



the
WIMBLY
ORDER



RILLY S BARON

The Wrong Order

Boston Mishaps Series

Riley S. Baron

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*TO ALL THE NERDY GIRLS WITH SUPERHEROES IN THEIR HEARTS AND JUST
WANT TO BE SEEN.*

I SEE YOU.

DON'T EVER CHANGE. NOT FOR ANYONE.

*AND IF ANYONE EVER TRIES TO MAKE YOU CHOOSE BETWEEN **B**ATMAN
AND **S**UPERMAN....*

*IT'S ALWAYS **S**UPERMAN. ALWAYS.*

One



Lenny

IT WASN'T OFTEN THAT I imagined creative ways a person could be killed, but today, I was up to thirty-six ways, and only adding more with each passing second. Between worrying about the state of the narrative assignment I had yet to finish, the video that I had yet to film and post, and the glaring asshole at Table Three, I was ready to call it a day.

Pouring more black elixir of life into the white mug in my hand, I lifted my gaze to where *he* sat, waiting for me to replace his coffee. His dark eyes met mine from behind his black-framed glasses, irritation furrowing his brow, and I tried to ignore how my tummy fluttered at his narrow-eyed glare.

I was lucky that I came into work in a shit mood because I'd always been a sucker for sexy grumps, and the guy currently glaring a hole into my ass had it going on in spades. I could all but see the storm clouds hanging over his head while he ground his teeth to dust.

It hadn't been my fault that he'd received the wrong order. I'd only followed Marcus's orders when he handed me the

coffee and told me to deliver it to the man by the window. He should have been a bit more specific because there were several men by the window. I'd simply taken a chance, my Jedi senses failing completely when I set the regular black coffee in front of the man who had ordered the espresso macchiato.

The frothy milk getting dumped down the front of the dark hoodie he wore was definitely my fault. And I wasn't about to apologize for doing it either.

He deserved it. In fact, I'd gladly shove his handsome face right into Nana's famous key lime pie if I thought it'd make me feel better.

"You keep scowling at the guy, he's going to think you don't like him," Marcus teased, bumping my shoulder with his.

I turned my scowl on my best friend. "I *don't* like him," I bit out angrily, wishing that I could add a little '*you suck*' art to the milky foam on his drink, just to let him know that he was an asshole. "A simple mistake, which you caused, by the way, and he was a jerk about it."

Marcus laughed. "How was he a jerk? I haven't seen him get off his phone since he sat down."

"I overheard him call me the *hot blonde bimbo* who couldn't make an overpriced coffee the right way," I informed him angrily.

"Doll..."

"Don't you dare say I'm overreacting!"

He held up his hands in surrender. “I was actually going to say that he thinks your hot,” he grinned. “And doll-face, that man...I’d let him call me anything as long as I got to call him *daddy*.”

I rolled my eyes at him, picked up the *correct* order, and stepped out from behind the counter. I used the short walk to study the man, taking advantage of his distraction to look him over from head to toe.

I’d noticed him the moment he walked in but had been busy with other customers. He was tall, fit, and so good-looking it was borderline disgusting. His dark brown hair curled at his nape from beneath the backward cap he wore, longer than was popular for men his age, which I’d pegged as in his early thirties. I’d gotten only a glimpse of his eyes but I knew they were dark, with lashes that most women would kill for.

It had taken all of a minute after he’d given his order to Marcus to drop down at one of the prime tables by the front window and slip a pair of sexy AF reading glasses on. He hadn’t moved since.

Every single woman in the shop had their eyes glued on the guy. I deserved a huge thank you for dumping milk all over the guy because he’d stripped off the hoodie, leaving him in a white Henley that did nothing to contain the bulging muscles of his torso. He’d shoved the sleeves up to his elbows, revealing heavily inked forearms that made my mouth water.

Bad Lenny. You don’t really want to take a bite out of the mean, grumpy asshole.

His head lifted, eyes meeting mine and I swear I could feel a little zing of pleasure straight to my core. His dark gaze scanned over my body, taking in the stained T-shirt the color of coffee beans that was too big for my skinny ass and my cream leggings that had seen better days. His full lips turned up in a smirk at the combat boots I wore, and I had a sudden urge to kick him in the shin like a toddler.

The second I was close enough, I all but dropped his coffee mug on the table to ditch and run, but his hand shot out and closed around my wrist.

“You mind waiting...wouldn’t want you to have to make another trip if this isn’t the right drink,” he grumbled, a distinct edge to his deep voice that sent delicious shivers down my spine.

Ignoring how good his long fingers felt wrapped around my wrist because I could all too easily imagine him wrapping that big, calloused hand around my throat, I cocked a dark eyebrow at him and shook him off.

“I think you might appreciate the cheap shit down the street,” I all but snarled at him, reaching for the mug to take it back and send him out the door.

What was it about this guy that set me off and made me want to plant my foot in his ass while simultaneously wanting to jump his bones?

He moved before I could take it back, lifting it to his mouth and taking a tentative sip. Eyes the color of storm clouds closed as he took another, adam’s apple working with the deep

pull and I swallowed against the urge to lick up the thick, corded column of his neck like a greedy hussy. His eyes opened and met mine as he set his mug down and I resisted the need to squirm beneath the intensity of his gaze.

“Satisfied?” I asked with a bit too much sass than was warranted.

That damnable smirk lifted one corner of his lips. “Far from it.” He shifted in his seat, tossing an arm over the seat beside him and sprawling long, denim-clad legs out before him. The look on his face was one of pure confident bliss.

It was a really good look for him. I could hear the little whispers of female ovaries everywhere as they swooned at the sight of his stormy eyes softening as the sweet notes of caffeine hit his bloodstream with all the stealth of a wrecking ball. Even his shoulders seemed to relax.

It was a look of complete and utter bliss. One that my horny brain latched onto and queried if it was the look he’d wear when he was balls-deep inside a woman.

“But at least the coffee’s good.”

The little daydream of him thrusting into my body I’d briefly indulged in was shattered at the sound of his deep voice, making me scowl down at his sprawled form. Either I was more tired than I thought, or this guy was walking sex on two legs and had shorted out my brain because guys never had this effect on me. Men fell to their knees ready to worship at the altar of my body, not the other way around.

“Probably has something to do with having the best coffee around,” I pointed out, before turning to head back to work. I needed to get away from this guy and the tantalizing pheromones that were turning my body to mush before I did something embarrassing like climbing his solid body like a spider monkey.

He was all kinds of delicious...even if I thought he had the personality of a dung beetle.

Two



CAL

IF LOOKS COULD KILL, Blondie would have incinerated my ass long before she had returned with the right order. Her big, green eyes blazed with the fires of hell, daring me to drop the pissy attitude and coax a smile or two from her. I wasn't usually such a dick about what I drank, but I was fucking pissed at the world and ready to throw down.

Sure as hell didn't help that the girl had dumped a carafe full of warm milk all over my favorite hoodie. By the time I got to practice later, it was going to stink worse than my buddy Cormac's lucky socks.

She made to leave and I cleared my throat, sitting up a little straighter to grab her attention again. I didn't miss the way she rolled those big eyes in exasperation or the way her pink lips turned down just a bit. My eyes drifted over the shirt she wore, looking for a name tag or something else to identify her with, but found nothing but small, perky tits that were shamefully hidden beneath the oversized tee.

With the way this chick was trying to ice me over, I wasn't the only one having a fucked up day. She had this sweet girl-next-door vibe going on but the second that I met those big eyes I could see the wild that she tried to hide. Made me wonder what kind of trouble she got into, what it took to unleash that wild child, and what it would take to be the one that she unleashed on.

Giving my head a shake, I took another long pull of rich espresso before meeting her irate gaze.

The pain in my knee had been keeping me up and it had taken months to find this place, that was the only excuse I had for being a prick to her. The Coffee Drop had been a surprising little find, and even though it cost enough to cover the price of my favorite protein powder on Amazon, I couldn't deny that sitting in the modern café with its soothing jazz filtering through the overhead speaker calmed the anger and frustration eating away at my insides.

“Did you think my tits were going to start talking to you?” Blondie asked, one dark eyebrow raised in a sexy little arch.

“Can't say they'd have much to say,” I shrugged, inwardly wincing at the hurt that flashed through her emerald-colored eyes. “Thought I might find a name so I could...thank you,” I rushed to clear up, though the damage had already been done.

“Sure,” she rolled her eyes, turning her back on me to leave.

I instantly wanted her back. I wanted her name. Hell, if I was being real, I wanted her pouty, pink lips wrapped around my dick while her mischievous eyes stared up at me, but I was

pretty sure she wanted to stick her combat boot so far up my ass, the team doctor would need to pull it free.

“Hey...” I called out to her, making her look back over her shoulder. She shoved a lock of blonde curls back behind her ear, that dark brow arching up making me question if she truly was a blonde. “Aren’t you going to tell me your name?”

She tossed her head back and laughed, confusion settling over me at what could possibly be funny about me asking for her name.

“Nope.” She took several steps away before shooting a glance back at me from over her shoulder. “You can just call me Blonde Bimbo,” she shot back at me, her husky voice chillier than the arena.

It took a hot second for me to realize she’d overheard the comment I’d made to Cormac earlier, right before she had dumped milk all over me. Guess that made sense now, I’d have probably done the same thing if I was her and I’d just been called a bimbo. I deserved no less, which pissed me off because I wasn’t this asshole.

The only woman I’d ever intentionally insulted without provocation was my little sister, and that was simply a brother’s right.

She didn’t wait for me to respond, heading straight back behind the counter to return to work. I watched as the dark-haired guy leaned over and whispered in her ear, which had another laugh ripping from her and I wanted to march over there and steal all her laughter away.

It didn't make a bit of sense, why this girl made me want to rile her up, to pull every bit of sass that I could from her. Right before putting her over my lap and spanking the brattiness out of her. I could all too easily picture that sweet ass of hers bare, the delicate honey tone of her skin flaming brilliantly with the print of my hand.

Fucking Christ Almighty, I needed to get laid.

Picking up my phone, I tore my attention away from the tempting view of Blondie and all her lithe curves, returning it to the contract that was a million times more painful than the fucking blown-out knee and months of physical therapy I'd undergone. It was part of the reason I was in here, drowning myself in espresso and jazz, when I should have been on the ice, making sure that I was ready for another season.

My final season from the looks of it. Boston was cutting me loose after the end of the season. They weren't benching me. They weren't trading me. I was done all because my physical therapist couldn't guarantee the coaches that my knee was back to full strength, even after all the work I'd put into getting it strong again.

It hadn't made a fucking bit of difference.

I'd had my last seasonal contract sitting in my hands for the last two weeks and I was no closer to wanting to sign off on it than when my agent Miles had placed it in my hands. There was a part of me that wanted to say fuck them all- throw away the money, the fame, the game that was in my fucking blood- all to prove a point.

My last season had been cut short when I'd taken a hit that had blown out my left knee. I'd had my fair share of injuries in my hockey career. Even had some that had benched me for a number of games. It was inevitable when you'd been playing the game since you were old enough to walk. I'd always bounced back, coming back stronger, faster, more determined.

Not this time though.

Absently, I rubbed at the pain that knifed through my leg, my head dropping back against the chair. I needed to figure out what I wanted to do. How I wanted to handle the situation that I found myself in.

“Do you plan on sitting here all day with a single coffee?”

I cracked my eyes open, giving a negligent shrug of my shoulder. “Haven't decided, Blondie. You got any better ideas?”

“Yeah, order another drink or free up the space.”

She was wiping down the table next to mine, so it wasn't as though she had come to single me out specifically, but I still wanted to believe that I hadn't completely fucked up my chances with her. I leaned forward, curious to see if there was a way I could make her forget the bullshit I'd spewed out earlier.

“I'm betting if I ordered a bottle of Fiji, you'd dump it on my head.” I propped my elbows on the table, giving her a contemplative look. “Even if I apologized for what I said earlier.”

She stopped mid-swipe over the table, bent over just enough to give a nice pop to her ass. “What makes you think I care what you think of me?”

“I wouldn’t be doing it for your sake, but for mine,” I answered. “It wasn’t your fault my order was messed up, and even if it was, calling you a bimbo was uncalled for. I’m sorry for that.”

Emerald eyes narrowed and I could see the wheels turning in her head, trying to figure out if I was being honest or if I was playing her. After a moment, she nodded in acceptance.

“Thank you...” her voice trailed off, a hint of a smile turning up her lips. “But I’m still not giving you my name.”

I grinned at her, amused as hell at her sass. “Fair. How about another drink then? Your favorite heavy-on-the-caffeine drink.”

She arched that damn brow again and I just knew, that whatever she planned on fixing, was going to be something out of the coffee God’s nightmares.

And I was going to have to drink it all.

Three



LENNY

WRAPPING MY ARMS AROUND Marcus's trim waist from behind, I propped my chin on his shoulder. "Whatcha doin'?"

His head turned to mine, lifting a hand to remove the earbud from his ear. Only then did I notice his phone in his hand and the video playing, my face heating with embarrassment. My eyes darted around the shop, grateful for the quiet morning that kept the place empty.

"I can't believe you're watching that!" I groaned, ducking my head against his shoulder as he continued to watch the video I'd posted just that morning.

"What? Just because you happen to be my best friend, doesn't mean that I can't enjoy the pure perfection that is that ass," he teased, pausing the video so that my lacy thong-covered ass was front and center and turning in my arms until he could face me. "I still don't understand why you hide all this," he waved his phone in my face, "under all that." His

eyes dragged down the bulky Boston College jersey I wore over ripped skinny jeans.

“I should never have told you about this,” I sighed regretfully. “It’s so fucking weird that you watch these.”

Marcus and I had been besties since kindergarten and my mom and I had moved in next door to his family. Where I was the girl carrying around a book or a sketchpad and couldn’t seem to make any real connections outside of him, he was the complete opposite. He was the point guard on the basketball team, the guy that everyone wanted at their parties, and didn’t bother discriminating against where his next date came from. Everyone loved him, and for some unknown reason, he remained my best friend. We didn’t keep secrets from each other.

Our senior year in high school, I’d run the yearbook committee and the school newspaper while he’d been dating the head cheerleader. When I fell victim to the classic *nerdy girl falls for the cute quarterback and gives him her virginity*, it had been Marcus who beat the ever-loving shit out of the guy when he found out that the asshole had videoed the whole thing and was sharing it with everyone. Turned out that I had been part of a sex bingo the football team had been playing, nothing more than a ticked-off square that had won the jerk the game.

As embarrassing as it was, I wasn’t going to be a victim of his bullying. So I did what any creative-minded, impulsive

eighteen-year-old would do. I made my own solo video and uploaded it onto social media.

Within a week, the high of all the attention was gone but not forgotten. I'd realized I could be anyone in front of the camera, show a side of myself I was terrified to show the real world, and began creating more content.

I'd told my mom who had begrudgingly told me that the only thing she asked was that I remove my identity from my posts so I could live a normal life outside of them. Using *CamGirls* had been an easy solution, and soon I was not just making content that made me feel hella good about myself, but I was also making money.

I rolled my eyes as he resumed watching the video of my morning routine, clad in a tiny crop top that revealed the bottom curves of my breasts and *Barbie* pink panties. The bell over the door chimed behind us and Marcus just waved me off, silently demanding I take care of the customer and leave him alone to perv.

“You're never going to get laid again if you keep perving out over your best friend,” I called out to him as I turned away, stopping dead in my tracks when I spotted the hottie from the day before standing at the counter.

“Oh, you have got to be kidding me,” I groaned as I stepped forward, feeling my cheeks heat beneath his stare. “You didn't hear that!”

He smirked and cocked a dark brow at me, his dark eyes flashing with amusement as he took in my BC jersey. “I'd be

inclined to forget what I'd heard for your name."

I groaned inwardly. He hadn't given up yesterday on trying to get my name, even asking Marcus when I pointedly ignoring him.

"If I tell you, will you leave me alone?" I asked, fidgeting beneath his gaze. The dream I'd had last night where this asshole had starred front and center flashed through my brain, a shot of heated lust aiming straight between my legs.

He shrugged a broad shoulder. "Come on, Blondie, it's easy. I'll go first." He held out his right hand, long fingers inked up and I swore I could feel each finger wrap around my throat with a promise for more if I were a good girl. "Hi, name's Callum, but most girls scream Cal when I'm making them come."

My brows arched in surprise. "Does that usually work for you?"

"Never had to work so hard for just a name," he deadpanned..

"Huh." I cross my arms over my chest, lifting one hand up to cup my chin as I studied him. I believed him when he said he didn't have to work for a woman's attention. Hell, if I hadn't heard him call me a bimbo, I probably would have given him not just my name and number, but my panties as well.

The man was just too damn sexy for his own good.

Yesterday he'd worn a hoodie with a basic Henley beneath, and today it was a dark blue flannel over a well-worn tee. He

should have looked like a backwoods lumberjack, not a fucking tatted-up Greek god.

I glanced up as Marcus slid on up beside me, ignoring the shit-eating grin on his face as he gave Cal a very thorough once-over. “She still playing hard to get?”

Cal leaned forward. “Want to do me a solid?” He asked in a dramatic whisper.

Marcus leaned in to meet him. “Now why would I give up my best girl’s name when she obviously doesn’t want you to have it?”

I chuckled at the playful hurt that crossed Cal’s face and could have kissed Marcus for having my back. I had thought for sure he was going to hang me out to dry since he kept telling me that a vibrator did not make up for a good fucking.

Cal seemed to think about what he was going to say next, his eyes once again flicking to mine with an amused gleam. “You like hockey?” he asked, reaching out and tugging on the long sleeve of my jersey.

I didn’t move away, not when the feel of his fingers grazing over the back of my hand made butterflies burst into flight in my belly. “I don’t have anything against the game,” I answered honestly, glancing down at where his tattooed fingers toyed with mine. My teeth caught my bottom lip as those fingers wrecked havoc on my control.

He laughed deeply, the husky sound of it wrapping around me as surely as his fingers wrapped around mine. “Hockey is

much more than just a game, Blondie.”

“If you say so,” I retorted, finally tugging away from his devious fingers and taking a step back. I had to put some space between us so that he couldn’t write any more crazy voodoo spells on my skin.

The glint in Callum’s dark eyes told me that he knew exactly what he was doing and how he was affecting me. “How about this...you surprise me with another one of your coffee cocktails and you let me surprise you with...”

“Don’t you dare say you’ll surprise me with your dick,” I interrupted.

Marcus sputtered in a shocked gasp of breath while Callum threw his head back and roared with laughter. There was nothing sexy or seductive about his amusement, and yet I still felt it hit me with all the force of a raging bull.

God, this guy could probably fucking fart like an old man and still make me want to lick him up like a popsicle on a hot summer’s day!

“Trust me, Blondie, while I’m all too happy to surprise you with my cock, that’s not what I was going to say. I’m not that type of guy, you have to at least buy me dinner before I let you see what I’m packing,” he teased.

“Bullshit,” Marcus coughed, earning a punch in the arm.

I felt my cheeks heat and gave him a rueful shrug. “Can’t blame me for thinking it, right?”

“Let me take you to show you what hockey really is,” Cal finally finished his thought. “After you tell me your name, of course. I can’t keep calling you Blondie, not when I really want to introduce you to my dick.”

“Oh for fuck sake, just give it to him already,” Marcus choked out. I was shocked he could even get a word out, he was laughing so hard. “Before he drops any more lame-ass pickup lines on you.”

“Gah!” I groaned, mentally throwing up my hands in defeat. Marcus was right, one more raunchy pickup line and I might forget my resolve to stay away and shut him up with my tongue down his throat. “Lenny!”

Cal grinned like a little boy who’d just visited Santa and received his entire wish list of toys. “See? That wasn’t so hard, now was it?”

“You have no idea,” I pouted, a sense of giddiness settling over me in preparation for what came next. I figured he’d ask me out, I’d say no, and then he’d leave. Playing hard to get only lasted for so long before someone got tired of the chase, and I was bound and determined for it not to be me.

Not with his voice running on repeat in my head as he called me a bimbo. He wasn’t getting into my good graces that easily. The man needed to grovel a whole hell of a lot more than just saying sorry.

Marcus grinned maniacally, tossing a salute to Cal. “Let the games begin,” he chuckled.



“What can I get....?” my question trailed off as I met the stormy blue eyes of the man who was driving me absolutely crazy.

Callum grinned cockily at me as he braced himself against the counter, the sleeves of his charcoal grey button-up shirt rolled up to show off the corded forearms covered in ink. His hair was pushed back, casually styled and despite the last two days, it looked as though he'd shaved. Where he had been sexy as hell in worn jeans and flannel, the dressed-down suit he wore was even deadlier.

This was the third day in a row that he had shown up at The Coffee Drop and I could admit, if only to myself, that I was starting to look forward to his visits.

“I'd like your phone number and an americano,” he said with a wink.

Rolling my eyes at him, I began making him his drink. I could feel his gaze on me, following me as I poured the last dregs of one pot into a to-go cup.

It had become a bit of a game for me, to see just how far I could push him by continuously giving him the wrong drink. I never knew exactly what it was that I was giving him, most of the time too scared to actually try it myself. Despite the mockery I was making of his drinks, he never pulled the asshole card with me, making me wonder if that first day

wasn't a one-off and if he really was just this charming, sexy hunk of a man.

I eyed him as I handed him the cup, part of me hoping he would take it and go, while the other part wanted him to claim a spot and stay. He smirked as he took a tentative sip. I watched him so intently that I didn't miss how his strong jaw tightened, his throat working like he was trying hard to get it down.

“Problem?” I asked in a saccharine voice.

“Nah, just curious how such a cute pint-sized woman like you can have such a devious heart,” he answered, his gravelly voice laced with amusement as he looked down at the cup he held, then back up at me.

The smirk he gave me did funny things to my insides, my eyes dropping to his lips. I bit my lip to hold in the moan that threatened when the tip of his tongue darted out to lick over his full lower lip, my dirty brain automatically conjuring up where else I'd love to feel that particular appendage.

Ugh. Why does he have to look like the tastiest treat ever? I just want to eat him right up!

I shrugged a shoulder, desperately trying to rein in the wanton thoughts that were racing through my head. The oversize sweater I wore dropped off the opposite shoulder to reveal the pink lace of my bra, giddy as a school girl when his eyes narrowed in on that tiny scrap of lace. I ignored the swarm of butterflies taking flight as if they were trying to get out of range of the heat pooling low in my belly.

“I don’t know what you mean.”

He made no move to leave, just propped a lean hip against the counter and took another sip, his gaze never leaving mine. I hated admitting that he was getting passed my defenses, his easy charm slipping through and making it really damn hard to keep saying *no*.

I arched a brow, silently asking if he needed anything else. His smile widened, catching sight of a dimple that until now had been hidden beneath a layer of whiskers and all my walls crumbled beneath that sexy-as-hell divot.

“You really, really need to stop that,” I warned him, my hands nervously tugging at my sleeves.

“Stop what?” The way he asked was full of mischief and innocence that gave him a boyish charm, making me want to climb over the counter and kiss him for all I was worth.

“That!” I cried, waving my hand at his stupid, perfect face. “You know exactly what you’re doing!”

He tossed his head back and laughed, “I’m just waiting for the rest of my order.”



“Your boyfriend is back,” Marcus teased, nodding to where Callum sat in his preferred club chair, a paperback in hand.

My core clenched as I took in the damned glasses that framed his dark eyes in the sexiest way, the messy tumble of his dark hair that I could easily imagine being caused by a

night of my fingers tangled in the soft locks, and the tattered jeans he wore.

Give the man a paper bag to wear, already. Might make him a little less appealing to the female population if he didn't look like a fucking sex god.

“He’s not my boyfriend,” I groused, even as the little sex-kitten inside purred thinking of this guy actually being more than just a pest of a customer. I’d be lying through my teeth if I said that I hadn’t been thinking all kinds of dirty thoughts about the man.

Something told me that he’d be anything but a vanilla lover.

I was getting a little sick of denying I wanted to take him for a ride.

Five days and he still kept coming back. He was nothing like what I had predicted on that first day. Nothing. It wasn’t out of the realm of possibility that he’d just had a really shit day, considering that he had apologized and continued to take the questionable coffee drinks that I made him without complaint, so he couldn’t be that bad...right?

Or he’s just extremely hard up to get into your pants and as soon as you give in he’ll go all Mr. Hyde on your ass.

“He specifically asked for your americano,” Marcus grinned. “I feel like that’s just foreplay for you two at this point. When are you gonna put that poor man out of his misery?”

“Nope.” Popping that *p* with a roll of my eyes, I turned to make his drink. I was in a good mood after the morning that

I'd had, deciding to go easy on him and making him my favorite dark chocolate caramel mocha.

“You can't tell me that the girl I watched play with a jeweled butt plug for the camera this morning doesn't want to come out and play with *that*,” Marcus teased, waving a wild hand in Callum's direction. “I'm not going to buy that shit!”

My head snapped up, shooting a glance around us to make sure that no one had heard the shit he'd all but shouted to the shop before whipping around to glare at him. “For fucks sake, Marcus, stop watching my videos!”

He grinned, stepping up and wrapping an arm around my shoulder. “I'm a guy, doll-face, what else do you expect me to do when my best friend is a sex-kitten in disguise. Plus, it's fucking fun making you go all red in the face with embarrassment.”

“You're an asshole.” I stuck my tongue out at him, my cheeks pink and on fire just imagining my best friend watching the video I had posted earlier this morning.

