen years of marriage and three kids later, I still froth at the mouth when I look at her.

I'm not even trying to hide the swelling in my pants the closer I get to her.

Her eyes widen when she sees, and her face is beet red.

"Someone's happy to see you, baby," I whisper to her and stealthily lick the shell of her ear.

A shiver courses through her, and she smacks my arm. "Stop. Somebody might see us."

"Somebody definitely will. It's either this or I go crash my fist into those men's jaws who refuse to look away."

"Jacob... They're not looking at me."

"Hmm."

I drape an arm around her and pull her close to me, meeting all the gazes of anyone who tries to stare at her. Good thing everyone is like a carbon copy of that loser earlier and starts busying themselves like I didn't just catch them ogling my wife.

Jenna wraps an arm around my waist. We watch our twin boys make us proud while their older sister yells to her heart's content in the stands.

I don't know what I've done in my past life to deserve this, but I'm mighty glad I have her and our kids. I no longer take on projects that require me to be out on the field, but I still do plenty of research. That way, I can stay at home and never miss special events like this.

Meanwhile, Jenna...

I'm not sure if I believe in soulmates, but the fact is...she's like the last piece of a puzzle slotting into place, like my soul has always been in search of hers.

This is a life I never knew I wanted. And I would never trade it for anything.

*The End*

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