Best friends we may be, I still didn't want to think about him jacking off while I got ready for the day with a jeweled butt plug in place.

I shrugged his arm off, Marcus's laughter following me as I moved from behind the counter to take Callum his drink of the day.

Callum's head lifted as I neared, his eyes intense as he scanned my body from top to bottom, his gaze burning

through the hoodie and skinny jeans I wore. He may as well have stripped me naked and had his big hands running over my flesh with how clearly I felt that look.

“What torturous concoction have you made me today?” he asked, leaning back and crossing his arms over his chest. He had on another flannel shirt, this one a dark blue and grey that seemed to brighten up his stormy blue-grey eyes, the sleeves rolled up above his elbows to show off strong forearms inked all the way up to his fingertips and the top three buttons open.

All that tattooed skin was making my palms itch, the need to touch nearly overwhelming.

I could easily imagine those sexy arms braced on either side of my body as he leisurely fucked into me. Corded muscles flexing beneath golden tattooed skin as he used my body to get himself off. Images that were so fucking graphic and erotic, I had to wonder how I hadn't already melted into a puddle of wanton hormones at his boot-clad feet.

Who knew a man's forearms could turn my panties into a mess just by looking at them?

“I-I'm...” I cleared my throat, my voice thick with lust. I felt my cheeks go pink as his lips quirked up, the thought that he knew exactly where my head was at made me feel all squirmy in my skin. “I'm in a generous mood.”

One dark brow arched up, eyeing me as if I had suddenly grown a second head...or I'd decided to strip naked in front of him and do a fucking fertility dance in the middle of the coffee shop. It was anyone's guess at this point. My body had turned

traitor in the last five days, not even the daily quality time spent with my favorite pink toy seemed to be helping take the edge off.

“Does that mean you’ll let me buy you a drink?” he teased, leaning back further in his chair to study me.

I shook my head, even if the sex-kitten inside me was screaming at me to accept. “Not that generous.”

“Dinner?” His grin widened as I shook my head again. “Fine, you win, two dinners and a breakfast.”

Again, I shook my head, this time not even bothering to hide my amusement. “You think two dates is enough to make me want to stick around for breakfast with you?”

“Mighty presumptuous of you to think you’d be in my bed long enough for breakfast,” he chuckled. “And we both know we won’t make it past dessert before you’re under me.”

Gimme, gimme. Pretty please?

Mentally shaking off the purring thoughts, I took a step back and turned away. I had to get out of here before I forgot where I was and jumped into his lap and showed him my best impression of a cowgirl. Callum’s hand shot out, latching around my wrist, stopping me in my tracks. I glanced down at the inked fingers against my pale skin, my pulse skittering out of control as image after image of those same fingers in other places on my body filtered through my head...more sensitive places.

Giving in momentarily to that alter-ego I kept leashed unless I was in front of my camera, I stepped forward, leaning into him until I could breathe in the winter scent that clung to Callum's skin.

“What makes you think that *you* wouldn't be the one under *me*?” I whispered sultrily, playfully nipping at his strong jaw before shaking him off. It took two steps before he groaned, a tortured sound that made my body burn. Glancing back over my shoulder, I winked playfully, biting my bottom lip between my teeth to keep from saying anything more. From offering to say *Fuck the dinners, take me now*.

Retreating back into the safety of the kitchens, I leaned back against the metal island and took a deep breath. Need pulsed heavily in my veins and I was going to need to change my panties. In the space of a few short days, this man had turned me into the equivalent of a hormonal teenage girl with her first boyfriend.

Gah, another minute in that man's presence, and I'm going to be doodling our initials in hearts.

“Tell me why again, why you aren't going for a ride on that particular pony?” Marcus queried, wrapping me in a hug from behind. “Because I don't have a fucking clue how this place is still standing with the heat you two are throwing down.”

“I'm beginning to wonder that myself,” I muttered under my breath. I didn't know how I was holding out on him, but after that parting shot, I knew it was just a matter of time before I found myself giving in to the demands of both our bodies.

Four



CAL

MAKING SURE MY LACES were tight, I skated out onto the ice, hoping that the chill coming off the ice would calm the chaos in my head. Our first game was an away game in Washington, and the stadium was a fucking madhouse. They had the home-ice advantage, but they were also playing Duke Byrd, a rookie goalie called up from their farm team, skating for the first time on Washington ice. Fans were going nuts for the pretty boy.

Boston was getting their fair share of attention though. There was a tension in the air, an expectancy with my return to the game after months on the bench.

I needed to be on my A-game, not fucking daydreaming over the sassy barista that wasn't falling for *any* of my charms. If it weren't for all the puck bunnies that had set up house outside our locker rooms, I would have thought the doctors had cut out my irresistible charm when they'd repaired my knee.

I couldn't seem to shake her loose, no matter how hard I tried to dismiss her. The week I'd spent trying to worm my

way into her good graces had backfired on me, instead, she'd managed to slither under my skin and make me crave her like one of her fucking coffee creations. I'd barely managed to get her name out of her and here I was, so obsessed with her that I couldn't sleep at night without jerking off to thoughts of her.

Giving my head a shake, I glanced up at the stands where our fans screamed *O'Brien, O'Brien* in a mind-numbing chant. Cormac O'Brien was a force to be reckoned with, so much charisma you couldn't help but love the guy. Put him on the ice and he turned into a fucking cyclone of terror. He was rocking out to *Welcome to the Jungle*, all but humping the ice as he stretched out, his hips bouncing, legs stretching out wide while a handful of giggling girls plastered themselves to the glass, trying to get his attention.

"You think his stalker bunny is going to be waiting in his room tonight?" Noah Ayers, our left winger asked me, skating to a stop beside me.

Cormac had picked up a clingy fan over the last year, and we were all waiting to see how long it took him before he called the cops on her crazy ass. I had a feeling that his patience was coming to a head and if she managed to sneak into his hotel room again, he'd be losing his shit on her. He'd made the mistake of playing hide-the-stick with her and when he'd tried to walk away like usual, she hadn't taken the hint. Somewhere during the night, she'd gotten it into her head that she was going to be the next Mrs. Cormac O'Brien.

The girl was certifiable, but she wasn't my problem.

I shrugged in answer. “As long as she keeps her crazy contained to him, I don’t really care,” I laughed. “How’s the wrist?”

Holding up a gloved hand, he gave a cocky salute. “My wrist isn’t what everyone is worried about, Sin. You’ve been off all week and Coach is starting to fuck right out. Core told him to back off ‘cause you were just all up in your head.”

I scoffed. A bitter rock of angry resentment settled in my gut. Of course, Coach was worried. He’d all but signed me over to face the firing squad once the season was done. I’m sure he was wondering if I was going to fuck him over just as badly as he’d fucked me since I was known to be a bit of a hot head on the ice.

There was a vindictive part of me that had thought about it. Letting my anger and hurt out in each game, killing any chance we had for the Stanley Cup, but I couldn’t do that to my team. They didn’t deserve the hit to their careers, any more than I had deserved getting shafted.

“It’s not the knee that’s fucking with my head, man, it’s a girl,” I shrugged. “She’s making me fucking crazy!”

“Good Lord, asshole, don’t let Coach hear that or he’s gonna make all of us swear off the fairer sex for the season!” Noah groaned. “I can’t make it without sex man!”

I chuckled in amusement because he looked like someone had just threatened to kick his puppy. Clapping him on the back, I turned and began skating away from his dumb ass.

“Let’s not give him a reason to then,” I taunted, pushing all thoughts of the pretty little blonde out and getting my head into the game ahead.



We were in a sudden death shootout. The cheering coming from the stands didn’t register as anything more than an incessant buzz while every shout from Coach Cooper rang out as clearly as if he were standing on my fucking shoulder with a megaphone.

My knee screamed as I pressed forward, my vision tunneling on the puck as I framed my shot. One shot. That was all we needed to win this fucking barn burner.

One.

Fucking.

Shot.

No pressure, right?

Cormac was killing it keeping the puck out of our net, but then so was Byrd.

I took my eyes off the puck, zeroing in on the impenetrable wall that was Duke Byrd. He was a beast on blades standing in front of the net, unfazed by anything that we shot at him. Finally seeing my shot, I pulled my stick back, took a deep breath, and let it fly. Every person in the place watched with bated breath to see if I’d make the shot.

The ping of rubber hitting the crossbar echoed across the ice. A deafening roar followed as the buzzer went off, the puck dropping behind the raised glove of Washington's new goalie, just a fraction of a second too late to stop it.

I skidded to a stop, my eyes tracking up to the scoreboard to watch as the score changed over and the game was called.

Boston- four.

Washington- three.

My smile was a mile wide, turning and watching Cormac charge for me. Bracing for impact, I still stumbled back from the force of my team as they crashed into me. I tore my helmet off, throwing it to the ice and wiping sweat from my face with the sleeve of my jersey.

Nothing compared to the rush of winning. The feeling you got from winning a game well fought.

Not fast cars. Not the buzz of alcohol or the high of drugs. The only thing that came close was being buried balls deep inside a sexy woman. The feeling was indescribable, so intense that it took hours to wind down and hit the ground. This was what I lived for, breathed for, bled for.

I didn't know what the fuck I was going to do without it.

"You fucking killed it, man," Noah hooted once we hit the locker room, tossing the game-winning puck in my direction.

A gloved hand shot in front of me, snatching the puck straight out of the air before it even came close. Cormac's smug face had my eyes rolling, grabbing the puck from his

hands and shoving him away. He landed with a thud, laughing like a hyena when he took out one of the other guys, his pads doing nothing from stopping him from bouncing back up and dancing around, his hands raised and ready to box.

“Fuck Callum! That was the Hockey God’s showing y’all who they favored tonight,” he grinned. “They love me, I tell ya!”

“You’re a fucking idiot,” someone hollered. A wet towel landed against his face muffling his laughter.

Coach Cooper came stomping in, instantly sucking the excitement from the locker room with his domineering glare. It never seemed to matter much to him if we won, he always had a critical speech ready to thunder down on us. I’d heard most of it all before so I tuned him out, slowly stripping out of all the equipment weighing me down.

My thoughts turned quickly to Lenny. Wondering just how into the game she was and if she had watched the game tonight. Would she want to come watch one of our games? How fucking hot would she look wearing my jersey and nothing else. Would she cheer for the whole team, or would those emerald eyes see nothing but me on the ice?

“Sinclair!” Coach shouting my name registered and snapped me from my lusty musings, my head lifting to meet his gaze. I winced at the scowl on his face, making me question how many times he’d called my name before I’d responded.

“Yeah, Coach?”

“I bothering you with my questions?” There was an edge in his voice, one that told me he was pissed at my inattention.

“Sorry,” I murmured in response. Cormac side-eyed me, letting me know that the apology I offered was complete bullshit.

“I want the Doc checking that knee once we’re back at the hotel.” It wasn’t a request. If I didn’t want to be benched our next game, I had to jump through every fucking hoop he put in front of me.

“Yes, sir.”

Stripped, I wrapped a towel around my waist and headed for the showers. I was lagging behind, all because I couldn’t seem to stop thinking about this girl and what I wanted to do to her sweet ass once she caved beneath my charm and gave me a shot.

Cormac strutted into the shower room, taking a spot in the stall next to me. “You haven’t told me yet what’s got you so fucked in the head. Don’t think we haven’t noticed that you’re not your usual chipper self.”

I chuckled despite how irritating it was constantly getting checked up on. “You want to have a little heart-to-heart with our cocks out, Core?”

His dark eyes widened in mock outrage. “Sin, my man, I am so fucking comfortable with my manhood that if you want to hug it out and cry on my shoulder, I’m down. I’ll even help take that stick out of your ass while we’re at it.”

I rolled my eyes and shot him a one-fingered salute. “You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

Where I had eyes for only the fairer sex, Cormac played both sides of the fence. His last steady relationship had been with a journalist with the Boston Tribune, a sports columnist that hadn’t been able to turn down his advances. He’d caved beneath Cormac’s considerable charm like bowling pins... right up until Cormac found a naughty little puck bunny naked in his bed on one of our away games.

“Nah, you’re not my type.” He winked at me as I finished up and grabbed my towel. “I’ve sworn off dicks this season, pussy is much easier to deal with.”

“Hurry your asses up, the bus is leaving!” Noah hollered, interrupting our little bonding moment.

Hustling my ass into high gear, I dressed while simultaneously tossing my shit into my duffel, cringing when I thought about how bad everything was going to stink by the time we got home.

I took a seat next to Core on the bus, knowing that he was right when he said they deserved to know where my head was at if it wasn’t in the game. Why I was so pissed off and combative with Coach when I was normally the chill one of the team. It was going to be a long fucking season if I couldn’t find a way to curb all the hurt and anger. It couldn’t hurt to lay some of the weight on my best friend. Let him help carry some of the baggage so I didn’t do something stupid in a fit of blind rage.

Cormac had his phone out and earbuds in, content to sit back and fuck around on his phone for the short drive back to our hotel. I knew it wasn't nearly enough time to spill the tea on everything, but I could drop him an idea of what I was dealing with.

Taking a deep breath, I nudged his arm with my elbow to get his attention.

He grinned. "Hey man, you have got to see this chick." He didn't even give me a chance to tell him how *not* interested I was in seeing his latest cyber infatuation, his screen turned in my direction and he had his earbuds popped out so the sound of the girl's sultry voice filled the bus.

"My professor assigned us to write our deepest desires. I'm not so sure that he'd appreciate me writing about all the ways that I live out my desires with you all. Could you imagine if he read it and came searching me out so that he could watch while I study for his class in lacy underwear?"

There was something vaguely familiar about her voice but I'd remember a chick like her.

Her body was banging, laid out on her stomach on a midnight blue comforter for all to see, her face carefully turned so that only her full, pouty pink lips were visible. All she wore was a tiny scrap of grey lace that revealed more of her perfect ass than it covered, maintaining a semblance of modesty with expertly placed textbooks and her laptop. She was all shadows and curves and dips and fuck me honey skin

as she did nothing more than hold a casual, one-sided conversation with the camera.

“And another one bites the dust.” Cormac crowed as I drew out my phone and pulled up the site, instantly downloading the app.

Maybe NerdyGRL19 was exactly what was needed to dig my way free of Lenny the Barista’s bratty little claws so that I could focus on what was really important. Showing Coach Cooper he’d made the biggest fucking mistake of his career by letting me go without a fight.

Five



LENNY

S NUGGLING MY PILLOW CLOSE, I gave my camera a sleepy-eyed look. I'd edit my face out later when I had more energy because all I needed to capture was the lazy stretching about to go down. My post for the day had already hit the site, a simple good morning photo showing off my very naked body curled around my pillow.

The day was mine. No work, no school. Just a day where I could binge-watch Netflix and veg out in sweats if that's what I wanted. It wasn't often that I got days like these and I was planning on taking full advantage of it.

Rolling so that my back was to the camera, I sat up and stretched my arms over my head. I stood, feeling that little thrill of power that came when I bared my body to the camera. Bare ass on display, I walked over to my dresser, hips swinging more than normal. I pulled out a thong and a cropped tee, bending to reveal just a hint of my tits as I slid my panties up my legs and pulled my top over my head.

It was moments like this when I knew there would be thousands of people watching my every move, that I felt the rush of power that came with my sexy little secret. It was a feeling I'd never get enough of, one that my geeky little soul now craved just as much as a *Snickers* bar during my period.

Like every female in history, I wanted to be wanted. Desired. Craved. But no one ever saw the nerdy girl who sat in the corner reading a book or playing a video game while life spun out around everyone else. I had been invisible up until the quarterback King had made me part of the football team's sex bingo game senior year.

I'd never let a man steal my power away again. Not for anything in the world.

As I went through my morning yoga workout, I let my thoughts drift to the coffee shop hottie that had been very noticeably absent for the last week. Callum...I refused to call him Cal because as soon as I did, I remembered his claim, which led me to imagine that big, hard body of his making me come so hard I did, in fact, scream the nickname.

Nearly face-planting into my mat as I moved through my poses and arousal began to swim through my veins, I settled into a child's pose and decided to call it good and find my way into the shop for a late breakfast and my daily caffeine hit. No point in busting my nose because I couldn't stop thinking about a guy that I wasn't even sure I liked.

The rest of the morning passed by quickly, getting the camera backed up and ready to go for the next recording. I

rushed through my shower, thoughts of a very naked Callum joining me beneath the hot spray and making a complete mockery of getting clean. The chilly weather called for thick leggings and my favorite worn sweatshirt that matched my green eyes. By the time I stuffed my feet into tall UGGs and pulled a floppy beanie over my ears, my stomach was growling with hunger.

It was a five-minute walk to The Coffee Drop, one that I loved even when the cold air nipped at my cheeks.

I reached for the door of the shop just as it was pushed open from the inside and I collided with what could only have been a brick wall. Big hands wrapped around my arms, hauling me in close when I would have bounced right off, most likely landing on my ass in a heap of embarrassed pride.

“I knew it was going to be my lucky day.”

That gruff voice had me fighting back a smile and I looked up at Callum, surprised at just how excited I was that he was here.

“Looks like it’s yours, but not mine. You ever run into a brick wall, Callum?” I asked, letting him see the teasing glint in my eyes.

“Can’t say as I have, Lenny. Are you trying to tell me that I’m hard?”

I rolled my eyes, my teeth biting into my lip to keep from laughing. He was a walking contradiction. He sounded like he could give Oscar the Grouch a lesson in misery, his voice low

and gravelly and the storm clouds in his blue-grey eyes never quite seemed to dissipate, no matter how flirty or outrageous he was. It was as if he had some inner demons that he couldn't quite control, no matter how hard he tried. And yet, barring our initial interaction when he'd insulted me, he'd been charming, flirty, and devastatingly sexy since.

Stepping back, I felt a shiver of desire skate down my spine as his hands coasted down my arms to grip my wrists, keeping me from pulling away completely.

“You are utterly ridiculous, you know that right?” I asked him with an arched brow.

Callum reached behind him and opened the door, stepping through and pulling me inside with him. It didn't escape my notice that he was already carrying a to-go cup of coffee, but his eyes told me he wasn't about to leave now that there wasn't a counter between us or work to distract me. The scent of coffee and pastries made my mouth water, reminding me again that I was starving and sluggish due to the deprivation of my caffeine fix. Tugging my hands free, I sauntered to the counter where Marcus was already plating up my favorite raspberry apple danish that he'd saved just for me and my perfectly made coffee waiting for me.

“Your ears must have been burning this morning because the second he walked through the door, he was asking about you,” Marcus teased, handing me my food.

“And I'm sure you were quick to tell him I'd be in later.” Marcus had been all for kicking him to the curb that first day,

but as he continued to come in and tip ridiculous amounts while trying his damndest to charm his way into my pants, Marcus had caved beneath the charm. He wanted me to give the guy a chance, because as he saw it, I'd been single for way too long.

Marcus shrugged and smirked. "Now, when that fine man asks you what you're doing on your day off, you're going to tell him," he motioned me closer, bending to whisper in my ear. "That you're doing him today!"

"Marcus!" There was nothing sexy about the choked laugh that escaped, my eyes darting immediately to where Callum stood, waiting to see where I'd sit, no doubt. "I'm not so hard up that I have to throw myself at a guy I barely know."

"Says the girl who spends all her spare time fucking around in front of faceless strangers," he scoffed.

For a minute, brief as it was, I let myself feel the pain his words brought. There was a truth to what he said, but I wasn't holding myself back because I was scared. I was comfortable with my life the way that it was. I was content with the jobs I had and the friends that I had. I liked the easy life I had.

Marcus turned to face me fully, his dark eyes full of apology. "You know I don't mean that shit, Mattlen," he apologized, the full use of my name telling me that he wasn't just saying it. "I love you, doll, but honestly, I think he'd fucking surprise the shit out of you if you gave him a chance."

I glanced over at Callum again, taking in the way he leaned casually against one of the high tables. He was wearing a

black hoodie with Boston across his chest, the material covering his broad shoulders like it had been made specifically for him, showcasing that sexy torso to perfection. His dark wash jeans hung low on his hips, a rip at his thigh hinting at the thick muscle beneath. He paid me no attention, content to wait me out while he focused on his phone in his hand.

“He is pretty cute, isn’t he?” I sighed, giving in to his request to give the man a chance.

Not like I didn’t know it was only a matter of time before I gave in and jumped that big, hard body.

“Doll-face, cute is for babies and little boys tugging on little girl’s pigtails for the first time. That man...he’s what every female over the age of sixteen is having wet dreams about. Hotter than Hell, twice as charming, and a bad boy that every good girl wants to sin with.”

My best friend was not wrong. Callum was all that and more. Even knowing that he could be a complete jerk to people, there was still something irresistible about him, that drew me in despite it all. The brat in me wanted to push all his buttons just to see how he’d react.

He exuded big dick energy. In the way he drew attention the moment that he walked into the shop, male and female, all watching him in silent adoration. As hard as I tried to fight it, I’d fallen victim to that same feeling.

I liked watching him. More than I wanted to admit. I got all hot and bothered every time he came in and sat his ass down in one of the stuffed chairs in the corner. He watched me just like

I watched him. He flirted, charmed, teased while he killed time playing on his phone or reading a book.

If I'd been a weaker woman, I would have been a puddle of wet, achy hormones the second that he put those fucking black-framed glasses on. He went from being a bad boy sex fiend to a hot professor with a stern voice, and both made me crave to have him put me on my knees and call me his good girl.

I really wasn't opposed to playing out that particular scenario.

"I'm not promising anything," I warned Marcus in a low voice, taking my coffee and food over to the stuffed chairs.

As soon as my ass sank down into the plush leather, Callum was taking the other chair, propping an ankle over his knee and pinning me with his stormy eyes. I met his gaze, brow arching in a silent question.

"What?"

"Just wondering how you keep getting sexier every time I see you," he pondered, stroking his lip with his thumb.

I scoffed in disbelief. "That's why you stopped coming in for a week, right? Because I was just too sexy for you?"

The minute the words came out, I wanted to take them back. I'd just lost all ground with him. No way in hell was he going to believe I was serious when I told him that I wasn't interested. Not when I'd just announced I knew how long it

had been since the last time he'd come in to torture my poor, neglected libido.

“Careful, Lenny. It almost sounds like you missed me,” he teased.

“Sure...about as much as I miss my monthly visits from Aunt Flo,” I retorted, taking a big bite of Danish, trying not to give him the satisfaction of seeing me smile.

Callum gave me a wicked smile, his raspy laugh turning my blood to lava and my eyes were drawn to the ink peeking from beneath his hoodie. I had to fight off the sudden need to climb into his lap and lick my way over all that delicious-looking ink and the sexy veins that had popped in the strong column of his throat.

“I was out of town for a few days with work. Just got back last night, actually.” He rubbed a hand over the back of his neck, a sign I took to mean that he wasn't being completely straight with me. “I was trying to tell myself I'd imagined your fucking appeal, but I realized if anything I'd been lying to myself.”

“Lying about what?” I asked softly, my head tilting to the side as I studied him.

“I don't have the fucking imagination required to dream you up.”

My cheeks heated with lust, pooling deep in my center. His eyes were so dark they were fathomless as I searched for the

lies within. I saw nothing but my own desire reflecting back at me.

I dropped my pastry onto my plate, uninterested in anything but this fucking man who was quickly becoming more addicting than caffeine in whatever form it took. Standing, my latte in one hand, I held out my hand to him.

“How about you make good on that promise you made,” I suggested, my voice a sexy whisper that told him exactly what promise I wanted him to keep.

He grinned and took my hand, standing so close I could smell the smokey wood and winter pine scent that clung to his skin. “How about I make good on more than that? Spend the day with me?”

It took me a second to realize he was serious, that he didn’t want to follow me home and fuck my brains out, but wanted to spend time with me...outside of the bedroom, fully clothed.

It was...surprising.

I nodded, even as Marcus’s words teased through my brain.

He’ll surprise the fuck out of you, if you just give him the chance, Lenny. Give him a chance.

Six



CAL

I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT if I'd lost my fucking mind, or if Lenny had performed some kind of witchcraft on me as I led her out of the coffee shop, her warm fingers wrapped snugly in mine. The temperature had dropped in the short time we'd been inside, a bite to the wind that had Lenny closing the distance between us to use my body as both a source of heat and a block to the wind that was trying to dig into our bones.

Letting go of her hand, I wrapped an arm around her shoulder and tucked her in close. "Cold?" I leaned down to ask, taking in a heady breath of cherry blossoms and warm peaches.

She glanced up at me. "You're a surprisingly decent radiator," she teased, a cheeky grin pulling at her full lips.

Instead of taking the offer and heading to her place to beat the chill and get hot and sweaty between the sheets with her, I was taking her with me to practice. Because what girl

wouldn't love to go on a first date to meet up with a bunch of hot sweaty hockey players.

I was straight as a fucking arrow, and I could see the appeal a mile away.

“Callum, where the hell are we going?” Her voice was laced with amusement, though it was muffed by the way she had herself tucked into the neckline of her sweatshirt.

“Oh come on, Blondie, it's not that cold. Your nipples aren't even hard!” I teased, dropping my gaze down to where her tits hid.

“That's because I am wearing a fantastic bra,” she told me snootily, her dark brows arching with an air of haughtiness.

“Uh-uh, I call bullshit,” I called her out with a grin.

She scoffed and tried to pull away. The chill had put a pink tint to her cheeks...or maybe it was the irritation that I could see in her eyes as she looked at me pointedly, silently demanding that I let her go.

“Come on, it's not very far and I promise, you'll have fun.”

We continued walking, comfortable in the easy silences that passed between us. It was obvious she didn't like talking about herself, clamming up when I asked more personal questions, but I didn't press because I didn't need all her dirty secrets on the first date. I was happy just to talk about the mundane shit that didn't mean anything, even though I learned a fair bit about her through her choice of music, movies, and books.

“Are you trying to tell me that there’s a closet geek living inside all that sexiness?” I chuckled, conjuring Lenny wearing the iconic *Princess Leia* bikini, complete with the collar so she’d never get away from me.

She grinned and shook her head in feigned disgust. “Nothing closeted about me! I embrace my geekiness with open arms.”

“Okay Marvel or DC?” I asked playfully.

“Marvel of course. Even if DC has the hottest Superman, they still can’t compete with the Avengers.” She pushed a chunk of dark blonde hair out of her eyes, locking it behind her ear so casually it made me want to tug on her hair like we were back on the playground. “You?”

“Iron Man owns my fucking soul,” I deadpanned. “Star Wars or Star Trek?”

I laughed at the widening of her emerald eyes, shocked that I’d even ask it. “If I had to choose, and only because I feel you would make me, Star Wars.”

“If you tell me that you’ve dressed up like Princess Leia in her slave costume, I’m going to demand to see proof!”

Lenny shrugged her shoulders, bumping my arm in the process. “You’ll never know because I will never tell.” Her head dropped to my shoulder. “You know, you haven’t told me where you went this last week.”

“Huh, I didn’t?” I hedged, not ready to tell her that I played professional hockey. I didn’t want to wonder whether she was with me because she actually fucking liked me or if she was

using me for her own claim to fame. Not to mention, I still hadn't quite figured out the whole 'last season' shit. "Some friends and I had business up in the DC area."

The reminder of those eight days on the road made me think about the shit Cormac had pulled. An idea of how to get him back popped into my head, curious to see if I could get Lenny on board with the impromptu plan.

"You ever been on the ice, Lenny?"

She tilted her head back to see me better, confusion all to clear in her eyes. "I grew up in Boston, what do you think?"

"I think there are lots of people that live in the area and haven't risked putting skates on," I answered honestly.

"Yes, I've been ice skating. Not since I was a teenager though, and I was lucky I didn't break my neck. Is that what we're doing? You're taking me ice skating?" That confusion clawed deeper into her as she drew to a stop, a fine line appearing on her brow as her eyes narrowed. "We could be having the hottest, most mind-blowing sex of our lives right now, and you're taking me ice skating?"

I gave a pained groan as her mind-boggled question sent a rush of red-hot lust straight to my cock. The poor bastard had already been fighting a full salute since she'd barreled into me but gave it all up as images of Lenny and all her sexy geekiness sprawled out beneath me, skin flushed as she screamed just for me played out in my head.

“Yeah when you put it that way, maybe I’ve lost my fucking mind,” I sighed and reached down to adjust myself, loving the way her green eyes darkened as she followed my movement. I gave her a wink, reaching for her hand and tugging her forward. “We’re tabling the mind-blowing sex for later...”

“Maybe on the table?” she suggested playfully.

“God, you’re going to kill me.”

This time it was me who stopped dead on the sidewalk. I tugged on her hand, causing her to stumble into me with surprise. I crushed her lips beneath mine, kissing her with every ounce of pent-up desire I had for her. She froze against me, only for a second, then the lithe curves of her body melted like hot butter against me and her hands speared into my hair. Lenny made a small sound and then kissed me back, her passion igniting like an inferno as we kissed right there on the city sidewalk.

The throaty little whimper she gave as my tongue drove in like a conquering hero had my cock throbbing against her belly and I knew I’d be hearing that on repeat for days. Or until I had her making even sexier noises to take its place in my memories. She tasted like espresso with a hint of the raspberry from her pastry and something else that was entirely her.

All my senses had engaged in kissing her. The silk of her wrist still caught in mine didn’t begin to compare to the silk of her lips against mine. The sweet scent of cherry blossoms,

peaches, and winter air was so fucking intoxicating it'd be easy to get high off it.

Nipping gently at her lip, I dragged myself away and rested my forehead against hers. As far as first kisses went, I was so fucking here for it. She was a shot of whiskey straight to the fucking blood, lighting me up with desire so hot that nothing else even registered.

“Cal-” my name fell from her lips with a heady sigh.

I'd never been so grateful for my phone going off as I was at that moment. I was seconds away from pressing her back against the nearest hard surface and taking her with all the desire she stirred in me but catching sight of the time as I pulled my phone out had me cursing.

I. Was. Fucking. Late.

Coach was going to have my fucking head. I answered Cormac's call, the blaring rock music in the background telling me that Noah had won the coin toss for who got to choose the playlist we practiced to.

“I'm on my way,” I told him before he could start in on me. “I ran into a...friend.” I shot Lenny a cocky smirk.

“Sin, you have ten minutes to get your ass on the ice before Coach fully loses his shit and benches your sorry ass,” Cormac snapped.

“Get me thirty and I'll pay your subscription fee for CamGirls for the rest of the season,” I bargained. I didn't miss the surprised look that crossed Lenny's face before she looked

away, a faint blush pinkening her cheeks at being caught listening.

“I’ll get you twenty, that’s the best I can do. And you’ll still pay out for the subscription,” Cormac shot back. He disconnected before his words had even finished registering.

There wasn’t a chance in hell I’d get a thirty-minute grace, not with Coach Cooper and his cantankerous ass already breathing down my neck about everything. But I could work with twenty.

Giving Lenny my most charming smile, I hoped she’d go along with my plan, even if it was so far from what she wanted to do as I could get.

“How would you feel about helping to pull a fast one on a friend?” I asked, studying her face to gauge her reaction. If she said no, then I’d just think of something else to get back at him for the debacle that was DC. I caught a hint of uncertainty in her big green eyes before she had it banked and there was nothing but curiosity remaining.

“It’s nothing bad, Lenny, promise. A buddy just needs to be taught a lesson though. Last year he picked up a rather clingy...admirer that somehow keeps managing to find out where we’re staying and which room he’s in when we all go out of town. While we were in DC she tracked him down and he was irritated enough to go out of his way to have our rooms switched on the registry, so instead of going into his room, this chick went into mine.”

Seeing where this was going, she grinned. “You found a strange girl in your hotel room and you’re upset about that?”

I shrugged a shoulder. “Not interested in that particular kind of crazy, Len.” I grinned at the flush of pleasure on her cheeks at the nickname. “I haven’t had much interest in getting down and dirty with anyone in a while and none of us thought she’d show up either.”

“Oh-kay,” she drew that one word out and I could see the confusion on her face. She was dying to ask questions, curious to know what I wasn’t telling her but I knew it would all make more sense if she agreed to my plan. “So what do you need from me?”

I laid it all for her, watching the way her eyes lit up with mischief as I told her my idea. I gave her one last chance to back out once we reached the arena, but she beamed with pleasure as we closed in on the arena.

“I really hope that your manhood doesn’t suffer for this, Callum,” she giggled, putting an extra swing in her hips as she took the lead and entered the lobby.

My eyes dropped down to her perfect ass encased in those tight leggings, my head spinning as I imagined those sweet cheeks marked with my handprint. My teeth ground together as I fought down the surge of lust that arrowed straight to my cock. She stopped walking, glancing back over her shoulder at me with a cheeky smile.

“You coming, or you gonna just stand there staring at my ass?”

Seven



LENNY

THIS WAS NOT HOW I expected my day to go. I felt like I was a pretty decent judge of people so I had no doubt in my mind that there was more to this little prank than just getting back at his friend, but I had to give it to Callum for being confident enough to even bring his sexuality into the joke.

Men were such delicate creatures, after all.

I grinned as I tried to move in what felt like a hundred pounds of hockey equipment while balancing on the skates Callum had found for me. Men might be delicate but if they could move like lightning across the slippery surface of ice while wearing this shit, I had to give them mad props because I'd barely taken a step before almost falling on my face.

With the helmet in his hands, Callum looked me over with the biggest shit-eating grin on his face.

“You look so fucking adorable right now, I can’t even deal with it,” he chuckled, leaning in and pressing a quick kiss to

my startled lips.

“I feel absolutely ridiculous, Callum!” I whined moments before he placed the full-face helmet over my head, effectively shutting me up.

Helping me get my balance, he led me toward the ice and a bevy of nerves fluttered in my stomach. I really didn't want to embarrass myself in front of complete strangers...or Callum because I'd never been the most athletic girl out there. Yoga and running were the extent of my exercise routine, not even close to what I was about to do.

“You'll be fine,” Callum reassured. “Besides, if you do happen to fall, you've got enough padding covering that fine ass that you won't feel anything but a bump.”

I wasn't too sure that I believed him, but I was willing to trust him. So long as he didn't laugh his ass off the first time I landed on my butt. If he did...well, then I may just nut-punch him while I'm down to teach him some manners.

Of course, that was all barring that I did indeed make a fool of myself and him being an asshole. Maybe we'd both be surprised and this would wind up working just as he had planned.

Callum held my hand the entire length of the concourse, supporting me while I found my balance. I could feel the chill of the ice trying to permeate the layers upon layers of clothes and gear I wore, goosebumps breaking out all across my skin and I was at once grateful for them.

The noise level increased with each awkward step, a mix of shouting, music, and movement creating a melody that was oddly satisfying. I froze upon seeing all the men currently on the ice. There was a hell of a lot more than I had thought would be here and all wearing very official-looking jerseys. My eyes flew to Callum, taking in his smug smirk and the mischief in his eyes.

“If you tell me that you’re a *Canadiens* fan, I may have to call this thing we’ve got going off. I’m okay with taking a hit to the *boys*,” he told me, giving a pointed look down at his crotch. “But fucking around with a Montreal fan would put me up as persona non grata faster than you can say death by blue balls.”

He couldn’t see my grin beneath the helmet but I suddenly wanted to tell him that I *was* a *Canadiens* fan just to see that fierce spark in his dark eyes burn hotter. Callum was so ridiculously hot I wanted to see him all fired up. I was just bratty enough to push his buttons just to see it happen, not that it’d make much of a difference. He was cocky enough to know it wouldn’t matter which team I rooted for, he was the one working his way into my bed, not a fucking *Canadien*.

“You’re...seriously going to make me walk out onto that ice where a fucking professional hockey team is skating?” I demanded in mock outrage. “I think *I’m* going to have to rethink this thing we’ve got going, because I’ll never, ever be able to live this down.”

“Lenny, baby, as soon as they see your gorgeous ass and those perfect tits, you could be the world’s craziest bitch and it wouldn’t make a bit of difference.”

“Lies, you’re full of lies!” I exclaimed, shoving past him and stepping through the gate leading onto the ice. “You’re going to owe me *so* big for this!”

He grinned and pulled his own helmet on, and I wondered how I had missed all the signs that he was this big-shot hockey stud. Thinking about it now, I’m sure all those giggling girls that came into the café after game day talking about the hotties on the ice, had all been talking about him. Smacking me on the ass playfully, he leaned down as he passed, his voice low and seductive.

“I plan on paying any and all debts to you in orgasms.”

Holy motherfucker, don’t come, don’t come. Lock up that thirsty vag and pay attention to the fucking ice so you don’t end up on your ass, bitch.

My knees turned to putty with his sexy promise ringing in my ears. I was going to need a new pair of panties because the ones I had on were so wet I was shocked there wasn’t a puddle at my feet. He’d gone from zero to sixty before I could even take a breath, and now, feeling about as unsexy as a troll, I had to play the part he’d assigned me before I could even think about taking care of the problem.

“Hey fucker, get your ass moving already!”

Distracted by the insanely loud shout, I lifted my gaze from the ice just in time to come face-to-rock hard chest with a giant of an angry god, his skates dancing in place while he shot daggers at Callum. He didn't spare me even a second of attention, for which I was thrilled because that just meant I could drink up the sight of him.

Good lord, I needed to start paying more attention to hockey if they all looked like they'd just fallen from Heaven.

His dark hair was nearly black with sweat and long enough to be tied back to keep out of his face, several locks falling across his dark eyes. It tamped down his sex appeal by just a smidgeon, the hard lines of his face still oozing sex and bad boy charm and suddenly I could see the appeal of starting my own harem.

A harem of scorching hot, sexy hockey players that were undoubtedly stacked with muscle upon muscle beneath all that concealing equipment.

I caught the wicked gleam in Callum's eyes, almost as though he could see exactly where my dirty mind had gone, and wanted to take the stick he held and smack him over the head with it. This was all his fault. The raging hormones, the damp mess of panties, the fluttering nerves that made everything seem so much more vibrant and intense were all Callum's fault.

I may be a cam girl behind closed doors, taunting men and women alike with my sexuality, but this was another level of

carnality. It was insane how revved up he made me just looking at me.

“Lenny wanted to tag along, see what all the fuss was about. Didn’t much like getting into all the gear, did you, baby?”

I shook my head, eyeing the guy to see if he was buying into *Lenny* being just another buddy, one of the guys. He barely even glanced at me, his dark eyes shooting fire at his friend.

“Coach is fucking pissed, man. Hope bringing this guy was worth it.”

What was it about hockey players that just screamed assholes? Maybe they just had so much testosterone seething inside they couldn’t handle it, they just automatically shifted to being pricks until they turned into angry heathens on the ice. It was definitely a thought, one that had me shifting uncomfortably on the thin blades of my skates as arousal shot through my body.

I had a type it seemed, one I didn’t know I had, because the idea of taking one for the team...by the team had me all kinds of hot.

Callum skated to stand before me, reaching out to lift the guard that covered my face. His eyes slid from me to the guy standing off to the side, impatient and irritated, before returning to meet my gaze.

“I don’t think I’m gonna get much chance to show you the ropes, baby, if you wanna change and watch, you’ll get prime seats for watching Coach rip us all new assholes,” Callum

leaned in, his gloved hand blocking most of my feminine features from view.

I knew it was coming and had prepared myself for the same inevitable rush of need that I had felt when he had first kissed me on the street, but it was still a shock when his warm lips settled over mine in a gentle and undemanding kiss.

“What. The. Fuck?”

Callum let me go, his stormy eyes nearly black when they opened to meet mine. He turned me, dropping the guard back into place, and gave my ass a tap to get me moving. I was slow to leave, hanging back to listen to the guy light into Callum.

“What the fuck are you doing, man? Since when are you interested in twink?”

“There’s just something about Lenny, makes me want to ride that ass right into the sunset,” Callum groaned, his voice so lusty and rough that I wouldn’t say no to what he wanted.

My spine tingled as I felt eyes from all directions follow me as I made a circuit around the ice like we’d planned before calling it and getting my ass off the ice. Part of me was disappointed I wouldn’t get to hang on the ice for longer, but I was eager to drop the gear and get back to watch Callum get ribbed by his teammates.

By the time I slipped into one of the seats behind the players’ bench, I’d been forgotten. Callum hadn’t exaggerated when he had said his coach would tear into them. If anything he hadn’t emphasized enough just how much yelling and

screaming the man was capable of. I'd yet to hear him use an inside voice, even when he was face-to-face with one of his players. It was as if he'd gotten stuck on obnoxiously loud and lost the remote to turn himself down.

I knew next to nothing about hockey but I was blown away by their speed, the precision that was required to handle the little rubber puck across the ice, and the way each man knew exactly what was needed at the right moment in time. The giant from earlier was in front of the net, dancing a cocky little jig as he blocked shot after shot that came his way.

It was hella impressive and made me just a little curious about him and his skill.

A man that could move like that with a hundred pounds of gear on...my brain went a little haywire while imagining not just Callum pounding into me, but the hunky goalie moving over my body as well.

Bad girl, Lenny. Bad, bad girl. Quit objectifying the sexy hockey players.

With no clue how long Callum was going to be, I pulled out my phone when boredom finally began eating at me, jumping between gaming and socials to entertain myself. A new idea for a video jumped into my head and I instantly began working with it. I just needed to ask Callum if I could *borrow* one of his jerseys.

“How'd you get in here, sweetheart?”

I jumped with a startled shriek, wide eyes shooting to the man who had spoken.

Were all hockey players gifted with Godlike beauty? Was it a pre-requisite to play because the man leaning on the boards, this side of the ice, was beautiful in ways that should not be legal. His dirty blonde hair was damp and curled over his brow, blue eyes laughing. He was a bit scruffy, but it didn't detract from the chiseled jaw, full lips, and crooked nose.

"Do I look like I'm a threat?" I asked with amusement.

His head cocked to the side, gaze studying me from head to UGG-covered toes. "You look like Core's next fucking treat," he grinned. "But if not, can you be mine?"

"Core would be?" I grinned back at him, eyes dancing from one player to another as they all headed off the ice, practice apparently over.

"So not Core." He sat down in one of the chairs in front of me, holding out a big paw-like hand. "Noah Ayers."

"Abso-fucking-lutely not," Callum's familiar voice growled, coming down the aisle behind me.

I glanced up at him, unable to stop the smile from breaking free as I met his angry mug. He didn't want me to give Noah my name, not when I'd made Callum work so fucking hard to get my name. He didn't want this guy to just walk up and ask for it all easy-peasy like, even if they were buddy-buddy.

Although, if I was being honest, the only reason I had made him work for it was because I was trying to fight off the

constant need to jump his bones since I thought he had been a bit of an ass that first day, not because I was against climbing-strange-men-like-spider monkeys-the-moment-you-meet.

I'd yet to know a single woman who liked being called names like Bimbo. If he'd called me a brat, I might have handled it better. Hell, I'd probably have grinned and given him my ass to paddle before rocking his world. That was a name I could stand behind. But Bimbo...I'd had to teach him a lesson, even if I caved before he'd learned what it was. I wasn't too sure I knew what it was I was trying to teach him any longer.

Gesturing him forward, I took Noah's proffered hand, giving Callum a mischievous look. "Mattlen," I told him, opting to give him my full name instead. "Mr. Grumpy is being territorial because he wants in my pants and I'm holding him off."

Callum sank down next to me, his arm wrapping around my shoulders and hauling me back until I was tucked firmly into his side. "You'll pay for that," he ground out, the tip of his nose running over my jawline in a straight shot to my ear, nipping at my lobe with his teeth.

"Promises, promises," I breathily teased. "I can't help it if he's got better game than you."

Eight



CAL

TAKING IN THE TEASING glint that sparkled in her big green eyes, all the blood rushed straight to my cock, ready to take her up on all the teasing and taunting that she promised. There was no doubt in my mind that she'd bring that playful side to bed with her and I was all too eager for her to pull out all the stops.

Tugging her into my lap, I nuzzled into the sensitive curve of her neck, breathing her in like a dying man. The feel of her delicate fingers sinking into my damp hair was sinfully delicious, her nails scratching gently over the skin of my nape and there was no containing the moan of pleasure that rumbled from my chest. Her head canted to the side, granting all the access I could ask for to the silky skin of her neck. Her breath hitched when my whiskers scraped against the underside of her jaw and my teeth nipped gently at the sensitive cord of muscle. It told me she was just as affected by this burning chemistry between us, soothing an ache inside that I couldn't even begin to understand.

“So Matt-Len-”

I grinned against her neck, hearing Noah stress the last part of her name. Should have known that I couldn't pull one over on him. Lenny smacked the arm I had banded around her waist playfully.

“I told you that I couldn't pass for a fucking guy,” she laughed, grinning at Noah.

I nipped at her shoulder, jealousy rearing up in my gut at the smile she was gifting my friend. I didn't want her looking at anyone but me, an uncomfortable feeling I needed to nip in the fucking ass before it was too late and I caught feelings for this girl.

“Sure...if you were an itty bitty teeny twinkle toes,” Noah told her, chuckling at the imagery. “Plus, anyone with any fucking sense knows that Cal has better taste than that. He likes pussy way too much to give it up.”

“Seriously man?” I glared at him for the betrayal as he spilled that particular nugget of information.

“You think that's a surprise to me, hotshot?” Lenny turned her head to meet my gaze. “I pegged you as a player the second you walked into my coffee shop.”

Unable to resist, I dropped a kiss on her full, rosy lips. “I knew you gave me that fucking disgusting coffee as a ploy to get your hands on me.”

Noah coughed to gain our attention. He studied Lenny for long minute, a slow, sly grin splitting his face as his eyes

danced between the two of us. “So she’s the one that’s had you chasing your tail lately.”

She side-eyed me, gauging how serious he was. I shrugged with a little smirk. I didn’t need to admit that I’d been acting like a lovesick fool chasing after her. Now that she had caved to my many charms, she wasn’t getting away from me before I’d gotten my fill of her- in bed and out of it.

“Come on, Blondie, let’s get the fuck out of here before Ayers spills all my dirty secrets and Cormac comes out and tries to steal your heart away.”

Lenny leaned in so she could whisper in my ear. “Are you afraid that I’ll be turned off by your dirty little secrets?”

Before I had the chance to answer, Lenny slid from my lap with all the skill of a stripper, her ass grinding against my hard-on in the process. I couldn’t stop from groaning out loud, not when everything in me wanted to grab hold of those tiny curves and plant her peachy ass right back on my cock.

Adjusting myself as I got to my feet, I shot a look over at Noah. “Don’t say anything about her to Core.”

Noah grinned at me, pretending to zip his mouth shut. “Not sure why you want your best friend thinking you’ve lost your fucking mojo, but I am so here for it.”

“He shouldn’t have made me deal with his crazy,” I shot back with a laugh. “Tell him he needs to get Tracy dealt with before she causes any more trouble.”

Noah grinned when he finally realized why I was messing with Core, giving me a double, one-fingered salute. “Aye, aye, cap.”

Lenny tossed her hair out of her face and tugged on the floppy black beanie, hiding all that gorgeous blonde hair. Her eyes lit up with mirth and a small dimple popped in her cheek. “I think I like you,” she told Noah, her grin full of sass.

I was so fucking gone for this girl.

My brow furrowed with a scowl when the thought crossed my mind. She was hitting like a drug more lethal than fentanyl, an obsession that I couldn't seem to want to quit. Everything inside of me wanted to drag her ass all caveman style, claiming her as mine but I settled for latching onto her hand instead. Her delighted giggle was a punch to the gut, *almost* as satisfying as the way she laced her fingers with mine, fitting together perfectly.

“Lead the way,” she directed, her big green eyes bright with anticipation of what came next.

Somehow, we miraculously managed to make it out of the arena without getting stopped by any of my other teammates. The wind had died down, taking with it most of the chill of the day but I still took the opportunity to tug her in close.

“I'm fucking starving,” I murmured as I kissed her temple. “You want to grab something with me?”

She tilted her head back to look up at me, a tiny little line of confusion on her brow that made me grin like a little boy. I

wanted her confusion, her curiosity. She was driving me bat shit crazy, consuming my thoughts when I didn't need the distraction. If she didn't get me harder than stone with just a thought, I might have been scared I really was turning into a pussy, but Lenny just had to look sideways at me and I was ready to go.

It was only fair that I bothered her to some degree.

“If I didn't know any better, Callum, I'd think this was an actual date and not some kind of hookup,” she teased.

Pressing my hand to my chest, I looked at her with mocking outrage. “How dare you suggest such a thing! If I don't feast right away, I'm not going to be able to fuck you into tomorrow.”

She grinned with delight. “Then, by all means, let's feed you. I need at least five orgasms before tomorrow comes.”

“Five? Let's make it an even dozen,” I promised, kissing her hard and quickly, satisfied when I drew back and saw the dazed look in her emerald eyes. “Maybe if you're a good girl, I'll give you the first one while we eat.”



We settled into our booth at The Italian Table, a little mom-and-pop restaurant that had some of the best pasta in the city, side by side. I'd been coming here for years, Mr. Gionata and his wife, Lucy had become close friends and I made sure they had home game tickets because they fed my ass better than I ever could. Lucy greeted us both with hugs and cheek kisses,

gushing over how pretty Lenny was and how skinny I had gotten.

“She loves you,” Lenny made the statement once Lucy had retreated to the kitchen with our orders.

“I’m a loveable person,” I told her with a grin, setting my arm over the back of our booth, tangling my fingers in the ends of her hair.

“And so modest about it, as well.” She turned toward me, hooking her leg across my knee and leaning in, putting herself in such close proximity that I could count the sprinkle of freckles across her cheeks if I had a mind to. “Is this really you skinny?”

Chuckling, I gave her a negligent shrug as though it didn’t matter. “It’s been a rough year, I haven’t been in as much as I usually am, and Coach has been working my ass off to make sure I stay golden.”

Absently, I rubbed at the scar tissue that ran down the length of my kneecap, a stabbing pain shooting through the repaired joint. It happened like clockwork whenever I thought about just how fucked up my future looked. Her hand settled over mine, sympathy and understanding on her beautiful face.

“How bad was it?” she asked, her fingers tracking where I’d just been rubbing.

“Blew my knee out during a game last season. Between my coaches and the doctors, they thought I wouldn’t play again. I told them to fuck right off, I wasn’t done yet, and here I am,

playing my last fucking season because Coach didn't have enough faith in me to fight for me."

"I'm sure that's not-" Lenny began, her tone conveying a wealth of emotion that didn't sit well with me.

I didn't want her pity, not over this.

Shifting gears, I lazily dropped my hand, lazily stroking down her neck and over her shoulder and arm until I could rest it on her thigh. Brow arched, she looked down at my fingers dipping to tease. It was nothing more than a taunting stroke back and forth above her knee and I gauged her reaction to see if she would stop me or if she'd encourage the public display.

"Why did you finally decide to give me a chance?" I asked, fingers drifting higher with slow, seductive increments.

Her legs shifted minutely, giving me the go-ahead as she leaned back against the red worn leather. She closed her eyes and took a deep, shaky breath, likely wondering what she was thinking engaging in exhibitionism.

"Oh, you know, nearly face-planting while doing yoga because I was daydreaming about your mouth on me was an indicator that I wasn't getting you out of my system any time soon." She peeked one eye open, a delicate pink blush stealing across her cheeks as she admitted to the fantasy. "Not without your help, anyway."

I nearly swallowed my tongue, her fantasy playing out in my head. Head down, ass up, all that pale skin on display as I pounded into her tight body. I could all but taste the sweetness

of her pussy on my tongue, feel the smooth silk of her tits in my hands as I ate her out like she was my last fucking meal.

I groaned, all the blood in my veins rushing straight to my cock, demanding that I forget feeding us some much-needed calories and just fuck her here and now. Lay her out on the table and devour her instead of the pasta that the Gionata's were cooking for us. She'd be fucking tastier than the tiramisu they were famous for, that was for damn sure.

"You were sexing me in your dreams, Len?" I teased, wishing she was wearing a damn skirt instead of fleece leggings. While they hugged her legs like a second skin, I'd rather have the smooth, silky flesh beneath my palm while I walked my fingers up her thigh.

"Well-" she drawled that one word out as a moan trembled past her lips as my knuckles grazed that sweet spot between her thighs. "I think...you were sexing me."

"Tell me more," I ordered roughly, stroking her hot pussy through the fabric of her leggings. "Were you doing the downward dog while I fucked into this tight cunt?"

She whimpered, the sound so sexy that my cock twitched in eager anticipation for all the other sounds she'd make when I was buried deep inside. Her eyes were wide, pupils blown as she leaned her head back against the booth and stared up at me. Her chest rose and fell in shaky breaths, trying to hide her arousal. She gave a jerky nod, like that was all that she was capable of in response to the question I'd posed.

“Use your words, Lenny baby,” I smirked. “You want to be my good girl, don’t you? You want to come before Lucy returns with our food, so she doesn’t know that I’ve got my fingers-” I stroked a path beneath the sweater she wore until I found her waistband, slipping beneath to find nothing but smooth, silky flesh. “Buried in your sweet little cunt.”

“Sweet mother of God,” she gasped, those burning emerald eyes snapping shut as I sunk my finger into her pussy. “You were e-eating my pussy...licking me like a popsicle.”

“Mmm.”

“Cal, please-”

“Please, what? You need to come, Len? You want to come all over my fingers?”

“Yes, please! Please, let me come,” she begged in a husky whisper, peeking through her lashes to see if anyone was paying any attention to what was happening at our table. To what I was doing to her.

But no one was.

Lucy had always given me a private booth, even when I didn’t come in with someone. It was the price I paid for being a professional athlete with a modicum amount of fame and they wanted me to be able to come in and eat without being bombarded with fans. It was just another reason why I loved the Gionata’s.

Knowing I was pushing our luck, I quickened my movements, adding another finger into her tight heat while my

thumb circled against the hard nub of her clit. Her mouth fell open in a silent cry, her back arching just enough to show off the pointed crests of her tits against the thick sweatshirt, and her pussy clamped down around my fingers as she came.

I didn't pull away from the slick heat of her pussy until the quivering of her body told me her release was ebbing, soaking in her pleasure. We had just enough time to put her back to rights before Lucy came over with our food, a knowing smile on her face.

One orgasm wasn't enough. Not nearly enough. I was greedy for more. To feel her tight body coming undone around mine. One hadn't even begun to take the edge off the burning desire that seemed to have set up camp in my blood.

The conversation was easy between us as we ate our food. Lenny wasn't like the puck bunnies I usually took out, barely eating anything of the rabbit food they ordered, even when they could have benefited from a little more meat on their bones. She liked her food, her eyes closing in blissful pleasure at the first taste of her meal, the moan she made almost as heady as the one she made when she came on my fingers just moments ago.

I couldn't keep my hands off her. The smooth skin at the nape of her neck felt like silk beneath my fingers while I played with the thick weight of her hair. I couldn't wait to see it spread out over my pillows, the light catching the subtle hints of chestnut and red undertones that naturally weaved through all the blonde. Her hand lazily stroked where it lay

high on my thigh, only inches separating her fingers and the hard length of my cock.

I'd never finished a meal as quickly, the need to get her under me, over me, driving me close to losing my cool. I was greedy for her in a way that felt feral and unhinged.

Taking the paper bag of leftovers that Lucy had prepared for me, I took Lenny's hand and led her out of the restaurant, stopping on the sidewalk to check in with her.

"Where to?" I asked, lacing our fingers together.

She groaned, rolling those big green eyes at me in exasperation. "I swear to God, Callum, if whatever is going on in that head of yours doesn't include making good on all those orgasms you promised me, I'm not interested."

I chuckled huskily, loving that she was as hot and bothered as I was. Tugging her in until I could feel her tits pressing against my chest, I wrapped an arm around her slim waist, letting my hand fall to the subtle curve of her ass.

"I think that can be arranged." I gave a squeeze to one firm cheek. "After all, you have some fantasies that need fulfilling. I wouldn't want to disappoint a fan."

Nine



LENNY

IF SOMEONE ASKED ME what we talked about, what direction we walked in, or even what the weather was doing, I wouldn't have been able to tell you anything other than that my pulse was hammering in my chest, butterflies swarmed my tummy, and I was so turned on it was embarrassing.

I was consumed by a need so heady and lust-fueled that I could officially say I was dick-crazy.

And it was all *his* fault.

It felt like he'd been edging me since I plowed into him at The Coffee Drop. Granted, he'd probably been doing that since the moment he walked in that first day, laying all the charm and flirtations he could on me day after day and I just couldn't admit to it. There was still some itty-bitty part of me that wished I could have held out against him longer. Then there was that other side that was screaming at me for being so stubborn and not jumping him sooner.

He stopped in front of a building not far from my own, the exterior a mix of brick and glass that spoke of money and class. An older gentleman opened the door for us, greeting Callum by name and with a genuine smile.

“Mr. O’Brien stopped by to see you, Mr. Sinclair. I informed him that you hadn’t returned and he promised he would be back later.”

“God, Joe, quit calling me Mister Sinclair. Makes me feel like my father,” Callum groaned. He grinned down at me. “Lenny, this is Joe. Joe, this is Lenny. If she shows up by herself, put her in the fastest elevator we’ve got and send her up.”

Joe nodded with a smile. “Of course, Mr. Sinclair. Miss Lenny.”

Both of us groaned at the show of respect, even if it was all part of the job description. Giving his head a shake, Callum led me to a private elevator and ushered me on. The second that the heavy doors closed, he had me pinned to the wall, his lips crushing mine in a kiss that felt like punishment and reward all in one.

He was demanding in his kiss, his lips firm against mine as his tongue tangled with mine. His fingers wrapped around my wrists, holding me in place against the chilled metal, unable to do anything but arch into the hard press of his body with a whimpered moan of pleasure.

“Christ, Lenny girl,” he groaned, pulling away at the ding of the elevator. “You make me lose my goddamned head.”

Taking a deep breath in, the rich scent of man and winter invading my senses. He smelled exactly like how a cold day in the middle of winter would smell. Pine, musk, and a little smokey, with the undertones of the man beneath it all. It was a scent that I knew I'd always remember.

I don't know how it happened, but as he led me into the luxurious condo, barely giving me a chance to take it in, I realized just how far I'd fallen with him. A spark of panic flared to life inside me, fear dampening the lust to a mere simmer, and I pulled back from him.

Eyes wide, I gazed up at him, turned on unlike ever before but suddenly needing a moment to catch my breath and steady myself before climbing onto his dick.

What a fucking mess you made, Lenny. You had to go and catch feelings for the guy, when all he did was show you a bit more interest than what was beneath your clothes.

Stormy blue-grey eyes softened on me and I knew he could see the sudden flare of nerves. Without a word, he reached over his shoulders and gripped the back of his hoodie, tugging it off over his head, along with the t-shirt he wore beneath until he stood before me, all hard lines and tatted bronze skin.

I stepped into him, reaching out to run a hand over the skull and roses that sprawled across his chest. Both arms down to his fingers were covered with intricate artwork, my fingers itching to trace every inch of black ink. The piece on his chest extended just past his impressive pecs, leaving the cut lines of

his abdomen the only part of him uncovered, but no less of a masterpiece.

Impatiently, Callum leaned down and stole my lips in a deep kiss, stealing the air right out of my lungs. My arms wrapped around his neck, uncaring if I was being an idiot and catching all kinds of feelings for him. All I wanted was the ecstasy that his touch brought.

I didn't realize that he'd been moving us until I felt something hit the back of my knees, completely unbalancing me and sending me sprawling to my back. My eyes flew open as I crashed onto the softest mattress I'd ever been on, glaring up at him for breaking what had been one of the most devastating kisses of my life.

Propping up onto my elbows, I tilted my head to one side to study him. "I'm not nearly naked enough and you're much too far away," I told him cheekily. "Must I do everything myself?"

"Please do. I'd fucking love to watch you take care of yourself," he grinned like a little boy, grabbing my ankles and removing first one boot, then the other. In a practiced move, he had my leggings off and thrown to the floor.

Sitting up even further, I slowly tugged my sweater off, leaving me naked in his bed, surrounded by fluffy, feather pillows.

"Fuck me, you've been wandering the streets completely fucking bare?" He groaned out, his voice dropping low as desire thickened in the air.

I brought one hand up to palm a small breast. “Well, I can’t be having panty lines in leggings and it’s not like these babies need a whole lot of support,” I giggled. “Besides, it wasn’t like I was expecting to strip naked with anyone today.”

He popped the button of his jeans, leaving them on as he knelt at the edge of the bed and stalked towards me on all fours. He batted my hand away, covering me with his own giant hand and my body shuddered with need.

“So fucking pretty,” he murmured, nudging my legs open to create a space for himself. “All this pretty pink skin just for me.”

Bracing his weight to the side on an inked forearm, he began to roam over my body, the rough callouses on his hand scraping over the soft curves of my tits and belly. I arched into his touch, needing more than what he was giving me.

“Quit teasing and fucking touch me, Callum!” I groaned, sinking my fingers into his thick hair and pulling him down to kiss me.

He moaned into my mouth, vibrating straight up from the depths of his chest. His weight pressed down on me, sinking us both into the mattress, the hard length of his jean-covered cock grinding into my center as he devoured me. There was something deliciously naughty about being completely bared beneath him while he remained partially clothed.

Callum dragged his lips away from mine, his teeth scraping over my jaw and down the length of my neck. I gasped at the

sharp bite when he bit down on a particularly sensitive spot, his tongue soothing over the mark.

He gave me no time to feel self-conscious about my small breasts, or the lack of full curves on my body. His hands weren't quite as gentle as before as he cupped one breast, his fingers circling around my hard nipple. Running my hands over his back restlessly, I tried not to squirm beneath his demanding touch, wrapping my fingers in the belt loops of his jeans to anchor me in place.

I cried out when his lips closed over me, my fingertips digging into his hips. While his mouth tormented my tits, I ground my hips into him, trying to find the right friction against my clit to get me off. I brushed against something in his back pocket, reaching in and finding his battered cell phone, grinning like a fiend as an idea popped into my head.

It wasn't often that I posted anything other than myself, but I had a few times. It wasn't like I had access to a lot of men...or women, that enticed me enough to jump into bed with.

But this guy?

I'd want him even though I probably...most definitely, shouldn't.

Activating the camera, I framed the first shot I wanted- his mouth closed over one breast while his tatted fingers fondled the other, the curve of my hip and thigh a stark contrast against the dark fabric of denim.

“Did you just take a fucking picture?” Callum chuckled, lifting his head to grin down at me.

I nodded with an air of innocence. “I needed to commemorate the moment.”

He dropped his head against my sternum, his chest rumbling with laughter. “Then we had better do it right.”

Stealing the camera from me, he sat up onto his knees, tugging me in so close that I could make out every ridge of his zipper that pressed insistently against my core, feel the hard throb of his cock beneath that.

“No faces,” I told him, giving him a cheeky smile even as I heard the shutter click.

“You like the idea of being shown off, don’t you?” he purred, his hands coasting down my belly until just the tips of his fingers rested above my pussy. “You want me to show off this sexy little body to all my friends so they can fuck their fists over the thought of being inside you?”

“Yesss-” I moaned, covering his hand with mine and pushing him to where I needed him.

“Dirty. Fucking. Girl.” He punctuated each word with a little slap against my clit, the sting all but robbing my breath from me as I climbed higher and higher to my orgasm.

All it took for me to go spiraling off the deep end was for his thumb to press against my clit while I ground into him. His name was a heady moan ripped from my throat, my head

pressing into the pillows beneath me as I came harder than ever.

I couldn't begin to fathom how fucking good it was going to feel coming undone when he was buried balls deep inside of me. If he could make me come this hard with just a finger and still wearing his jeans, he was going to blow my mind.

It barely even registered that he'd moved until I felt wet heat that had nothing to do with my thirsty vag and everything to do with his talented as fuck mouth. He devoured my needy cunt like a starving man, one strong arm holding me down when all I wanted was to prop myself up and watch.

His tongue both soothed and destroyed, wickedly dancing over every inch of my quivering flesh. He pressed one thick digit inside, crooking it just so and finding that one spot that was more myth than fact. A wave of pleasure crashed over me, so intense that my vision blurred and his name caught in my throat in a strangled cry.

He didn't stop until I came again, dragging his mouth up my body to press another drugging kiss to my lips. "We're at three, Lenny, you keeping up?"

"You are such an asshole," I laughed breathlessly.

"Ah-ah, that's no way to talk to me, especially when we've still got..." he settled once more between my spread thighs, running his hand down my side until he reached my thigh. He gave me a soft tap, prompting me to lift my legs to wrap around his lean hips. "By my count, nine more to go."

Hands greedy to touch, to take, to feel every hard inch of him. I wrapped my arms around him, dragging him down with me and I was able to roll him to his back beneath me. Sitting up straight, I planted my hands on his pecs, tracing a fingernail over the vines that wrapped around the skull on his chest and led down his ribcage.

I rocked my hips against him, his cock nestled against my overly sensitive pussy. With just a little effort on my part, I'd get off again. There was a part of me that wanted that. To see if I couldn't get us both off rubbing on him like I was the thirstiest bitch out there. The greedy wench screaming inside wanted him buried to the hilt, clenching around the steel length of him, feeling him pulse into me as he fell over the edge with me.

My fingers wrapped around his base, the groan rumbling from his chest sent a wave of vibration straight to my core. I'd take his hard body as my vibrator over the silly pink one I kept hiding in my nightstand any day of the week.

“Do it!” he moaned, his fingers digging firmly into the cheeks of my ass, urging me to take what I wanted from him. “Take my cock into that tight little pussy and fuck me.”

Rising up onto my knees, I positioned him where I needed him, shuddering when his crown slid over my clit. There was a delicious stretch as I began sinking down his length, a promise that he was going to fill my cunt with little effort and that I'd feel *every-fucking-thing*.

“Fucking Christ, Lenny.”

He yanked me down his cock impatiently, throwing my head back and crying out as his thick dick stretched me wide. The orgasm that ripped through me sent stars shattering in my vision, the sound of him shouting my name echoing through wave after wave of pleasure as I exploded around him.

Callum flipped us once more, his hips slamming into me like a battering ram, hard and deep and so fucking perfect that I couldn't do anything but hold on with everything I had. He dropped down and kissed me, drinking in the breathy moans that spilled from my lungs, one tatted hand wrapping around my throat while the other gripped my hip, helping to move my body in just the right way so that we both felt every forceful thrust to the max.

The release that pulsed through me was infinitely less consuming than that first one, a mere aftershock in comparison but I knew he felt it right down to his balls when he stilled, his jaw clenched tight against his own release. He pulled out of me, once more adjusting my body like I was nothing more than a rag doll. Suddenly finding myself with my face pressed to the dark silk bedding with my ass in the air for him to drive into me deeper, harder, faster.

“Cal, fuck, Cal,” I chanted his name, unable to form anything beyond that one-syllable word while he drove me fucking insane.

He was right. If he fucked all women like this, it was no great surprise that they couldn't call him anything but Cal. He

broke brain cells, stole all thought with every brutally thrust of his body into mine.

His hand fisted around my hair, pulling my head up until I had no choice but to rise up onto my knees in front of him, my back lining up with his chest. He shifted until I straddled his bent knees, working me over him with a grip on my hips that was just past the border of pain.

His hold on my hip shifted, his fingers skimming down to slip through my dripping folds, circling my clit as he stilled, his cock throbbing inside of me and I knew that he was done, that he was going to pull one more devastating orgasm from my helpless body before he let himself go. I'd lost count of how many times I'd come, but I knew that he'd yet to find his own.

His fucking stamina was on point, that was for sure.

Dropping my head back against his shoulder, I turned my head so I could find him with my dazed and lust-drugged gaze, our eyes connecting the moment that I came. His lips crushed mine, swallowing my cries and giving me his own moans. Tongues clashing, teeth clinking, I kissed him with everything that I had, my arm reaching behind me to hold him to me as he finally came.

Cal jerked his lips away, dropping them to my shoulder where he bit down, muffling the roar of my name.

There wasn't a single ounce of strength left in my body, every muscle I had quivering with residual aftershocks from what had just gone down.

“Give me five and I think maybe we can reach our fucking goal of a dozen,” he groaned, finally pulling out and flopping to the bed with me tangled in his arms.

God help me, I was about to be fucked to death and I didn't even care.

Snuggling back into the warmth of his big body, I couldn't do anything but laugh and pray that where ever we ended up in the afterlife, he never stopped fucking me stupid.

Ten



CAL

IT WAS SHOCKING HOW just a couple of days of hot sex could make me feel like a fucking king. Lenny had barely left my bed in the ten days since we'd started fucking. She left long enough to work or go to classes, but come the evening, her ass was planted in my bed.

“Where can I find some of the fucking Kool-Aid you’ve been drinkin’?” Cormac groaned, dropping his helmet to the locker room floor. “You’re a chipper son of a bitch.”

Flipping him off, I grinned up at him from the bench, stripped down to my hockey pants as I blissed out on adrenaline and the high of yet another win. “I’m always in a good mood, asshole.”

He choked out a laugh as he began stripping out of his gear. “Yeah, you’re a regular ball of sunshine. Swear to fucking Christ, Sinclair, you were fucking grumpy ass, all piss and vinegar a month ago and now you’re fucking pissing out rainbows like a damn lucky charm leprechaun. What gives?”

Before I could form a response, one of the guys yelled out from the showers, his voice muffled enough that I couldn't tell which asshole it was.

“He's getting fucked on the daily!”

Core's sweaty dark head whipped around to stare me down, undoubtedly shocked that I hadn't told him about the fuckfest that had been going on in my condo. “You're seriously fucking down a goddamned baby twink? What did those fucking doctors do to you, man?”

I shrugged, all for letting him continue on believing that Lenny was nothing more than a bad phase that somehow had sucked me in. Most of my other buddies had already met Lenny at some point during the last ten days, but Core had yet to meet her and I wasn't in a rush to change that.

It still pissed me off that he hadn't been man enough to deal with his crazy fan himself.

“What can I say, man, Lenny has one of the tightest fucking asses I've ever seen,” I tossed out, not a hint of a lie in my statement.

A look of disbelief swept over his face and he grabbed his phone from his locker. After a couple of minutes of fiddling around on it, he nodded decisively and flipped it around to face me, the screen filled with our home jersey and one sexy fucking ass.

My jaw dropped as all the blood in my body fled south straight to my cock.

“You can’t tell me *that* ass doesn’t beat any other fucking one- twinkly ass or not- hands down. Especially when your name is plastered all over it,” he taunted.

I grabbed the phone from him, trying to make sense of what I was seeing. Sinclair sprawled across the girls’ shoulder blades, the number 39 a beacon I honed in on. I knew that jersey about as well as I knew the peachy ass wearing it.

What. The. Actual. Fuck?

NerdyGRL19 was Lenny?

Lenny was NerdyGRL19?

I wasn’t sure if that was singly the hottest fucking thing that I’d heard or-

Nope.

It was definitely the hottest shit I’d heard. There was no question about it.

I had one of the sexiest cam girls on the web, in my bed, taking my dick on the daily, while millions of poor saps jerked off to just the thought of being with her. How many times had Core told me about her lives, where he’d tipped just to get her to show off her perky tits or bend over and shake her peachy ass?

And I was getting a show from her every fucking day for free.

“That really is one spectacular fucking ass,” I agreed, passing Core his phone back with a smug smile. “It’s a shame

you'll never get a piece of it.”

He threw his head back and laughed. “You wouldn't even stand a fucking chance, Sinclair. Your grumpy ass had to switch playing fields.”

Pulling out my phone, I signed in on the CamGirls website. I'd made an account after he'd shown me NerdyGRL19's back in Washington but had barely even accessed it since sinking into Lenny. I hadn't been as fucking thirsty for pussy since she'd fallen into my bed, so it wasn't like I needed to go searching for it.

“Core, my friend, I could catch her interest long before you ever hit her fucking radar,” I taunted, pulling up the video of Lenny wearing my jersey and hitting play to watch the full clip.

Every soft curve of her body was visible, yet distorted behind the steamy glass shower door. Her back was to the camera, her dirty blonde hair tumbling down her back as she ran her hands over her body, leaving bubbles in her wake.

I'd fucking come all over that perfect skin just hours earlier. I could close my eyes and see the way she had choked on my dick, those pouty pink lips wrapped around me while tears had spilled down her cheeks. I'd had her in every way imaginable and the whole time, my best friend had been jerking off to the idea of her.

Watching her, knowing this was something she got off on had me biting my lip in anticipation of the game I was about to play. It should have pissed me off that she hadn't told me

about her little alter ego, but I was so on board with it. Some of the photos she'd posted had been ones that I'd taken, edited to hide her features, but I'd gotten really damn familiar with every delectable inch of her. I loved watching her get herself off, there was something so fucking sexy about watching her take control of her wants, her needs. Every aspect of this side of her turned me on, made me burn that much hotter for her.

The app had its own messaging system, a way to keep everyone anonymous while still being able to get their flirt on. I hit the little message icon on her profile, letting a new chat load.

HockeyDaddy34: What will it take to get you wearing that jersey again, NerdyGRL? You look so fucking hot supporting my home team.

Cormac snorted a laugh as he read the message I'd just sent. "That's the best you got? Where's your game, Cal? I've seen you practically get a girl pregnant with a fucking look, and *that's* what you're going to lead with?"

I ignored him, knowing enough about Lenny now to know that she would take the compliment for what it was, but the request to wear the jersey again...that would make her think, to want to play with whoever was on the other end of the conversation because it wasn't an outright ask.

Lenny liked games. In bed and out. It was just one of the reasons she was getting under my fucking skin like she was. She was like the fucking Energizer bunny on crack, playful

and full of adventure and ready for whatever shit I pulled out of my hat.

My phone pinged with a notification and I ignored the shocked look on Core's face, ducking with a laugh when he threw his blocker straight for my head.

NerdyGRL19: How do you know I'm not wearing it right now? It is game day after all...

I had asked her to come to the game tonight but she'd had to work since her bestie was laid out in bed with the flu. She'd promised that she'd come over once she closed up with a bag of ice for my knees and some peanut M&M's, a guilty treat that I indulged in while I was freezing my kneecaps into submission. So I could have a little fun with her and O'Brien in the meantime.

HockeyDaddy34: Does #39 make you wet, baby?

NerdyGRL19: Mmm...39...17...86...44...I'd gladly be the filling of that hockey sandwich. You'd like to see that wouldn't you, all those big, strong players stuffing me full while you watched.

My eyes shot to Cormac, then over to Ayers, before landing on Declan Jerome as he sauntered out of the showers with a towel wrapped around his hips, his tatted skin still wet from the shower. If I'd been into sharing a woman, I'd be setting up that orgy faster than she could say *please, daddy*.

Deciding to cut Core a break from his pouting, I tossed him my phone. He caught it without even glancing up, his reflexes

on point. He read her response, his dark eyes going wide with shock and his head jerked up to meet my humorous gaze.

“Is this girl for fucking real?” he asks in a whisper. “Could you imagine? She’s every man’s fucking wet dream.”

I huffed a breath, taking my phone back in hand and working out what I could possibly say in response to the hottest fucking scenario she could have every presented. There was just enough of the miserable prick from weeks past that I didn’t want her to even think about fucking another cock. She was *mine*.

I’d called dibs on her like a fucking toddler who found the best toy in the playroom and wasn’t keen on sharing.

HockeyDaddy34: Nah, baby girl. I’d rather ride that sweet ass myself than watch you take it.

“Now that is the Cal Sinclair I remember,” Cormac chuckled, reading my response from over my shoulder.

“Sinclair, Doc wants to see you.” Coach Cooper stood just inside the locker room door, arms crossed over his barrel chest and an intense glare on his face.

“Yes, sir,” I jumped to my feet, rushing through getting rid of the rest of my kit. By the time I was back in sweats and a practice jersey, I was back to feeling that edge of anger that dogged me every time I stepped off the ice.

I could have played the best fucking game of my life, and still, they’d want to poke and prod at my knee, demand more from me. To push harder, play faster. Be more aggressive. If

my knee was really in that good of shape, then I didn't need to hold back on the ice.

I'd heard it all before.

Knocking on the partially closed door, I waited for Doctor Harper to greet me, silently telling myself that I just had to get through this last season and then I was a free agent. I had the fucking money to retire if it was what I wanted, but I didn't feel ready. I wanted to play.

What else did I have if I didn't have hockey? It was a fucking sobering thought. One I needed to figure out the answer too.

"Come in, Callum." I strode into the exam room, locking eyes with the older man. "Have a seat and let's take a look at that knee."

Eleven



LENNY

CALLUM HAD GIVEN ME a key to his house before I'd left this morning to cover Marcus's shift, a good thing since he didn't answer when I knocked. Checking the time on my phone, I wondered if I'd misunderstood our plans since I'd been distracted by the devastating orgasm his fingers had ripped from me. I had very limited brain function when those talented fingers were destroying my body.

It was after midnight and his condo was empty. Lights off, completely silent.

He wasn't home.

I'd watched the game from work so I knew that they'd won against the Rangers. He'd played good, even if he had gotten into a hell of a lot of fights and spent more time in the penalty box than any of his other teammates.

Shooting him a text, I sank down onto his cushy leather couch to wait.

And wait.

Half an hour flew by and I was still waiting. An hour, and he didn't answer the call I forced myself to make...and still I waited. Complete radio silence. No explanation. No excuses.

Every minute that ticked by, I got more and more pissed. Yeah, we hadn't exactly formalized what we were, but when I made plans with someone, I damn well made sure that I checked in if something came up. It wasn't even like we had made huge plans or anything, just chilling out with a movie because I knew he'd be tired and sore as fuck after playing.

I had found him a cooling balm to massage into his knee, one that I had been told worked miracles when combined with ice and massage to go with the party-size bag of M&Ms that he snacked on while rehabbing his knee. As much fun as it was to fuck like bunnies, I had just as much fun arguing over which superhero was better or how the old-school *Star Wars* movies were a million times better than the newer ones.

By 3 AM I was done. Pulling his jersey off, I tossed it on the back of the couch, thankful for the tank top I'd worn beneath as I shoved my arms into my fluffy down jacket, calling an Uber while I waited for the elevator. I wasn't going to sit around waiting for him, I wasn't that girl. I'd thrown all caution to the wind and gotten involved with him, that was on me, but that didn't mean I was going to sit around like a good little girl and wait until he was ready to acknowledge me.

I'd just unlocked my door when my phone pinged, the screen lighting up with a notification from both my CamGirls account and from the jackass who had ghosted me tonight.

Deciding Callum could wait, I opened the app to read the new message waiting.

HockeyDaddy34: Tell me, baby girl, what do you think about when you're teasing that pretty pussy? Do you think about a guy pounding into you while he plays with your clit? Or maybe you want your man to bury his face between your legs and make you come all over his tongue?

Well, that escalated fast. Knowing that my bitchy mood wouldn't translate well in any response I could make, I dismissed the message without further thought. I tossed my purse onto the glass table by the door, phone firmly in hand as my bed called my name.

It had been days since I'd slept in my own bed. I'd been falling asleep curled up against Callum's hard bod after he'd dicked me down and I was a boneless pile of mush, and moving was next to impossible. I'd been spoiled the last week and I doubted that I'd get be getting any sleep tonight. There was just something so fucking right about having Callum's strong arms wrapped around me that made me feel safe, secure...

Treasured.

Stupid jackass and his big dick! At least I didn't serve him up my big dumb heart on a platter so that he could trample it with his boot. Better now than getting even more attached to the asshole.

I stripped before pulling on my most comfortable- but fugly-flannel pajamas, feeling all out of sorts over the conflicting

emotions duking it out inside. I was mad at Callum because he'd pushed so fucking hard. Charming me into accepting the risk that I had known he was. I was so pissed because I had thought he was different, that he actually cared about what we had. He'd only proven he was just like all the rest of the cocky jocks that I'd dealt with in the past. I was hurt too, but that particular feeling seemed to have taken a backseat to the furious rage that made me recall the first day we'd met and I'd dreamed up all those different ways of getting rid of him.

By the time my alarm went off at 6, I knew there was no hope of getting any sleep. I'd spent the entire night tossing and turning, battling back tears of hurt and anger that left me emotionally exhausted and mentally depleted. I wanted to stay curled up in bed for the day, adulating could fuck right off.

I hadn't even looked at the texts that Callum had sent throughout the night, unwilling to be the fool to fall for his excuses just because I'd caught feelings for the jerk. There was no way I was going to work, knowing that there was no way I could ignore Callum if he came in. All it would take would be a flash of that boyish smile that popped his dimples and I'd forgive him everything.

Pulling up Marcus's number, I hit dial and put it up on speaker as I hit the shower.

"Hey." His voice still sounded hoarse but he no longer sounded like death was knocking. I could only hope that he was feeling well enough to cover my shift since I had no intention of leaving my apartment.

“How you feelin’?” I asked, turning the water on and setting the temp to hot, the vanilla and peach scent of the bubble bath I poured in filling the bathroom.

“Eh, I’ll live to pester you another day,” he informed. “God only knows how you’d ever survive without me.”

“I’m sure I’d find a way to get over it,” I grumped.

He paused and I swore I could feel his dark gaze narrowing on me. “Why do you sound like someone just took away your favorite toy *and* pissed in your Lucky Charms?”

“Because I’m an idiot,” I told him, my voice breaking just a little beneath the flare of hurt.

“Excuse me?” There was no humor left in his voice, his silence deafening as he waited me out.

“I fucking fell for the guy, Marcus.” That was all I said. All that I could say. Admitting to the messy emotions boiling inside of me. Saying it aloud had the first tear spilling down my cheek and I swiped it angrily away.

“And this is bad?” he asked in confusion, a confused laugh leaving him.

“He stood me up last night, didn’t bother answering my texts or phone call, and left me hanging in his fucking place til one in the morning,” I snapped, sinking into the welcoming heat. “So yeah, it’s a bad thing. This was supposed to be nothing more than a little fun between the sheets, not...this!”

“Oh, doll-face,” he murmured sympathetically.

“No! You don’t get to doll-face me! He made me fucking cry, Marcus. I haven’t cried over a guy since high school!” I felt those tears burning again and groaned. “I blame you for getting me into this mess, Marcus Owens. If you hadn’t encouraged me to take a chance on him, he wouldn’t have had the chance to get me so dick-drunk I can’t even think straight.”

“And you would have lost out on some fucking phenomenal sex,” he retorted. “Blame me if you want, but Len, I’ve never seen you happier than you have been over the past couple of weeks. Even when he was only coming in for whatever that shit was that you were serving him, you were happy. So don’t give me shit because you can’t handle some real-world relationship. I love you to death, but that’s some fucked up bullshit if you ask me.”

Stunned, I stared at my phone as he called me out on my shit. I knew that I had some issues where men and relationships were concerned, but guys didn’t usually fall for the geek squad. They wanted the cheerleader with perky tits and perfect asses and curves for days. They wanted the girl who had confidence in spades, not the girl who held her insecurities like a blanket around her.

“Mattlen, sweetie, I don’t know what Callum’s excuse for last night was, but we all fuck up. You haven’t told him about your little side gig, right? Has he even been to your place?” Marcus tried to reason with me, his calm rationale beginning to sink in.

He was right.

While I still couldn't understand why Callum wouldn't just tell me he had something else going on or that he needed space apart, I could understand that maybe it was what he had needed last night. Maybe he sucked at communicating just as badly as I did, and we were both being idiots.

"I hate when you make sense," I pouted.

Marcus chuckled and after a few more minutes of nonsense and an agreement to give me a single day to pout like a baby, he hung up, leaving me to reflect on my situation.

I didn't touch my phone again until well into the afternoon, not trusting myself and my rollercoaster emotions. When I finally felt like I had a grip on myself, I swiped open the chat with Callum, going back to the first text he'd sent last night.

Cal: Thought you were gonna be here when I got home?

Cal: Thanks for the balm, that shit worked amazing.

Cal: Are you fucking ignoring me because of last night?

Cal: Come on, Lenny girl, don't be mad. Let me make it up to you...

Cal: I fucked up, I get it! Don't fucking shut me out because I'm a fucking idiot, Lenny!

I contemplated what I wanted to say, what I wanted to tell him. After talking to Marcus, I knew I was going to give him the chance to explain because he was right when he told me that I wasn't being completely honest with Callum either. I wasn't telling him about the little sex kitten alter ego that only came out when the camera was rolling. I wasn't embarrassed

about what I did, but I didn't want to have to choose between the rush of confidence that camming gave me or having a real relationship with a man who might not completely be on board with me showing off the goods to strangers. Not everyone was understanding as my pervy best friend.

Deciding to just bite the bullet, I dropped Callum my location and sat back to wait, to see if he'd show up.

Twelve



CAL

“**W**HY EXACTLY DID YOU want me tagging along?”
Cormac asked from the passenger seat of my truck.

“Because your dumb ass was the reason I bailed in the first place,” I reminded him. “If you hadn’t thought I needed to get fucking blasted last night, I would have gone home, gotten laid, and all would still be good in my life.”

He threw his head back and laughed, completely unrepentant for the shitstorm he had created. Not that I expected any different from him. He pulled shit like stealing our phones and calling boys night or texting all the WAGs, claiming the team needed some quality bonding time. It was complete bullshit because like any of us needed to spend any more time together, especially during the season when all we did was spend time together.

Noah claimed he needed that connection because he was the goalie and had his own training and practice schedule outside of ours. It was his way of feeling like a part of the team. I

claimed it was because he was a needy fucker and couldn't stand not being the center of attention at all times.

It was probably a bit of both, to be honest.

After Doc had poked and prodded my knees to the point I was pretty sure I had his fingerprints bruised onto my bones, he'd told me that there was some swelling he didn't like and that I was going to be on the bench for the next game if it didn't go down. I was pissed. Show me one guy on our team that didn't have some kind of inflammation or swelling in their joints after a game, and I'd say they didn't fucking play their heart out on the ice.

Core hadn't taken no for an answer when I'd come out of Doc's office and saw the barely contained fury on my face. He'd stolen my phone and dragged my ass out with him and Ayers to one club after another. It had been after one by the time he'd given it back and I'd thought for sure I'd find Lenny passed out in my bed when I got home. I hadn't expected her to wait up for me, but I'd thought for sure she would have been there.

But the hot blonde that I'd hoped to lose myself in wasn't there. The jersey that I'd given her had been tossed across the breakfast bar along with a half-eaten bag of peanut M&M's. I'd found the miracle freeze gel on my coffee table and had felt like such a jerk because she'd wanted to take care of me and I'd callously blown her off. I knew that I should have called or texted but I'd stupidly thought she wouldn't care.

She hadn't answered a single text until she had dropped me an address while Core and I were consuming our weight in chicken wings.

Call me a fool, but I'd packed up the rest of our food, grabbed Cormac by the scruff of the neck, and dragged his ass along for the ride. He was about to get a crash course in jumping to conclusions about people. And not taking advantage of friends and their kindness.

"You just want me along because you're gonna let Lil' Lenny down easily so that you can pursue your chances with NerdyGRL19," Cormac taunted. "She hit you back?"

"Nope, but I'd rather Lenny hitting me back, not some faceless, nameless girl that has a million other men hard for her," I told him honestly. "Including my best friend."

It was true, too.

I didn't want the anonymous girl hiding behind the camera, even if I knew who she was, I wanted the Lenny that I had come to know. I loved how comfortable she was with her body, how much she enjoyed showing it off even if she didn't share that part of herself with me. She enjoyed sex more than any other woman I'd been with, and honestly, was a lot more fun than any of them too. All of it combined, and she was my perfect girl come to life.

"Holy fuck." My voice was a strangled whisper, barely audible above the loud rap pumping out of the stereo.

I pulled into a parking spot outside of the apartment building that Lenny had directed me to, shifting the truck into park, and squeezed my eyes shut. My heart thudded erratically in my chest as the reality of my situation crashed down on me.

I'd fucking fallen for the girl.

I'd been falling for her ever since she placed the wrong order on my table and called me out on my dickish behavior.

I'd caught fucking feelings for the girl who loved Marvel over DC with an intensity that was slightly terrifying and thought Dungeons and Dragons was a way of life.

"Yo, breathe man, you look like you're about ready to puke all over the fucking truck."

Taking a deep breath, I leaned my head back against the seat rest. How the fuck had I gotten into this position? Not only had I royally fucked things up by standing her up- even if it had been completely out of my control- but I'd somehow managed to go and fall for the girl too?

"Come on, man, let's get this over with," Core urged. "It's fucking cheat day, I want to be spending time with a beer and all the fries I can take, not sitting around watching you moon over...whatever the fuck this is."

"Yeah, yeah," I muttered, "God forbid you face the shit that you caused by being such a needy fucker."

"I can't help it, you just looked so sad coming out of Doc's office," he shrugged with an impish grin.

Shaking my head in exasperation, I got out, tilting my head back to study the building. The place was a lot like mine, just on a smaller scale. Lots of glass, steel, and brick and manned by an older gentleman decked out in the customary livery that you'd see in any upper-class complex. Knowing what my place cost, I was a bit surprised that she could afford a place like this which told me that she made better bank in being a cam girl than I'd originally thought.

"Name, please," he asked upon opening the door for us.

"Callum Sinclair. I'm here to see-"

"Miss James, yes, she called down earlier to tell me you may stop by. Apartment 602."

Core grunted in surprise, suddenly showing a bit more interest in the situation I was dragging him into. I hit the call button for the elevator and ignored him as best as I could, even when he punched my arm hard enough to hurt.

"You sneaky son-of-a-bitch, you played me," he hissed.

Shrugging, I gave him a smug smile. "Yeah, maybe I did. Or maybe you just don't know how to read the fucking room, jackass."

He laughed as though I hadn't just insulted him. He punched the button for her floor and leaned back against the faux wood-paneled wall, content to sit back and watch me grovel my way back into Lenny's good graces. It was completely on brand for him. Everyone loved Cormac O'Brien so he rarely had to face

the music after he'd created a catastrophe of one kind or another.

I ignored him right up until we stood outside of her apartment, trying not to let my irritation with Core show. I gave him a dirty look, silently warning him to be on his best fucking behavior. Hesitating for half a second before knocking, I thought twice about letting him stick around instead of giving him my keys and sending him on his way. As much as I wanted to just get in there and make it right with Lenny, I knew there was no way he was leaving now that he knew there was a girl in the mix.

Core's shock when Lenny opened the door would have been funny as hell if she didn't look pissed as fuck standing there in ratty sweatpants and a cropped sweatshirt, hair pulled up in a messy ponytail. Her normally bright emerald eyes were red and swollen, making my gut clench when I realized I was most likely the cause behind her heartbroken gaze.

"You needed back up to face me?" she asked in a husky voice. "I thought you were a bigger man than that."

"I brought him because he owes you an apology for-"

"What? Why do I have to apologize?"

If I could have punched him in the throat for being such an idiot, I would have but Core would give as good as he got. Even if he deserved it. Lenny glanced between the two of us and made a move to shut the door in my face.

“Lenny, I’m sorry, okay. This fucker took all our phones after the game and told us we weren’t getting them back until he was good and ready. I tried to get a hold of you as soon as I could.” I threw my hand out, keeping the door open, and took a step into her apartment, closer to her.

She looked up into Cormac’s face, arching a dark brow in question. “Really?”

At least he had the decency to look guilty as he nodded. “He was pouting like a baby because the Doc told him he had to baby his knee or he wasn’t playing. I felt it was in the interest of the team to take the boys out for a round of drinks to celebrate.”

Lenny leaned up against the open door, taking him in silently. “So you thought it was a good idea to steal all your boys’ phones, take them out on the town until all hours of the night without giving any of them a chance to change plans?”

Damn, she was good at laying the guilt on. Even I felt the weight of her words, and I’d been one of the ones he’d manipulated into action. Granted, I was a big boy and could have found another way of getting a hold of her if I hadn’t been such an utterly selfish ass.

“How many of your boys have wives waiting up for them after a game? Girlfriends? Kids?” She continued.

“When you put it like that, it does kind of sound like a shitty thing to do,” he murmured pathetically, dropping his head with a pout.

“It was a shitty thing to do, and if I were you, I’d be making it up to each family that was kept waiting for their man to show up.”

I don’t think I had ever seen Cormac O’Brien put in his place so effectively. He shifted uneasily, unable to meet her eyes. I shook my head in sympathy. Lenny James just spanked him good.

As if she could read the humor I was holding in, her gaze shot to me. “And you! You’re a fucking grown-ass man. Did he steal your wallet and keys too? Chain you to him so that where he went, you had no choice but to follow?”

“Nooo,” I drawled, sensing where she was going with this.

“So you could have left at any point during the course of the evening, but chose not to?”

“Yeah, and I admit that I fucked up. I’m sorry that I bailed on you, I would have much rather been with you,” I told her, reaching out and tugging on a lock of her hair that had come loose from her ponytail. “You’ve thoroughly spanked Core’s ass into submission, he’ll probably never be the same carefree jackass that he once was, and I’d like to send him on his way before he has to witness me getting on my knees so I can do some proper groveling.”

She looked once again at Cormac, who met her eyes and gave a slight nod of respect. Finally, she stepped back, giving me the go-ahead to come in. Giving one last look over my shoulder at my best friend, I tossed him my keys.

“Go enjoy your fries, but make sure you leave my fucking keys at my place before you jump into bed with someone. I don’t want to have to hunt you down in the morning to get to practice.”

“Nice to meet you, Lenny,” Cormac called out as I shut the door in his face.

Leaning back against the door, I couldn’t take my eyes off her. The black sweats hung low on her slender hips and had definitely seen better days. There was a worn *Iron Man* helmet on the cropped top that left her flat belly exposed. I had no doubt that if she had stopped and thought about what she looked like, she never would have opened the door for me, but I found that she had never looked more beautiful than in this moment.

“On a scale of one to ten, how pissed are you at me?” I teased, grabbing her wrist and pulling her in close.

She gave a token of resistance before finally giving in and melting against me just like I liked. “Twelve,” she mumbled against my chest.

“Is that going to be our number now? Twelve? First night I had you in my bed I’m pretty sure you hit a cool dozen orgasms that night,” I nuzzled her temple, the scent of her shampoo tickling my senses. I’d never be able to smell a peach without thinking of her. “I’d be happy to do a repeat of that night.”

Lenny gave a soft sigh, breaking my heart in the process. “Raincheck on the orgasms?”

Raising a hand to her face, I cupped her jaw, tilting her head back so that she had no choice but to look at me. “I have the entire day off, it’s a cheat day for me, and I have zero intention of leaving here before I see those pouty lips smile so whatever you want to do, I’m all fucking for it.”

Thirteen



LENNY

I 'D NEVER BEEN TO an NHL game before, not that I'd ever really wanted to go to one, but as I took my first steps into the arena, I knew that this wouldn't be my last. The energy was electric, the noise unreal, and the scent of popcorn and beer filled the chilly air. People were everywhere- young, old, of every ethnicity- all gathered together in one arena to enjoy the game.

Cal had given his jersey back to me to wear, claiming I was his good luck charm and had to wear it. Every time he thought of me wearing his number, all he wanted to do was finish the game so that he could bend me over and fuck me stupid, all while his name was blazed across my back.

I wasn't going to argue that particular scenario playing out. He was awfully talented at making me come like a firecracker.

"Where'd that guy tell us our seats were?" Marcus asked from behind me, his hands loaded down with beer and food.

Scanning the tickets, then the surrounding area, I pointed toward the ice. “We’re right on the ice.”

Marcus’s dark eyes went wide, his smile so big I thought he’d swallowed the sun. “Seriously? Holy fuck, Len, marry this guy!”

I rolled my eyes, laughing at his level of excitement. “Yeah, that seems like a legit reason to marry someone. Because he can get my bestie decent seats at a game,” I called back to him as I led the way the stairs to where our seats were located.

He wasn’t wrong that our seats were prime spots. From where we were sitting, we had a perfect view of the players’ bench on our left and the net on our right. Settling in, I propped my UGG-covered feet up on the little ledge right in front and watched in fascination as the players warmed up. Men were stretching out while others did passing drills with pucks or skated around sticks laid out on the ice.

I grinned when I spotted Callum, his focus wholly on Cormac as the two did some kind of stretch that made them look like frogs bouncing on the spot. Or like they were humping the ice like over-eager little boys. No wonder he was so fucking good in bed when he practiced hip thrusts on the daily. Heat pooled in my belly as I watched, enjoying the fantasies playing out in my head of just how beneficial those stretches were.

As though he could feel my gaze, Callum’s head shot up and scanned the growing crowd until landing on me. His eyes were lost in the shadowed protection of his helmet, but I could see

his lips turn up in a smile. He was on his feet in an instant, skating over to the boards. Dropping my feet, I stood to meet him against the protective glass.

Callum took off his helmet, holding it beneath his arm as he scanned me up and down, his gaze heating. I felt it like a physical touch, his eyes slowing over my torso to take in the jersey that I had tied up around my waist to keep from completely drowning in it.

He blew a kiss to me, pressing his gloved hand to the plexiglass. “My number looks fucking good on you, baby!” he shouted through the glass.

Tugging the jersey away from my chest, I grinned. “I do make it look good,” I called back. I leaned in close to the glass, “Win this fucking game and I’ll make sure your fantasy comes true tonight.”

His stormy eyes blazed hot and wild, his smile predatory and fierce. Tossing a wave to a couple of fans behind me, he winked at me before skating off to rejoin the team. He returned to Cormac’s side and leaned in to say something to him, who in turn glanced over and waved, giving me a thumbs up like he was completely on board with winning.

Callum told me that two days after I’d chewed him out, Cormac had booked every wife he’d made wait up for their guy a spa day, complete with childcare for the littles. The girlfriends had received two dozen roses and a box of Swiss chocolates. He’d made good on his promise. Apologizing to all the women who’d been affected by his machinations. Once

Callum had gotten over the shock, he'd had quite the laugh at Cormac's expense.

Waving back at the guys, I sank down into my seat next to Marcus and prepared to watch my guy kick some Winnipeg ass.

Even though I didn't understand much about the game, I still got caught up in the manic energy that filled the stands. With minutes left in the game, Boston was on fire, the game a complete shutout.

I couldn't take my eyes off Callum.

Even when he got into a brutal fight with Winnipeg's bruiser, I still couldn't look away. While he sat in the penalty box, I studied him, imagining the strength that hid beneath layers and layers of equipment that only I got to enjoy. It was really a shame that all those ripped abs had to be hidden beneath his gear.

I had become an addict, and he was my drug of choice. Recently, I'd started to play with the idea of turning off the cameras because I wasn't getting the same rush out of it. Callum was everything I never knew I'd need. When he touched me, I burned. When he looked at me with those stormy eyes, I lit up like a fucking firecracker. When he kissed me, it was like he was giving me the air I needed to breathe. The only reason I hadn't quit yet was because I really, really liked the bank I got from doing it.

The adrenaline that rushed through my body while I watched Callum play was just as addictive as the rush I got from being

close to him. The way his body moved, the speed he moved across the ice, despite all the gear he had weighing him down made me appreciate that hard body hidden away even more. Intensity radiated in waves off of him, his focus never once straying from the game, completely oblivious to the screams of the fans. He was lasered in on that puck flying across the ice and nothing else.

Not the crowd screaming for him.

Not me, as I fidgeted in my seat, so turned on I couldn't do anything but squeeze my thighs together and hope that I wouldn't leave a mess behind on my seat. I was burning with need, consumed by this one man and everything that he made me feel.

I wanted all that energy and intensity focused solely on me. I wanted him fucking me with that same focus. Pounding into me, hard and fast, uncaring about any shit that was going on around us. Choking me on his big dick while he fisted my hair and held me in place so all I could do was accept what he gave me. I wanted him to mark me, to claim me, to make me his.

He. Was. So. Fucking. Hot.

“Your man is on fucking fire tonight,” Marcus shouted, distracting me from fantasies of being bent over and fucked like an animal.

The man currently consuming my every thought was on a breakaway, the crowd on their feet with deafening roars of encouragement.

“You would be too if you got promised whatever your cock desires,” I laughed. A couple of guys laughed behind me, my cheeks heating when I realized how loudly I had said that.

Marcus wrapped his arm around my shoulder and kissed my temple, laughing at my embarrassment. “And just like that, every man in the vicinity wishes they could be Callum Sinclair.”

Eyes glued to the ice, I jumped to my feet as Callum neared the net, perfectly in control of the puck at his feet. I couldn't watch, yet nothing could make me turn away. Like every other fan in the building, I held my breath, waiting for him to make a move.

It happened in the blink of an eye. The buzzer behind the net went off just seconds before time ran out, Callum's aim true. I didn't even bother looking at the scoreboard overhead, knowing that he had taken Boston to a final score of 5-nothing. Callum was swallowed up by his team, all shouting and cheering, leading him off the ice without a glance into the stands.

My gaze followed him off, consumed by such immense pride for a man that I wasn't even sure was my boyfriend. The question wasn't how far I'd fall, not anymore, it was how bad the landing was going to be when I crashed down to reality. This all-consuming need I had for him wasn't normal and couldn't realistically be maintained for any great length, even if I tried clinging to him with everything I had.

“You waiting for lover boy?” Marcus asked, getting to his feet when the crowd finally thinned out a bit.

I nodded. “He’s going to be a while, so go on and get out of here.” Leaning back in my seat again, I propped my feet up against the boards and relaxed, letting my eyes slip closed and the adrenaline rush slowly ebb away. “Thanks for coming with me, Marcus.”

“As if I would miss something like this,” he laughed, leaning down and kissing the top of my head. “Don’t do anything I would do.”

“Well, that doesn’t leave me with too many options,” I teased.

He walked away with a grin, leaving me to my thoughts. It didn’t take long for boredom to set in and I pulled out my phone, deciding to do a little work while I waited. I was in the process of editing a video that Callum had taken as I walked away from him the other morning when a pretty brunette in a pair of mom jeans and a tight long-sleeved team shirt sank into the chair beside me.

Having mastered the art of concealing my phone in situations like this, I arched a brow at the woman.

“You’re Lenny, Cal’s girl?” she asked, her voice soft and feminine, completely at odds with the curves for days she had.

“Lenny, yes. Callum’s? That’s debatable,” I joked.

“I’m Haley Schaefer, 57 belongs to me,” she laughed, holding out a slender hand. “Cal asked one of the girls to come

get you so you wouldn't have to wait out here by yourself. Trust me when I tell you that you definitely don't want to be sitting here while those boys deal with press. Your ass will never forgive you by the time they stop peacocking around."

I grinned at her. "That bad, huh?"

"You don't know the half of it." She stood, waiting until I stood up with her.

"Lead the way."

Walking into the exclusive women's club of wives and girlfriends was nerve-wracking. I was the new girl, in more ways than one. Callum and I hadn't defined what we were, even if we had been spending all our nights together, so I knew that the women holding court in the private box would have questions. Hell, I had questions and I was the other half of this duo.

"You look nervous," Haley stated gently. "You really don't need to be, I promise. We don't bite."

"I wouldn't say nervous is the right word."

Haley giggled, linking her arm with mine and pushed the double doors for the private box open. I took in the dozen or so women mingling in the spacious room. Before the doors had even fully closed behind me, all eyes were on me, sizing me up.

"Well, well, well. You are not at all like Cal's normal girls," a stunning blonde greeted with a predatory smile, every one of her pearly whites bared.

“She’s just a baby,” another blonde cooed, her head tilting as she studied me. “How old are you, sweetheart?”

Gritting my teeth, I pulled out my best fake smile. “I swear my mama finished potty-training me.”

“Seriously, Chloe,” Haley sighed and shook her head in disappointment. “I told Lenny we didn’t bite and you’re just proving me wrong.”

“I’m just curious, Hales.” The blonde, who I assumed was Chloe, sent me a sheepish smile. “I’m sorry if that came off as rude, but you really are a surprise.”

“Why? Does Callum date women with a third leg? Maybe they’ve got two heads and blue skin and speak in tongue?” I asked, not even trying to keep the bite out of my voice.

“Baby girl has claws,” the second blonde chuckled. “What we mean is that he doesn’t date, *ever*. I’m Stacy.” She sidled up to me, throwing an arm around my shoulders, and began introducing the other women, names going in one ear and out the next.

I didn’t really care who was Karen or Kim. I wanted to know more about Callum and his history of non-dating.

“What do you mean, Callum doesn’t date?” I asked curiously.

“Cal is one of the biggest players on the team, sweetheart. Although since his accident, even the puck bunnies haven’t cut it for him. So tell us, Lenny, is it? How did you and Cal meet?”

It was women like her that made me so glad I didn't have many female friends. Her voice was as sharp as a razor blade, her tone telling anyone who would listen that she was better than everyone around. Her goal in life to squash the little people beneath her stiletto heels. I could see the judgment in her blue eyes, trying to decide if it was worth it to cut me down in front of her peers or if I was even worth an ounce of her time.

Feeling all kinds of bratty, I smiled wickedly. "He came into my coffee shop, and I came on his big dick. He rocked my world so hard that I just couldn't let him get away."

Little Miss Stacy gasped in shock while Haley and Chloe both burst into giggles. It probably wasn't a good idea to antagonize the she-wolf, but I couldn't seem to stop myself. The woman really needed to be brought down a peg or two. I waited until she turned on her spiked heel and walked away before turning to the other two.

"Sorry, I don't do well with passive-aggressive bitchiness," I apologized. "I didn't actually jump Callum's bones the first day."

"None of us would judge you if you had, Lenny," Haley told me with a grin. "I may be married to my own hunky hockey star but I can appreciate the hotness that is Callum Sinclair."

If Stacy was the Wicked Bitch of the West, Haley was nothing short of Glenda the Good Bitch. I'd yet to feel any amount of judgment coming from her, and I had a feeling that

once she got to know a person, she was 100% loyal to a fault. I could get behind the idea of Haley and I forming a friendship.

Grinning, I agreed with her. “Callum really did come into the shop where I work, but he was a jerk because he didn’t get the right drink. He thought that if he just flashed me a dimpled smile, I’d give him a chance but I had to stand my ground. Grumps may be hot, but jerks are definitely not my cup o’ tea.”

“Good for you,” Haley laughed. “That man needs someone willing to put him in his place.”

We eased into an easy conversation, rapid-firing questions at each other to get to know one another. She asked about my family- spoiled, only child here- and about the Coffee Drop. I asked about being married to an NHL player and the demands it put on her- which there were plenty. She wanted to know about school and the classes that I was taking. I found out that she and Niall (hunky number 57) had just had a baby four months ago, a baby boy at home with grandma while they got some alone time.

I lost track of how long we sat and talked, forgetting just how long it had been since I’d had any girl time. Marcus and I were the best of friends, but sometimes, nothing beat just having a girlfriend to vent to.

Haley shot out of her seat, a huge smile lighting up her pretty face like she’d swallowed the sun and I knew hubby dearest had just entered the room. Sure enough, I followed her bouncing steps to where she flung herself into the arms of one

of the biggest guys I'd ever seen, his big arms lifting her like she weighed nothing more than a feather. She looked like the cutest little Tinkerbell all wrapped around the sexy Goliath of a man.

“Those two are so sickeningly in love, it's disgusting,” Callum whispered in my ear, his strong arms wrapping around my waist, pulling me in flush against his body.

Leaning back against him, I tilted my head to the side, granting access to the curve of my neck for his sinful lips to tease. His hands slipped beneath the jersey I wore, tattooed fingers hot against my belly, stroking the banked fire to life.

“Do you know how fucking hard it was playing knowing that you were right there, wearing my name?” he murmured against my neck.

“I'm guessing it was as hard as it was watching you get all sweaty and intense,” I snorted. “Especially when I kept thinking about all the other ways you get sweaty and intense.”

“Oh yeah? You having more dirty dreams about me, baby girl?”

I turned in his arms, winding my arms around his neck. My nipples were hard as diamonds, pressing against the solid wall of his chest and I had to fight the urge to rub against him like a cat in heat. “You've got me so dick-drunk, I can't think of anything else.” I tugged him down until I could kiss him, connecting with him the only way that I could with so many people around.

“I like that you can’t think of anything but my cock,” Callum grinned against my lips, nipping at my lip playfully. “Cause I can’t think of anything but your sweet cunt.”

“Get a fucking room already.”

Callum’s head lifted, as well as a hand that he used to salute his friend. His stormy dark eyes narrowed in a mockingly outraged glare. “You’re just jealous, Core.”

Haley sidled up to me with her mammoth of a husband in tow. She introduced us quickly before turning a hard eye on Callum. “Don’t you dare do anything to mess this one up, I like her.”

“I like her too,” he chuckled, nuzzling a kiss to my temple. “You guys heading home or…”

Niall shook his head, damp blonde curls falling against his brow. “My mother has Liam for the night, I’m taking Hales to The Tap Room and then we’re getting a room. Gonna see if I can’t plant another baby in her belly,” he informed us.

“You wouldn’t fucking dare,” Haley warned, her chocolate brown eyes narrowing on him.

“Oh, you know I would. Nothing sexier than seeing my woman barefoot and pregnant,” he shot back, his gaze hot and full of lust as he drank her up.

Fanning myself, I side-eyed Callum, beginning to understand what he meant when he said they were disgustingly in love. There was a little green-eyed monster stirring inside that wanted that same kind of love, so sweet that it made others

want to hurl. His dark eyes locked with mine and my breath caught in my chest, the way he was looking at me so hot I wasn't sure how my clothes hadn't gone up in flames already because I could feel the lust, the need, burning over my skin as though he were physically touching me.

I was starting to wonder if I had bit off more than I could chew with him, or if he was going to eat me alive and ruin me for any other man when he ultimately walked away.

And he would walk away.

Men like him, full of confidence and swagger, never picked the nerdy girl. Not when they could have their pick of the hottest women within the tri-state area.

Fourteen



CAL

SHE WAS THE TASTIEST treat I'd ever laid eyes on wearing my name and number on her back. She wore my jersey proudly, lit up with excitement as she gazed up at me. She looked like there was nowhere else that she'd rather be, no other guy that she'd rather be with.

I found that I wanted to be her guy.

The team had standing plans for drinks after games but I didn't want to go out tonight. I didn't want to spend any more time with my guys, I wanted to give this damn girl my undivided attention. I wanted to make her come apart beneath my hands, to hear her scream my name, to feel her nails scraping over my skin. Standing around a crowded bar while trying to fight off the advances of every puck bunny in the area just didn't sound like a good use of my time.

Waving Core off I saw him closing in on me, I tightened my hold on her and let my hands slip beneath the silky jersey.

She was like warm silk beneath my calloused hands, all soft and smooth skin with the perfect amount of curves that fit right in my palms. I'd always veered toward busty women with more curves than sense but after a couple of months of having Lenny in my bed, I couldn't imagine how I'd ever wanted a pair of D's when I could have perfect B's.

She fit my hands, my mouth, my fucking body like she was the missing piece of the Callum Sinclair puzzle.

“Are we waiting for anything in particular?” Lenny teased, tracing a finger over the scruff on my jaw.

I shook my head, drawing her in close, her breath mingled with mine. “I didn't think you'd want an audience when I stripped off those fucking leggings and claimed my reward for winning by burying my cock in your tight pussy.”

Her breath caught, a tiny whimper of sound escaping her lips and arrowing straight for my dick. I could die a happy man hearing that little moan of pleasure, knowing I was the one making her come undone, when she had millions of men at her fingertips who would gladly take my place. I'd never tire of how she felt when she came, my cock so deep in her body that I felt every quivering muscle ripple through mine.

My hands skimmed down her sides, settling on the fleece leggings that clung to her slim hips, my fingers digging in as if I could imprint my prints on her skin and she'd never be able to forget who had destroyed her, wrecked her for any others.

“If you don't want me sinking my tongue in your cunt right here, right now before I bend you over one of these fucking

tables, then you better tell me now, Len. Once I get a taste, I won't be stopping until you're screaming my name," I gave her in fair warning.

Again, her response was nothing but a breathy moan. Taking that as consent to have my wicked way with her, I slipped my hands beneath the waistband of her leggings and felt nothing but smooth, silky flesh. She really did like driving me nuts wondering what kind of mood she was in. Whether it was lace panties, quirky boy shorts, or nothing at all. Feeling how ready she was, how slick her pussy was, was all it took for me to shove the material down her long legs, dropping to my knees in front of her.

"Callum-" she moaned.

"Hold my jersey up out of the way, Len. Let me see how wet that pretty pink pussy is," I purred as I nuzzled into her pelvis, my hands roaming over her hips and grabbing handfuls of her ass.

She listened so goddamn well. Her fingers curled over the hem of the jersey, raising it inch by fucking inch in a slow tease. She didn't stop until she had it gripped tightly just below her heaving tits.

"Good girl," I praised, nudging her legs open and urging one long leg up until it rested over my shoulder.

I was greedy for the sweet taste of her on my tongue but I also wanted to tease Lenny until she was an incoherent mess of begging and pleading. Kissing first one thigh, then the other, I drew my tongue up the sleek line of muscle, feeling

her tremble and tugging her ass forward. She glistened with arousal, the scent of her taunting my senses until I couldn't handle it any longer. Her squirming hips urged me on and I dragged my tongue through her pussy in one swift pass of my tongue, teasing us both before I settled in and feasted.

She tasted like honey, heated and raw and so fucking delicious. Licking into her, I took one hand off her ass to spread her open, granting me easier access to devour her. She wriggled even closer, her moans and whimpers music to my ears and I latched onto her clit, sucking the hard nub into my mouth while I speared two fingers into her cunt, curling them to find that sweet spot that made her explode. Her hands dropped their hold on the jersey and tangled in my hair with a death grip that had pain splintering through my skull as she nearly tore my hair out from the roots.

“Callum, I'm gonna...I'm gonna come,” she panted, her hips rolling in my hold.

I thrust a third finger into her tight pussy, loving the way she clenched down on them as she fought off the orgasm. Her tits heaved with every ragged breath she drew and I doubled down on her, taking her up higher and higher until she came with a rush all over my face.

I didn't give her a chance to recover, her voice crying out my name barely audible over the roaring lust in my head. I stood up fast, favoring my bad knee as it screamed in protest at the abrupt change in position, and spun her around to face the high-top table behind her. Fisting her long hair, I pulled her

head back until I could see her flushed cheeks and dazed emerald eyes.

She was so fucking beautiful that for a minute I forgot what I was doing.

Leaning over her, I ran my nose over her jawline. “You look so fucking gorgeous when you come.”

Her mouth fell open with a sigh, a temptation that I couldn't resist. I claimed her lips, her breath, her very soul with a drugging kiss. Our tongues tangled together while she ground her ass back against my cock, still locked away in my slacks. I groaned as I pulled away from her, flattening a hand between her shoulder blades right over my name and pressed her down onto the hard surface of the table, her tits flattening beneath her. She shifted so that she could stretch her arms out in front of her, bracing herself by curling her fingers around the edge and pushing back against me.

Reaching down with one hand, I hastily freed my cock and gave it a quick jerk before nudging her legs further apart. I dragged my tip through the slick mess of her arousal, coating my thick cock before I pressed in steadily. Dropping down until I was draped over her body like a fucking weighted blanket, I turned my head to hers and crushed her lips with mine. I slipped beneath her jersey, running my hand up the flat of her stomach so I could palm one small tit, rolling her nipple between my fingers as I sank balls deep into her body.

“Your pussy feels so fucking good, baby. So tight and wet, fucking strangling my cock,” I moaned as I drew back and

thrust hard back into her core. “I want to pound into you so fucking hard, you’ll be feeling me inside for days, weeks.”

“Callum-” she groaned my name, her hand reaching for mine to lace our fingers together.

Her body shifted, lifting up off the unforgiving table and she tugged our hands down. I knew what she wanted, what she needed. She shuddered beneath me when our joined hands slipped between her thighs, our skin instantly coated with her arousal. I used her fingers like a toy, finding her clit and rubbing against it just like I would have if I’d been using a vibrator against her. Our position let us feel every thick inch of my cock as I pumped into her tight cunt, over and over again.

She’s close, her pussy clenching rhythmically around me, fueling my own driving need to come. I’ve been on edge for hours and the need to feel her exploding around me has my balls drawing up tight, my hips to jerk into her so hard I’m surprised it doesn’t break into a million pieces beneath us. The scent of sex is heady, thick in the air and filling my lungs and I can’t hear anything but the sound of my hips slamming into hers. There was something so undeniably erotic about fucking her in the private suite of the arena, knowing that at any moment we could get caught by the cleaning staff that pushes me higher, faster, harder.

My body aches with the need to come, to fill her cunt with every ounce of cum I possess until she’s dripping with it. I’m lost to each quivering muscle, each thrust stroking into her pussy, each moaning breath that rips from her lungs. If there

was a heaven, this would be it because nothing penetrates through the drugging haze of lust and passion that envelopes us.

“Cal,” she cries out, her orgasm ripping through her slender body and giving me what I need to get off.

Bracing myself, I slam into her hard, over and over again until I can't fight it any longer. Jerking to a halt, buried to the hilt, my cock swells and my balls draw up as my orgasm tears through my body, ripping my existence to shreds until I know nothing but her, *us*. Her name exploded out of me, echoing around the room.

I didn't give a flying fuck if the GM walked into the suite right then and there and told me that I was done, that I wasn't ever playing another game in my life because it didn't fucking matter. I'd once thought that hockey was everything I'd ever needed, but as my cock pulsed inside of her, I knew it was all bullshit. I could die a happy man buried inside this girl. I wanted every teasing word, every dirty thought, every lewd moment with her. *Only her*.

“Oh, fuck,” I moaned, trying to stay upright and not collapse to the floor in a boneless heap like some untried teenage boy.

When I could finally move without having to worry about falling on my ass, I pulled out, grabbing one of the white napkins from the nearby table to clean us both up before tucking my cock back into my slacks. I smacked Lenny on the ass, grinning like a Cheshire cat at the hazy side-eyed look she

tossed my way, her body still shuddering in a sprawled out mess across the table.

“Not that I’m complaining about the view, babe, but you alright?” I teased, smoothing my rough hand over the pink mark left on her cheek. I noticed the deep, angry red marks on her hip from the imprint of my fingers digging in and felt a moment of guilt at hurting her, even when I wanted her to wear my fucking marks for the entire world to see.

“Nope.” She popped her *p* with just enough sass to tell me she was fine, a tired smile turning up her full lips. “You killed me with your dick, Callum. I’m never moving from this spot again. I don’t care who sees me.”

Chuckling, I pulled out my phone, taking a couple of quick photos of her bent over, ass still fully on display, cum leaking down her thigh. Bending to pull up her leggings, I give her ass one more lingering kiss before biting a perfect cheek, leaving just one more mark behind on her pale skin.

“Hey!” she laughed, wiggling away before I could right her clothing. “I really need to clean up a bit better before putting those back on or else I’m not going anywhere but home to change.”

“Home is good. Home means bed. Home means I can fuck you until neither one of us can move,” I told her, helping her stand up.

She turned to face me, her head canting to the side to study me, clearly trying to decide whether or not she was going to

take me up on that plan. It was a bit amusing thinking that she even had a choice.

Her hair was a tangled mess, falling out of the ponytail. The smattering of freckles on her cheeks stood out against the pink flush that heated her skin, making her appear young and innocent. Her lips were swollen from our kisses. She was a hot fucking mess and I'd never seen her look sexier. My cock stirred to life, perking up as I met her heated gaze with my own. If I didn't get her out of here fast, I was going to put her on her knees and make her gag on my dick.

"Agreed." She sighed breathily, giving me a filthy smile and nodding enthusiastically in agreement with the plan I'd laid out for her. "*But* you have to feed me first. I'm thinking... sushi."

"And here I was, thinking you couldn't get any fucking hotter," I muttered teasingly. "Fine, fix yourself, dirty girl, and I'll stuff you full of all the sushi you can handle."

Fifteen



LENNY

S PRAWLED ON MY BED, the camera live-streaming while I scrolled through all of my DMs. I hadn't been as present on my CamGirls account, so while Callum was on the road I decided I'd make an appearance. Most of the messages that came in were in the form of simple questions, asking about my day, or some mundane shit like that. Others came in that requested me to post a certain type of photo or video, to do something sexy, or even to call someone's name while moaning and groaning.

And then there were the ones that told me that I had been sent something to the postal box that CamGirls had for each of its girls. Those I didn't enjoy quite as much because of the intimacy of most of their *gifts*. There was something a bit creepy about receiving a sex toy from a complete stranger, especially knowing that they wanted me to use it while recording. They wanted to claim a part of my pleasure, and that's not why I cammed.

A ripple of excitement swept through me when I stumbled on another message from HockeyDaddy34, baffled by how extreme it felt. There was no reason whatsoever for me to be getting even a little excited by his attention, not when I was in a really fucking good place with Callum. Yet there it was, those little winged beasts fluttering in my belly at the sight of his name. There was just something about the way he talked to me that didn't feel like I was just another sex toy for someone.

Clicking the message open, I gave the camera a sly smile, shifting on my bed so that the little camisole I wore lifted to show off the curve of my ass, the little red thong doing nothing to cover it.

This particular stranger wasn't like all the others. Sure, he sent sexy comments and asked intimate questions, but he also threw in some sweet ones too. It was questions like *Who's my favorite superhero* or *What is my favorite type of cookie* that made it seem like he wasn't just after my pussy, but also wanted friendship as well. There was just something different about the conversations that I had with him over any others.

HockeyDaddy34: Did you know that a woman's orgasm lasts up to 20 seconds compared to a man's 6 seconds? Do you think that is true? I volunteer as tribute if you want to time it...for science and all.

Rolling to my side, I propped myself up on my elbow and did a little Google investigation. It was comments like this that made me question just how far on the bullshit scale he was,

but so far, he'd just dropped random facts on me that were one hundred percent true.

Weird.

But no less true.

“Hmmm...what do you think, guys?” I pursed my lips, knowing that it was the only part of my face that was visible. “Do women really have longer orgasms? Does that make you jealous? Angry? How does that make you feel knowing that a woman comes twice as long as a man.”

I watched as comments flew in.

@Morning_Glory: I'd give you an orgasm that would last for days, nerdyGRL

@SilverFoxxx: If your orgasm doesn't make your toes curl and your eyes roll back, then I ain't pleasin' my baby girl right

@2Hot2handle: I want to feel you come all over my cock, for as long as it'll last

On and on the comments went, one after another. There wasn't any real creativity in them, a fact that irritated me enough to tune most of it out. I teased my fingers over my body, offering them just enough incentive to stay on, but I was getting bored of it all.

I knew that it was because of Callum, this unfathomable boredom and loneliness that seemed to grab hold of me whenever he wasn't around. He'd fucked with my head, gotten me so goddamned dick-drunk that I couldn't see past the fog

of lust. It was only a matter of time before nothing that I did even came close to what I felt with Callum.

Ready to end my live, I slipped my fingers beneath the waist of my panties, the usual rush I got from fingering myself in front of an audience barely a blip in my arousal, but an errant thought of Callum being one of the names behind the screens, cock in hand as he stroked himself while he watched me...

I barely even had to touch myself before I was coming, so aroused by the thought of him knowing what I did, was enough to send a flash bang of ecstasy shattering through me with just a couple of strokes of my fingers. Keeping my head enough to bite my tongue against moaning *his* name in front of the million or so viewers, I collapsed back against the bed, breathing heavily as I tried to figure out how much longer I'd be able to keep doing this if I couldn't even get off without thinking of him.

“Definitely twenty seconds,” I giggled, wiggling my glistening fingers at the camera in a wave. “See you again soon.”

By the time I had cleaned up, it was time to head to work. Callum was playing tonight and I'd told him that I'd make sure the game was playing in The Coffee Drop, even though it was far from a sports establishment. Callum had gotten a jersey made for me, one that actually fit my slim frame, and I'd begun wearing that to work anytime I couldn't make it to his games. Marcus teased the shit out of me because of it, but he was also the first one to jump in and pick up a shift for me

so that I could go to one of the home games, so I wasn't going to bust his balls too much over it.

Besides, over the last couple of weeks, he'd become one of Callum's biggest cheerleaders.

We'd spent Thanksgiving apart since he'd been on the road then too. I'd gone with my mom to the Owen's for dinner, a tradition we'd held since Marcus and I had been little. Callum had called just before meeting up with his parents and sister to tell me that he'd left a present for me at his place, which had ended up with a FaceTime call at 1 AM so that he could watch me fuck myself with the cute pink dildo he'd gotten me.

He was always surprising me with shit like that. Taking photos or videos when I least expected it. Dirty texts in the middle of class that had me squirming in my seat, desperate to touch him, kiss him, feel him. Callum made me feel special in a way that I'd never felt before. He made me feel seen, feel heard. He didn't judge me when I told him about how hot I thought it was being watched, or when I told him that I fantasized about getting fucked by two men. He let me have my kinks and while I wasn't too sure he'd ever go for sharing, he had no problem with the exhibition side of my kinky ass.

Bundling up in all my winter gear and making sure that my beanie was pulled down to cover my ears, I made my way to the shop. My breath puffed out in front of me, a testament to how cold it had gotten. There was no dallying when my nose had turned into Rudolph's and I could feel the cold trying to sneak right into my bones. I heaved a sigh of relief as I pushed

into The Coffee Drop, the heat of the shop almost painful as it hit any exposed skin. I gave Marcus a wave as I wound my way through the front and into the back, unwinding the scarf from around my neck as I went.

“You look frozen,” Marcus stated the obvious, holding a mug that said *My favorite things about winter? When it's over* in his hand.

“I hate the cold. Hate being cold. There is nothing beneficial about the cold. NOTHING!” I ranted, hanging my puffer coat on a hook.

“Sure there is, nobody has body issues in the winter because everyone is buried beneath twenty layers. We all look fat,” he laughed, finally passing me the steaming mug of coffee.

I took a sip, knowing that he'd have given it ample time to cool down from the mouth-charring heat he preferred. I'd barely swallowed before spitting it back out, utterly disgusted with what he'd given me.

“What in the fuck is this?” I asked, dumping it into the sink. “That tastes like you scraped the beans from the bottom of a trash can and got some dog shit mixed in with it.”

Marcus roared with laughter. “That's some of the crap you've been serving Callum,” he told me. “When I told Kay how you met Loverboy, she wanted to implement a coffee inspired by some of the drinks you made him. This was today's drink of choice.”

My eyes widened in shock as I stared down at the empty mug. “He drank this crap?” At Marcus’s nod, I groaned, feeling horrible that I’d subjected someone to that swill. “Oh, God, I’m going to have to apologize, aren’t I?”

He shrugged and gave me a smirk. “He’s a big boy, Lenny, if he wasn’t trying to make up for being an asshole, he wouldn’t have drank it...or kept ordering it.”

I dragged a hand through my hair, tugging it quickly into a high pony. “Were they all this bad?” I asked, trying to remember all the wrong drinks I’d intentionally given him that first week, when all he’d wanted was a damn Americano.

“Nah, some were actually quite good.”

Taking a deep breath, I blocked the wave of guilt that threatened to crash down on me because Marcus was right. I wasn’t forcing him to drink the damn stuff, and I sure as hell never tried it myself or I’d never have given it to him. Pulling out my cell, I snapped a selfie with the empty mug.

Opening up the chat with Callum, I sent him the photo.

Me: You should have told me I was serving you shit! Marcus just gave me one of the coffees I made for you and OMFG it was disgusting! Why would you think my pussy was worth giving yourself a bleeding ulcer??? Your poor stomach!

I shoved it back into my back pocket and got to work.

With the game on, I was able to catch highlights. I groaned in protest when I heard the ref call another penalty on Callum,

watched him skate his ass right into the sin bin, and toss his stick against the boards in a fit of rage. Boston was ahead 2-1, with three minutes left in the second period, and he had already accumulated three penalties. Either he was in a shit mood, or the other team was playing a real fucking dirty game.

The chimes above the door sounded and I glanced up, a smile upending the frown that I couldn't seem to get rid of. Haley Schaefer stood at the door, a baby seat hanging from one arm while she tried to untangle the scarf from her coat. With a laugh, I hurried to her side, her relieved sigh as I took over getting her out of her winter gear.

“Good lord, why couldn't my husband play on a team that had perpetual sun and white sand beaches?” Haley whined, shrugging out of her coat. I wasn't entirely sure how she was able to stand beneath it all since I now held her coat, scarf, hat, and mitts and she still wore a thick sweater and knee-high boots.

“If that's where you lived, Haley, I'm pretty sure Niall would be out of a job,” I teased. “Come on, there's a seat over by the fireplace where you can still see the game.”

I led her over to the trio of club chairs that sat around the blazing brick fireplace. She sank down gratefully, quickly flipping the cover off the baby carrier to reveal the adorable little baby boy bundled inside, fast asleep.

“Liam can sleep through anything, even when it's colder than a witch's tit and mommy's shaking like a leaf,” she told me in a hushed whisper. “Please, please give me something

that will thaw me out but won't keep me awake til the break of dawn!"

"I think I can handle that. How are you for caffeine in general? Yes? No?"

She leaned her head back against the plush back, her eyes closing as she took a couple of deep breaths and soaked up the warmth radiating our direction. "I probably should just refrain from it altogether," she groaned. Her eyes popped open and she turned to the menu board, scanning it with the quick efficiency of a new mom short on time. "Cinnamon white hot chocolate with one of those hazelnut chocolate eclairs."

I could only imagine how tired she was, taking care of a newborn while her husband was gone all the time. I wasn't even married to the man and I missed Callum more than was natural, so I couldn't imagine how hard it was for Haley. We'd gotten together a few times since we'd first met, becoming fast friends despite the objections of some of the other girls in her crew. Seeing her sitting here, her dark eyes tired, the shadows hidden carefully beneath a layer of makeup, I decided she was getting an extra fucking éclair.

"Ugh," Haley moaned, her eyes glued to the television. "Whoever pissed in those guys' Fruit Loops today needs to be taken out back and shot. They're all out for blood."

"I was thinking that they were all playing a little more aggressively than usual," I agreed.

She nodded. "It's not even going to matter if they take the win tonight, they're all going to be absolutely miserable

beasts. If I didn't miss the jerk like crazy, I'd pretend to be sleeping when Niall called tonight, just so I don't have to deal with his pissiness," she shook her head in resignation. "Maybe I can sext him into a good mood."

I sank down into the chair opposite her, grinning wildly at the look of pure innocence on her face as she contemplated sexting with her husband. It was hilarious to me, considering that I loved that kind of attention and she looked like she was too embarrassed to even consider sending her man a dirty text.

"I'm sure that Niall would go to bed a very happy man if you sent him some dirty texts," I confirmed. "He'd probably think he'd died and gone to heaven if you sent him a sexy little selfie!"

"Or he'd taken a hit to the head and had a concussion!" she giggled, snuggling her son close.

"Well, what a way to go."

My phone pinged, notifying me of a text and I pulled it out, seeing Callum's name and glancing to where the game still played. I groaned, my stomach sinking when I saw the highlight playing of Callum taking a hit to the back of the knee that sent him sprawling to the ice, the commentator recapping his prior injuries and questioning his ability to keep playing. It took a hot minute for him to get back up, throwing a dirty punch at the guy, getting him kicked from the remainder of the game for unsportsmanlike conduct.

"Oh for fucks sake," Haley groaned, seeing the same thing I had. "Stupid shithead."

“Which one?” I rolled my eyes. “Looks like Niall won’t be the only one getting sexted tonight.”

Sixteen



CAL

MY KNEE WAS FUCKING killing me, but it had held strong, thank God. The moment I'd felt that stick against the back of my leg, I'd overcompensated so I didn't land on it. It was probably the only reason I was able to get back up. Hitting the douchebag may have felt all kinds of good, but it wasn't right. Just because Calgary had played dirty, using every weakness that our team had against us, didn't mean that resorting to their level was good gameplay. Coach was going to be pissed. There was a very real chance that he'd be benching my ass.

I was alone in the locker room after getting expelled from the ice. I'd already changed out of my kit, packed my duffel, and now sat contemplating my actions just like Coach wanted as though I was a naughty toddler and not a thirty-four year old man. My anger simmered when I swiped my phone up and saw Lenny's text, chuckling at the thought of Marcus giving her the same shit that I'd forced myself to drink.

Me: Your pussy was definitely worth the wait, but I didn't actually drink all of it. I enlisted Marcus into dumping it when you weren't paying attention.

Me: I think you should make it up to me by greeting me naked on your knees and taking my dick like a good girl. I'd forgive you anything then.

We played against Montreal before we got to head home, but I was suddenly ready to call it and go home. I didn't want to sit on the bench, watching the game pass me by all because Coach and the Doc were too fucking scared to let me play on a less-than-perfect knee. If I couldn't play, I didn't want to fucking be there. I was tired of being second-guessed, questioned on how much I could handle.

The ping of my phone was a welcome distraction, drawing me out of my depressive thoughts. I should have been worried about the clench in my chest when I saw Lenny's name, but I found she was exactly what I needed. She was becoming a light at the end of a very bitter tunnel, beckoning me through the misery of my thoughts. Even when I was having the worst fucking day, Lenny somehow turned it all around with a look, a word, a touch, her fucking presence.

Swiping open our chat, I groaned at the selfie that filled my screen. She was wearing the jersey that I'd gotten for her, bunched up so that the underside of her tits was showing. She'd opted for a pair of yellow cotton panties with little hockey sticks and pucks scattered over them which made me grin because I knew she'd gotten them just for me. Her lush

bottom lip was pinched between her teeth, and the look in those emerald eyes promised all sorts of dirty, sinful pleasure.

Good Lord, if I could opt out of the rest of these fucking away games and head home, I'd do it just to see her wearing those panties and nothing else.

I saved the photo as my wallpaper before I texted her back.

Me: Guess what I'm thinking...

Me: I'll give you three chances to get it right

Me: If you fail to get it right, you owe me naked sexy time

The three little dots flashed, disappeared, and finally reappeared as she fired back at me.

Lenny: Soooooo

Lenny: I should probably just guess wrong to start.

Me: Not how it works,

Lenny: Are you sure?

She sent another photo, this time it was a close-up of my name blazed across her back and her perky ass. God damn this girl.

Me: I'm going to bend you over my knee when I get home if you keep up the sass, Len.

Lenny: Promise, promises

Lenny: How bad is the knee?

Just like that, all the pleasure I'd gotten from flirting with her dropped away. Of course, she'd been watching and seen the hit, the fight that had gotten me kicked from the game. Shoving my phone back into my slacks, I finished packing up my gear, ignoring the next set of notifications that followed.

I knew I was being a bastard by ignoring her. I also knew that I would have been pissed had she not asked the question. It showed that she cared, that I wasn't alone in feeling something that extended beyond the fun we had in the sack. It was a goddamned mess, that's all I knew because I didn't want her to think I wasn't strong enough to handle the game any longer. I didn't want her to worry about the next hit, the next fight. I didn't want anyone to worry but I also wanted someone to help carry that weight. I wanted someone waiting for me at home with a bag of frozen fucking peas and some M&Ms and a soft touch while I babied my aching muscles.

By all rights, Lenny deserved better than me. She was young, had her whole life ahead of her, and a world of possibilities. She was smart, funny, and while the bratty side of her had my palm itching to spank it right out of her, it was also one of the things I enjoyed most about her. She wasn't afraid to put me in my place. She deserved better than a bitter pill of a man months shy of retiring, and absolutely no fucking clue what I wanted to do when I grew up.

Problem was, she was fucking stuck with me now because I wasn't about to let her go.

The horn blasted, signaling the end of the game, and I gave my head a shake so I could plaster on the fake smile and cocky indifference. Coach and the rest of the guys didn't need to see me moping around like a kicked puppy dog, tail between my legs because I'd been a stupid fucker and let my anger get the best of me.

My phone came out again to check the score. There wasn't an ounce of excitement to be found when I saw the final score of 4-2, not when they hadn't needed my help to pull out a win. I rubbed at the tension building behind my eyes, the fucking rollercoaster of emotions drilling ice shards into my brain. I had minutes to pack it all away and put on my game face so that my boys wouldn't see how royally fucked up I was.

My team came rushing in, laughing and cheering like it was just another day, another game. I moved my shit out of the way, waiting for the minute when Coach walked into the locker room and gave his standard celebratory speech before turning his attention to blast me. I had fucked up, but it wasn't like I was the only one out there on that ice that had played it dirty. Calgary had brought the fight to me. I wasn't the kind of guy...or fucking hockey player...that sat back when someone was gunning for me.

I wasn't bitter enough not to congratulate the guys on a hard-played game. They deserved the win, to be acknowledged for the good game they had all played. My eyes shot wide when Core came sauntering in, a cut above his left eye that was still bleeding. My gut churned at the sight. While I had been pouting like a little baby for getting thrown out of the game,

they'd still been playing a cutthroat game...and fucking winning. Cormac was our fucking goalie, untouchable by rights. Nobody messed with the goalies, it was an unspoken rule that all players went by, and yet he stood in front of me with blood dripping down his face.

“What the fuck happened to you?” I demanded while he began stripping his kit off.

“You didn't think we were going to let it slide what they fucking did to you, did you? Even if it was after the horn went off,” he chuckled. “Ayers, the pussy, is off with Doc getting stitched up but he took down two of their guys before getting called.”

If at all possible, in that moment, I didn't feel quite as alone anymore. It felt like we were back to where we'd been last season, all for one and one for fucking all. Ride or die, we had each other's backs. I bumped fists with him, a smile breaking out for the first time since we'd arrived at the arena.

“I should have known you'd have all the fun without me,” I laughed.

“Fuck yeah,” Core grinned wildly. “Those bastards may have started shit but you can bet your ass that they're wishing they hadn't. Their coach is probably chewing them all new assholes as we speak.”

Speaking of coaches...

“How pissed is Coach?” I asked seriously, glancing toward the door where he had yet to make an appearance.

Core shrugged as he finally got everything off and grabbed a towel, wrapping it around his lean hips, and turned toward the showers. “Not sure man.”

As soon as I left the safety of the lockers I'd be bombarded with press and I wasn't sure which was worse. Waiting for Coach to come in and ream my ass out for being the only jackass who'd gotten tossed from the game that had drawn blood within the first five minutes of entering the media's dragons den and being bombarded with questions I wasn't ready to answer. By the time Coach Cooper finally came into the locker room and gave me the go-ahead to leave, I had a full-blown migraine and felt like puking.

My brow furrowed in confusion that he hadn't had anything to say about my conduct but I knew that seeking him out wouldn't get me any answers. Ayers came in with a bandage over his cheekbone, hiding the stitches that he'd received. He grunted a greeting as he passed me, bumping his gloved fist against mine.

“What's up with Coach?”

“He knows they played a dirty game,” was all he said.

I didn't press for more. If Coach had anything more he wanted to say to me, he knew where the hell to find me. Taking a deep breath, I walked into the press area, ready to face the music before heading back to the hotel so I could FaceTime with my girl. That thought calmed my nerves, even though I was sure that she was going to be a little pissy about leaving her on read while I sulked like a five-year-old.

“Cal!”

“Callum!”

“Sinclair, how’s your knee feeling after taking a direct hit to it?”

Camera flashes went off, questions were hurled faster than I could answer, and I mentally groaned before answering all the questions that I could.



By the time I was able to lay my ass down in bed, it was well after midnight. Knowing that there was a couple of hours difference in time, I pulled out my phone and shot Lenny a text.

Me: Hey babe, just got back to my room. It’s been a fucking crazy night. You still up?

I tossed it onto the bed while I stripped down to my boxers and pulled a pair of flannel pants out of my suitcase. It was too fucking cold here in the prairies to sleep naked, especially not when I didn’t have Lenny to curl up with. I’d be lying to myself if I didn’t admit that I slept a fucking hell of a lot better with her next to me. She was the best kind of security blanket that a guy could have.

Grinning when my phone rang beside me, I swiped to accept the call from the girl of my dreams.

“Did I wake you?” I asked once her face filled the screen.

There wasn't a sexier sight in the world than seeing Lenny James all sleepy-eyed and tousled. I was hard as stone within the space of a heartbeat, imagining all the ways that I loved waking her up. She smiled sleepily, nodding in answer.

"Sorry, I thought I'd be done with the press and everything a lot earlier."

"It's okay, I caught some of it. You okay?" her voice was low and husky with sleep, doing nothing to calm the raging hard-on that was demanding my attention.

"Better now that I'm talking to you," I answered, shifting until I could lay down and prop the phone against a pillow. "How was your night?"

"Slow. Nobody likes coming out when it's so cold." She shifted until she mirrored my position. She grinned at me, tucking a hand beneath her cheek. "Are you naked in bed without me?"

I laughed. "I'm not risking freezing my cock off up here, baby, when I have nowhere to go to warm up. Still three more games on the road before we head home."

Lenny made a small whimper of disappointment, one that reminded me of when I'd stop just before she reached her release, edging her over and over again just to hear those sweet sounds. I watched her lift her hand to her throat, her thumb running across the fullness of her lower lip in a playful tease. I knew she wasn't naked since I could see the *Harvard* logo on the oversized white shirt she wore but with her and her

proclivity for baring herself on camera, I couldn't say how long she would stay that way.

“You lonely without me?” I teased, wondering if she'd admit that she missed me.

“Welllllll-” she drawled, “I won't lie and say that I haven't missed that big dick of yours.”

Grinning, I switched cameras and showed her just how affected I was by her. “Trust me, baby, this dick misses you too.”

Her camera followed the path of her fingers, teasing over the mounds of her breasts where the hard tips of her nipples pressed against the soft cotton, over the flat of her belly. Lenny had pulled the shirt up while letting her fingers travel, just a sliver of skin showing above the hockey-themed panties she wore. I groaned in response, dropping my hand to where my cock strained against my pants.

“I love watching you tease that tight cunt of yours,” I groaned, “but fuck me, I wish my fingers were the ones fucking it.”

“Do you want to watch me come on my fingers?” she murmured as her fingers dipped once beneath her panties before pulling them out. “Do you want to see how wet I am just thinking about what you're going to do to me when you get home?”

“Fuck, yes,” I hissed, shoving my pants down and kicking them off.

No chance of freezing my balls off when it feels like lava is flowing through my veins just watching my girl finger her tight pussy.

Lenny brought her fingers back up, glistening with her arousal, and traced them over her lips. Her tongue peeked out, a moan of pleasure escaping her lungs as she tasted herself, sucking her fingers into her mouth.

“I love when you’re my dirty fucking girl,” I groaned, wrapping my hand around my cock and giving a casual pump of my fist. “You like tasting your sweet cunt?”

She let her fingers slip back down her body, beneath those fucking panties that looked more like something a teenager would wear, not a woman who exuded sexuality with every breath she took.

“Take your panties off, baby. Let me see that pretty pussy.”

She didn’t hesitate for even a second, wiggling her hips to help push them off while she maintained her hold on the camera. She spread her legs, opening herself fully to her playful touch. She was driving me out of my fucking mind, teasing herself when I wanted to watch her come, to see her eyes glass over and the sweetest fucking noises pouring out of her.

“Stop fucking playing, Lenny. Make yourself come. Fuck those fingers like they’re mine,” I demanded. “I want to see you come all over your fingers and watch while you clean yourself up. Can you do that? Can you be my good fucking

girl and show that pussy what I'm going to do to it the second I get home?"

Lenny whimpered as she pumped her fingers, once, twice, three times before returning back to circle her clit. Her hips moved in tandem with the steady stroking of her fingers, her breathing heavy as she fingered herself. I could tell she was getting close when she focused fully on her clit. While she could have an orgasm without it, she always came harder when that hard little bundle of nerves was stroked.

"Look at what you fucking do to me, Lenny, look at how hard you make me," I ordered, flipping the camera so that she could watch me pump my fist up and down my cock in time with hers.

"Ohmygod, ohmygod," she panted, while her hips fucked up into her hand.

"That's it, baby girl," I moaned, feeling my own release build, my balls tingling with the need to release. "Come for me, Lenny, come for me now."

The moment her orgasm hit, her eyes squeezed shut and her mouth dropped open in a breathy sigh. Her head tilted back and she moaned my name so sweetly, I'd be hearing it on repeat for days. I came in a rush right after her, choking out her name as I coated my hand and abs with my release. I kept my eyes locked on her, drinking in the sight of her coming down from her release while I shuddered through my own. God, this girl was something else.

Flipping the camera back around, I wondered how I was ever going to get enough of her. She was taking up every space in my head, making me think of what our lives could be like ten years down the line and we'd never even talked about what our relationship was. I had thought that we'd have some fun, keep it casual, and enjoy the hell out of each other but that didn't seem to be the case any longer. The lines between fun and a lifetime commitment seemed to be blurring more and more with each day that passed.

"God, I can't wait until you get back," Lenny whispered, so softly that I almost didn't hear her. There was a tiny furrow between her brows, a look in her emerald eyes that told me she didn't like admitting that she missed me.

"I miss you too, Len." I wanted to reach out and smooth away the lines of concern on her face. I wanted her to miss me like I missed her. "There's a charity gala I have to attend, black tie formal, fucking pretentious as hell but I'd like you to come with me? Please?"

She didn't answer right away, her eyes narrowing as she considered it. She didn't even want to hang out with the wives and girlfriends on the regular, so asking her to come to an event that catered to some of the stuffiest socialites of the Boston area was a huge ask. It wouldn't be something she was comfortable with, it wasn't even something I was comfortable with but I couldn't pull up the excitement to go without her. I'd just have to make it worth her while because I couldn't exactly beg off and not go. I was already skating on thin ice with Coach.

“We can leave whenever you feel like it. Just show our faces and run if that’s what you want,” I promised, sweetening the deal.

Her eyes locked with mine and I knew I had her. “I guess I’ve got to go buy a dress.”

Seventeen



LENNY

“**Y**OU LOOK SO FUCKING gorgeous!”

I shivered with pleasure as Callum’s deep voice tickled my ear as he skated a finger down the bare expanse of my back. The dress I had chosen for the night was a shimmery black with tiny straps and absolutely no back. His wandering hand settled low on my hip where his talented fingers teased the slit that went from hip to hem, exposing the full length of my leg with just the slightest of movements.

As much as I loved my dress, I’d never been so uncomfortable in my life.

When Callum invited me to this charity dinner, I hadn’t thought about all the people who would be in attendance. I’d never been a fan of big parties, especially ones where you had to shout to be heard and you had to plaster on a fake ass smile to avoid conversation. While the music filtering through the ballroom of the five-star hotel was soft and people weren’t engaging in torturously loud conversations, I still wore that

fake-ass smile so that I didn't have to converse with any of the socialites that had gathered to support at-risk youth.

“You're lucky that I like you,” I murmured as I felt his fingers wander, dipping just beneath the silky fabric.

“Can't help it,” he replied, grinning against my neck. “I have to know...”

“Know what?” Given the location of his hand and how he had positioned us so that my body was concealed by the bar at my front and him at my back, I knew exactly what he wanted to know.

“Whether my fingers are going to meet with lace or something a whole lot softer than silk,” he nipped my shoulder, slipping his hand deeper beneath my dress. I felt his groan rumbled out of his chest when he made contact with nothing but warm skin, a smug smile tilting up my lips. “Fuck me sideways, of course you're not wearing panties.”

I turned my head so that I could see his handsome face. I tracked over the healing cut on his cheekbone, the slight bump in the bridge of his straight nose, feeling like I could look at him for hours and never get tired of it. He'd trimmed the whiskers that had grown out into a scruffy beard into a short, well-groomed beard that showcased the strong line of his jaw and his oh-so-kissable lips.

The man is a deadly weapon in jeans and a Henley. Put him in a fucking tux made just for him and he's a weapon of mass destruction to womankind.

“This dress didn’t really work with panties,” I whispered, tilting my head just enough to press my lips to his.

“I should be spanking your ass for this,” he groaned, finally giving in to the need to touch and slipping his fingers through my slick folds. “I’m going to be hard all fucking night knowing that you’re walking around here with your wet cunt so easily accessed.”

I ground my ass into him, feeling the evidence of his hard-on pressing firmly against my cheeks. I loved knowing I didn’t have to work too hard to turn him on, especially when I lit up like a candlestick for him at a second’s notice.

His fingers teased over my clit before sinking one long finger into me, making me bite my lip to keep from moaning out loud. He chuckled and pressed a kiss to my temple. “You like that, don’t you? You’re so fucking wet right now just thinking about me making you come in a room full of people, aren’t you, you dirty girl.”

I whimpered quietly, his big body pinning me to the bar and preventing me from wiggling closer. He may have had a finger buried in my pussy while the heel of his hand pressed against my clit, but it wasn’t enough to make me come. I needed more, I *wanted* more.

And he was being a bastard by not giving it to me.

“More, please,” I begged, trying to shift into a better position. One that would grant me the friction I needed to get off.

Callum nuzzled my cheek, his lips grazing my skin while he moved slowly, deliberately within me. He added a second finger, a little more pressure against my throbbing clit, but maintained that agonizingly slow pace.

In. Out. In. Out.

“Fuck, you’re stunning. Taking my fingers like a good fucking girl while no one is the wiser.” His dirty mouth was turning me on even more, desperately wanting to drag him out of this stuffy, pretentious event in search of the first private place we could find so that he could fuck me stupid.

“You’re so fucking close, aren’t you. Your pussy is just choking my fingers, baby.”

“Callum, please.”

I could feel his erection pressing into my ass as he ground into me, all while his fingers continued their assault on my pussy. He was employing a slow-and-steady method in getting me off, building me up so slowly that I was vibrating with the intensity of it all. I couldn’t make a sound without someone hearing me, couldn’t move without exposing us. My breath was panting out of my lungs as my head fell back against his shoulder.

“What are you two doing over here, all by your lonesome?” Cormac’s voice barely penetrated the haze of lust that Callum had wrapped around me.

“Just whispering sweet nothings to the sexiest girl in the room,” Callum chuckled, his pace building as though he

wanted me to come while Cormac watched.

I turned my head to meet his gaze, his dark eyes narrowed suspiciously on us. I was right there on the precipice of the orgasm he'd been building me toward, just waiting for me to let go. Cormac wasn't a stupid man, he knew exactly what he had interrupted, and in a move that would have been sweet to anyone else, he turned his back to us and shifted so that I was protected from anyone who thought to look over.

"You've got balls of fucking steel, man," Core said, shaking his head in exasperation.

"I know," Callum agreed, laughing it off behind me, setting his drink down on the bar in front of me so he could wrap his arm around my waist. "I have to get my kicks somehow. These things are boring as fuck."

"And you thought fingering your fucking girl by the bar was the only option available?" Cormac asked curiously. "Because the way I see it, you're fucking lucky it was just me who caught you, not Coach or someone else."

Callum's fingers never stopped moving as they talked. I turned my head into Callum's body to muffle my shocked cry as I finally let go, coming so hard I would have fallen to my knees had his arms not been wrapped around me protectively. I felt both men watching, felt the heat of their gaze as I trembled in Callum's arms. My chest rose and fell in rapid puffs of breath, panting as though I had just run a 5K marathon.

"Good girl," Callum praised, turning me to face him as he slipped his hand from beneath my dress and raised his

gleaming fingers to my lips.

I ran my tongue over his fingers, licking myself off his skin and meeting Callum's heated gaze with mine. His mouth dropped to mine, kissing me in a wicked mess of teeth, tongue, and breathy moans. He made me every dirty, filthy promise with his kiss. He had just given me one spectacular orgasm and I was thirsty for more, desperate for everything he could give me. Hard and fast, slow and deep, raw or sweet. I wanted it all.

"Oh for fuck sake," Cormac grumbled, clearly annoyed by our PDA.

"Don't like it, go away," Callum told him once he pulled away, his dark eyes remaining locked on mine.

"Would that I could, asshole. Coach was looking for you, said he's got someone he wants you to meet. I've given you two more than enough time to get this shit out of your system," he shot back.

Callum dropped his head to my shoulder, groaning into it. Now that he wasn't touching any of the overly sensitive erogenous zones that sent me diving headfirst into mind-melting desire, I could actually think straight. I wiggled out of his hold, making sure that my dress covered all the bits that needed covering and nothing slipped out.

"Go," I sighed. "I don't want to be the reason you get in shit."

He studied me intently, his stormy eyes so dark they looked fathomless, endlessly dark. My stomach fluttered helplessly beneath the intensity of his desire, wanting nothing more than to touch him, taste him, claim him for my own and never fucking let go. Something hard and uncompromising passed over his features, gone before I could even blink, and my stomach clenched with apprehension.

Since he'd returned from the long stretch on the road, there'd been so many moments where I'd caught a similar look on his face. Almost like he had something that he wanted to say, but couldn't find the words. Whatever was bothering him had made him put space between us and I didn't like it. I was trying to give him what he needed- time and space- because I didn't want to push him. I didn't want to speculate what he was thinking or feeling, or what had happened while gone that had him putting up a wall around me. It was as if he was reverting to that grumpy asshole I'd first met, but was fighting the transition. I only hoped that whatever it was, he figured it out and actually talked to me.

"I'll be fine. Promise." I reached for his drink, taking a small sip of his whiskey before handing it over to him. "I'll stay right here until you get back. Unless I have to pee, then I'm out."

"Okay," he finally agreed, a small smile turning up the corner of his mouth. He took a step back and downed the rest of his drink, setting the glass on the bar. "I'll be back as soon as I can."

I gave him a little shrug and a sweet smile. “I’ll just keep myself entertained with thoughts of how I plan to return the favor.”

I let out a husky laugh when both men groaned and turned away. Their hard, sexy bodies looked so damn good in their custom-tailored tuxes. I wished their jackets were just a little shorter so that I could drool over the perfection that was their asses. The hockey gods had been more than generous with those two.

Watching Callum walk away brought my thoughts once again back to how things had changed over the last couple of weeks. Before he’d gone on the road, whenever he had left my side, he would always look back and wink or a smile, his way of promising he’d be back. Tonight, he hadn’t looked back. Sure, he’d been a lot more touchy-feely but the distance that he’d put between us, one that hadn’t been there before had made all those itty-bitty insecurities of mine come to life.

Take a chill pill, Lenny, the man just finger fucked you in a room full of people. You don’t do that when you’re ready to pull the plug.

“Well, don’t you just look like a sad panda.”

I swallowed the groan as I recognized Stacy’s nasally bitch voice behind me. Anytime she was around, she found one thing or another to harp on my ass. For weeks she had constantly cut me down and talked trash about me. Turning, I let my gaze drop from the perfect curls on her head to the perfect makeup and down the perfect strapless gold sheath

dress she wore, the shimmery fabric clinging to a body of perfect curves. She was so disgustingly perfect, it made me feel like barfing all over her just to mess her up a bit. I ground my teeth together, tamping down my temper and trying really damn hard to remind myself that she wasn't worth getting worked up over. She was a Barbie doll, perfectly perfect in this world of the rich and famous and there was no part of me that wanted to be a part of it.

It was just a fucking shame that she had the personality of a rabid dog.

“I'd much rather be a sad panda than a trash panda,” I shot back with a smirk, unable to hold my tongue. The last time we'd been in the same room, she had called me a little girl playing dress up with her mama's things.

She had really taken her mean girl status to heart, which was baffling because she was dating Adam Friberg, one of the nicest guys that I'd ever met, and Boston claimed him as one of their own. The only thing that made any kind of sense was that Stacy suffered from major split personalities if he was able to spend five minutes in her company without wanting to shove her head in a toilet. It was the only explanation for how a girl with a mean streak a mile long was able to land such a nice guy.

“Oh, come now, Mattlen...or do you prefer Nerdy Girl?” she asked, her voice dripping with disdain.

What. The. Actual. Fuck?

I swung around to face her, my pulse hammering and gaze narrowing on her. The only way that she could call me by that name was if she knew exactly who I was and what I did.

“Excuse me?”

“It wasn’t a secret, was it? You’re little alter ego? I mean, the whole team has been talking about how Callum is nailing his own little porn star. They’re like a bunch of horny teenagers with their first nudie magazine,” she laughed, her dark eyes full of gleeful malice. “Take it as a compliment, you’ve hooked every guy on the team with your little sex show. They’re all eating up the cute, innocent act that you’ve got going on.”

I felt sick. Suddenly, puking all over Barbie didn’t seem so far-fetched. I had no idea how she knew about my CamGirl personality, but she did and she was using it as a weapon against me, taking her shot to knock me down since nothing she’d tried so far had worked. I took a step away from her, unwilling to continue this particular conversation for fear of making a scene.

“Don’t get upset, little girl, I’m sure that you’re more than worth the price. Cal needed a little pick me up, a little ego boost, if you will after he got hurt. You’re young and really quite beautiful,” she continued, as though every word out of her red lips wasn’t meant to be an insult.

“Bitch, what the fuck is your problem?” I snapped, shutting her up. “Did your parents not love you enough? Did the other kids not want to play with you so now you’re so butt-hurt you

don't know any better? What is it? What did I do to you that makes you think I deserve your fucking bullshit?"

Her eyes narrowed, pure venom shooting out at me and if I had been a smarter individual, I probably would have tucked tail and run. Common sense told me that I should turn away, walk away before things got out of control, but I was just mad enough to ignore what my brain was telling me.

"Little girl, you don't belong here. Do you honestly see a future with Cal? You thought you'd fall in love with the poor injured hockey player on his way out and cash in on it, living the dream. A girl like you doesn't belong in this world, sweetheart, she belongs in the gutter with the rest of the trash. You're nothing but a joke to Cal and his friends. Entertainment that he'll get bored of soon and send you back to the street corner he found you on."

I didn't know what hurt more because there it was. I knew she was right. Callum would get tired of me, of the monotony of being with the same girl, and send me packing. He was already starting to pull away. It hurt like hell knowing that Callum had obviously known about what I did and had been using me to make himself feel better. My heart cracked open when I thought about him talking shit about me, laughing about the little camgirl who was so desperate to be wanted that she had bought into all the shit he'd told her with his buddies, and this bitch had caught wind of it.

She was right about more than that though.

I didn't belong in this world.

I was the twenty-year-old barista who enjoyed working with her best friend in the little coffee shop, staying home to watch superhero movies, and posting scandalous photos and videos that millions of people used for their spank bank. I wasn't embarrassed about what I did, it just wasn't something that I talked about because most people didn't understand it and judged accordingly. It wasn't like I was working the streets, fucking my way through Johns to make a buck. I was sharing my body and what I liked from the privacy of my own home.

“What bothers you the most, Stace? That Callum is paying me to be his arm candy...or that he's never looked twice at your Barbie doll ass?” I sassed.

This bitch wasn't going to see me break, even if it was killing me to know that Callum and I were over. I'd considered quitting my camming because Callum was more than enough for me and I was nothing more than a game to him. I'd believed everything that he had told me. Hook, line, and sinker. I had believed every bullshit line he'd thrown my way, and now I was going to have to pay the price.

“You need to grow the fuck up, this isn't high school where mean girls run the world. Do me a favor, the next time that you think about talking shit about me, do what you do best and swallow it down.”

She gasped in outrage, advancing toward me with hellfire blazing in her eyes. So over her and her bullshit, I turned and walked away, heading in search of a quiet spot to calm the nerves that were flaying me alive before I left for good. My

chest ached, and I wasn't sure if it was from the anger directed at Stacy, at Callum, at anyone else who thought I wasn't worthy of decency and respect and thought it was okay to treat people like shit or if it was from holding in the hurt and pain that was clawing at my heart. I didn't know, I just knew that if I didn't get out of here, I was going to embarrass myself by falling apart.

The noise from the ballroom faded as I walked the hall toward where the restrooms were. I wanted to leave, to go home and pretend that the last few months hadn't happened. That I hadn't fallen for a complete asshole. That there wasn't a Callum-sized hole in my soul from where he had bulldozed his way in.

He'd ruined me in the worst possible way.

Swiping angrily at my eyes, the burn of tears that I refused to let fall told me I was closer to losing my shit than I thought. Leaning against the wall, I closed my eyes and tried to take some deep breaths but my lungs didn't seem to want to work. Memories of every moment I'd spent with Callum ran through my head, tainted now with the knowledge that it had all been a game to him, making every breath I took sharper than a knife's edge.

The sound of footsteps broke through my misery, making me hastily wipe my eyes and push away from the wall. Two older men, both silver foxes dressed to impress entered my line of sight, their gaze raking over me in a way that made my skin crawl. The taller of the two moved off to the side, almost like

they were setting themselves up to cage me in, to keep me from running and I instantly was on edge.

“Just the girl we were looking for,” the shorter man greeted, his voice deep with a hint of an accent. His dark hair was threaded through with silver, slicked back from the proud face that would have been attractive had he not set off all sorts of alarms in my head.

The sudden drive to get the fuck out of there hit, hard and fast. My gut screamed at me to run, that these two men were trouble I didn't want, nor did I need, but the only way out was to go through them, to push past and hope like hell that they didn't grab me on the way by. Brushing my hands down the front of my skirt, I eyed the distance between them, around them, before glancing over my shoulder, looking for a way out that didn't involve getting closer.

“Don't be scared,” the other man told me, his deep voice smooth and cultured, all but shouting with each syllable that he came from money. He was taller than the other guy by a couple of inches, built just a little bit bigger, his dark eyes just a little colder. There was an air of malice that seemed to be wrapped around him. “We just want to chat.”

“I'm sorry, but my boyfriend will be looking for me,” I told them, barely recognizing the whispered tone of voice as my own. I sounded about as intimidating as a mouse, unsure and full of doubt. A chill raced down my spine, fear making my hands feel clammy and my heart pound in my chest.

I knew they heard the fear in my voice by the way their eyes lit up and smug smiles turned up their lips. The first man stepped forward, casually unbuttoning his jacket and leaning against the wall beside me, much too close for my peace of mind.

“It’s okay, sweetheart, we know all about you,” he murmured, reaching a hand out to run a hand over the bare expanse of my arm.

I jerked away from his touch, taking a step back but only wound up putting myself closer to the other guy. Unease fluttered along my nerves and I wondered if I screamed if anyone would come to investigate, to help, or if I was completely on my own. I hoped- for just a second- that Callum would miss me and come looking for me, but knew that was a pipe dream.

You can’t miss something that you don’t care about, Len, you’re on your own.

“What’s your name, sweetheart?” Douchebag one asked, against trying to sneak in closer, the scent of whiskey and cigars teasing my nose as he pressed in.

“Not your business,” I snapped. “Look, I don’t know what you think you know about me, or who you think I am, but I’m not interested in whatever it is you’re offering,” I told them, trying to inflect enough confidence into my voice to send them packing.

“We just want to take advantage of the same deal Cal is getting,” Douchebag Two informed me cockily. “We’d make it

worth your while, pay you double what you're getting from him to be here.”

I snorted with laughter. “Even if I was being paid to be here, I have more class than to leave my date for another offer. So if you'd excuse me, I'm going to-”

Douchebag two grabbed my arm, stopping me in place. I glanced down at where his large, tanned hand wrapped around the entirety of my pale bicep, then back up at him with one brow arched.

“Get your hands off me,” I snapped in a low voice. When he didn't remove his hand, I jerked, trying to free myself from his grip but he kept a firm hold on me.

“Women like you don't just turn men like us down. What's it going to take to join us? Cal won't even notice that you're gone. Fuck, he hasn't noticed you left yet, and we can make sure you're back before he realizes you were even missing,” he volleyed back.

“Not. Going. To. Happen,” I snarled. It hurt to realize that he was right about Callum not noticing my absence, especially when I was so fucking aware of him, but I'd deal with that particular feeling later. Right now, I was beyond furious that these two complete strangers couldn't take the hint and get lost. I was terrified that I wasn't going to get out of this without help. I had enough to worry about that any pain I felt over Callum could wait until I was safely in my apartment, buried beneath a pile of blankets.

“Ten minutes, we can have you back to the party in ten,” Douchebag one piped in.

I rolled my eyes and laughed. “That’s how you think you’re going to entice me away?” I finally managed to break free and shoved passed them. “Promise a girl ten minutes, ‘cause that just makes her go weak in the knees. Where’s the promise of multiple orgasms? Fucking her so hard that she can’t walk? Promise a girl that kind of fucking and maybe you’d have a shot, but ten minutes? That’s just telling her she’s going to have to get herself off because you’re too fucking selfish to do it for her.”

I couldn’t seem to stop, the anger I felt from everything overriding the fear of being trapped and alone by these two big assholes. I knew without a doubt that my words would hit hard and if they were like any other male in the world, they’d be pissed so I moved fast, hoping to reach the threshold of the party before they caught up to me.

The noise increased the closer I got and I could feel them at my back, persistent and furious. I didn’t chance a look back, wishing that I wasn’t wearing five-inch heels or that the dress I wore wasn’t completely ridiculous for moving at anything faster than a snail’s pace. I should never have agreed to come to this fucking event.

I could have been safe at home, curled up in comfy pajamas on my couch while watching shitty reality TV with Marcus, and eating Thai takeout but instead here I was, fending off bitchy witches, arrogant assholes and their dirty propositions,

and learning that the man I'd fallen in love with was nothing more than a cocky prick playing a twisted game of *let's fuck with Lenny's heart*.

A strong hand closed around my forearm with enough force that I knew I'd see bruises before the night was over, a pained cry leaving my lips as he pulled me back. I stumbled back against the smaller man, though he still towered over me. His arm banded around my waist, holding me against the hard body hidden beneath the tailored tux.

"Don't pretend that whore's like you are after anything more than the next big buck," he growled, his breath hot against my neck.

"Get. Your. Fucking. Hands. Off. Me!" I snarled loudly. I could see the open doors where hundreds of rich and spoiled socialites rubbed elbows, made connections, and furthered their status in society with one deal or another. As much as I didn't want to make a scene, I was quickly running out of options.

"I'd listen to the lady, if I were you."

My head whipped around to see Cormac stalking toward us, his handsome face set in cold fury and immediately wanted to cry. I heaved out a shaky sigh, relief cutting through the fear and panic and I knew an adrenaline crash was imminent. I just hoped that I was far, far away from this fucking place when the dam finally broke.

"O'Brien, this doesn't concern you," Douchebag Two chuckled. "We were just having a little tête-a-tête."

“Doesn’t look like she’s too keen on sticking around to finish that, Daniels,” Cormac gave me a pointed look. “Do you, Miss James?”

I shook my head, unable to find my voice beneath the swell of emotion. Tears burned, demanding that I give in and let them fall, but I couldn’t. I couldn’t give them the satisfaction of seeing me fall apart, caving beneath their advances. I couldn’t because once I started, I wouldn’t be able to stop.

“Let her go now, Larson.”

The man holding me hesitated, as though he was trying to determine just how serious Cormac was. He squeezed tight before he dropped his hold, making me stumble but Cormac was right there, catching me before I could fall on my ass. He made sure that I was steady before he let go, tilting my head up so that he could look me dead in the eye.

“You okay?” he asked gently.

I nodded. “Yeah, just want to get the fuck out of here.”

The two men stood by still, watching, waiting. I could feel their judgment with each pass of their eyes over me. Knew without a doubt that they were thinking Cormac was just another client of mine, that I was probably fucking him for money too, and I wanted to scream, to rage at the complete injustice of it all. Who were these assholes who thought they had any right to judge me?

If I wanted to fuck Callum, Cormac, the whole damn team, and the three musketeers, that was my business.

“I see how it is,” the guy Cormac had called Daniels chuckled.

“You see how what is?” Cormac asked, turning to face off with the guy. “You see how common decency is and gonna give it a go?”

“Nah, just see that the slut has a certain type that she caters to,” Daniels said, shrugging like it meant nothing to call a woman a slut.

Cormac took an aggressive step toward him before I could latch onto his arm and stop him. “He’s not worth it, Core. Leave it alone.”

“Listen to the girl, O’Brien, you don’t want my brand of trouble.”

I spun on him, feeling a bit more confident now that I had someone in my corner. “I don’t know who the fuck you are, but if I thought for one second that you would learn a lesson in how to treat another human being, I would gladly let Cormac kick your ass.” I stepped forward, needing to stand up for myself, for women in general without leaning too heavily on his presence. “You may think I’m a whore, but I think you’re a complete piece of shit. Even if I was an escort, a prostitute, or a fucking porn star, I am still a human being that deserves to be treated with respect.”

He snorted in disgust. “You aren’t worth the shit on my shoe,” he sneered. “Your kind are only good for spreading your legs for men like me. You may have fooled O’Brien, but we all know what you really are.”

“And how do you know what I am?” I didn’t know why I hadn’t thought of it soon, but it suddenly dawned on me. I saw it in his face, the malicious glee in his eyes telling me that Stacy the Bitch had spewed her venom to anyone that would listen.

She had set these pricks on me. Planted it in their itty-bitty brains that I was up for sale to the highest bidder out of a sense of jealousy and pure bitchiness.

Disgusted in the human race and womanhood in particular, I sashayed over to him, planting a hand on his chest. His eyes shuttered, closing down as he studied me, waiting me out. Dragging my hand down, before he could react, I grabbed his junk and squeezed...hard. He grunted in pain, hunching in on himself like it would ease the pain.

“There’s not enough money in the world to make fucking a small, pathetic man like you worth it,” I snarled with pure venom, giving one final twist before letting him go with a pat on his chest and turning away from him.

And stopped dead at the sight of Callum standing there, furious eyes narrowed on me.

Just fucking wonderful. Let’s make this night from Hell even better, why don’t we? Just add another asshole to this clusterfuck ‘cause I haven’t dealt with enough yet.

Eighteen



CAL

“WHAT THE FUCK IS going on?” I seethingly demanded, my gaze fixed on where Lenny’s hand fisted at her side. “What the fuck are you doing?”

“Callum-”

My name trembled from her lips and my eyes shot to hers. I didn’t miss the way she flinched at the sight of my barely suppressed rage. I couldn’t read her, couldn’t trust myself to know what was going on because she’d managed to pussy-whip me in the months we’d been seeing each other. All I could see was her hand wrapped around Evan Daniels’s cock while cozied up to him.

“Cal,” Core stepped forward, his face set in a furious glare. “This isn’t what you’re thinking.”

“What I’m thinking? I don’t even know what the fuck it is I should be thinking. I get told that the girl I’m sleeping with is off with two of the biggest players in the state and the next thing I know I’m finding her in a dark hallway with her hand

wrapped around his dick. So you tell me Core, what the fuck should I be thinking?”

“Let me guess, a little bird by the name of Stacy chirped in your ear,” Lenny piped in with a sneering tone, taking a step away from all the testosterone. “Did she by chance tell you that she was the one who sent them after me because I called her a worthless bitch?”

Choosing to ignore her at the moment, I turned to face Steve Larson and Daniels. They were sports agents, some of the biggest names in basketball were their clients, but they were fucking assholes. I knew of at least three guys who had fired their asses because they hadn’t been open about offers that had come in because they weren’t good enough for *them* but had been their first choice. The fact that they had been anywhere near Lenny was enough to fuck with my head, but seeing her that close to Daniels...

I wanted to break the motherfucker into a million pieces.

He smirked at me, the smug bastard. “I caught her last video, Sinclair. All that porcelain skin. Fuck me, makes me hard just thinking about all that silky skin rubbing up against me. You ever wonder how many other men she has wrapped around her little fingers? How many she’s fucking while you’re on the road? A girl like her wants to fuck and fuck often, she’s not going to wait for no man.”

I glanced sharply at Lenny, his words truer than I cared to admit because I had thought about that, especially at the beginning of our relationship. It bothered me that she never

wanted to come to an away game. There was always school shit that she was behind on or work that she couldn't get out of. She'd even used Marcus as an excuse before. To hear someone else put voice to my insecurities made it feel like the truth, real in a way that I hadn't been able to see because I was so fixated on everything else.

She glared at me, her emerald eyes so dark and furious I was shocked I didn't burst into flames. "Are you seriously going to believe him?"

"It's not like you've been completely open and honest with me, Len," I told her with an indifferent shrug, trying to play it off like I wasn't dying inside. "Don't pretend that you don't have thousands of men just like *them* paying you to give them just a tiny bit of your attention."

Lenny visibly flinched at the tone of my voice, icy disdain dripping from every word that I spoke. I'd never even raised my voice with her because we never fought...ever. She was so fucking laid back, never demanding more than what I was willing to give her and maybe that was my fault. I couldn't even claim her as a fucking girlfriend because we'd never talked about being exclusive, I'd just always assumed that we were. Her head dropped, but not before I caught the sheen of tears, and a tiny crack split through my anger.

"So this is what?" she threw her arms out, indicating the growing audience around us. "My way of changing it up a bit, getting out from behind the camera? You think so little of me

that you actually think that I'd *want* them when I already have you?"

"Oh come off it, babe, you love the attention. Doesn't it play well into your secret life?"

I glanced over at Core when I heard his rumble of exasperation. His face was a mask of confusion, his gaze dancing between me and her. I sent her a nasty smile, before I dropped the bomb on my friend. "That cam girl you're obsessed with, the one you jack off to every time she posts a new video or picture? That's Lenny, man. Your spank bank is full of the girl that I've been fucking. While you've been paying prime buck to enjoy her show, I've been getting the free uncensored play."

"You fucking bastard," Lenny whispered, a wealth of emotion in those three barely audible words.

"Excuse me?"

"This-" she waved a hand between herself and me, "was really just one big game to you." She took a step back, her face so pale it was all but translucent. "You were playing me the whole time."

I took a step toward her as the cracks widened and I began to see things without the red haze of anger. Concern shot through me when her body swayed and the pallor of her skin paled even more. She looked like she was about ready to pass out... or burn the place down in a fit of rage. She jerked back like even being close to me hurt her.

“Was it worth it?” she demanded, her voice trembling with emotion.

“Was what?” I asked quietly, aware of the audience that we had.

“Making me fall for you. Was fucking me worth making me fall in love with you? Was that part of your grand plan?” she snapped, swiping angrily at her eyes when a tear slipped free.

It was the first time she’d said that she loved me and they shattered against the wall of anger I’d erected. The first time that I heard those words and the devastation on her face told me that there was no chance in hell she’d ever say them to me again. Guilt settled at the bottom of my stomach as I watched her fall apart in front of me. She swiped angrily at her tears and I felt each drop as though they were acid on my skin.

“Lenny-” I reached out to her, taking a step to close the gap that she’d put between us.

“Don’t fucking come near me,” she cried, taking another hasty step away from me. “You pushed and pushed and fucking pushed when everything was telling me that I needed to stay away from you. I was just a fucking game that you couldn’t lose.”

“Lenny, stop,” I grabbed her arm before she could turn away from me, stopping her in place.

She spun on dangerously high heels, ones that I had been picturing wrapped around my waist since I’d picked her up at her apartment. Her fist flew, sending my head swinging to the

side with the surprising force of her punch. The shock had my eyes narrowing on her as I slowly turned back to face her, still holding her in place but I was mollified to see the same shock registered on her face. She was just as surprised at her actions as I was.

“Feel better,” I asked her, trying to keep my voice calm when all I really wanted to do was fucking yell and get the fuck out of this place.

She shook her head, shaking her hand out and I felt a smidgeon of pleasure knowing that my hard head had most likely hurt her more than she had hurt me. She tugged on her arm again, a sad whimper rushing out. That small, pathetic sound had me feeling lower than scum and I dropped her wrist, letting her step away but feeling the distance she put between us grow and grow with each step.

“I thought you were different, that maybe, just maybe, you cared. I thought it was safe for me to fall for you, that you’d be there to catch me.” She put a hand out against the wall to steady herself as she slipped first one sky-high heel off, then the other. “I guess I should count myself lucky that we didn’t get to the point in our relationship where you were paying me for time well spent, huh?”

Lenny didn’t even give me a chance to respond, spinning on bare feet and running as though the hounds of hell were nipping at her heels. She didn’t look back until she’d reached the end of the corridor, casting one last distraught look in my direction and disappearing from sight.

I felt Cormac's presence behind me, felt him lean in until he was all up in my space. "I don't know what the fuck is going on here, but you should know that Daniels and Larson weren't taking no for an answer. She was only trying to defend herself."

"What?" His hand gripped my shoulder when I tried to shove him away.

My heart was threatening to rip out of my chest, my eyes glued on the doors she'd just run through just hoping that this whole thing was just one big mistake. That she'd forget all the shit that I had said and come back inside. It was a pipes dream. She'd forgiven me once for insulting her before I'd gotten to know her, there wasn't a chance in hell that she'd forgive me for all but calling her a whore.

"You go after her now and she's going to eat you alive, man. Give her some space, let her calm the fuck down. It's not every day a girl gets harassed by a couple of douchebags and her boy toy doesn't step in to take them down for her."

"Fuck you, Cormac. It's not like I had anything else to go off," I snapped, jerking out from under his hold. I wanted to go after her, but there was also a part of me that wanted to say *fuck her*. She had been making me chase her since the very beginning, and I was just petulant enough to want to hold that against her.

"Maybe not, but you could have trusted her. You didn't even stop to fucking think before assuming the worst. And why?"

Because a couple of playboys who've had it out for your ass since you slept with Daniels's girlfriend..."

"Lainey was his ex-girlfriend," I interrupted.

"Ex by all of twenty-four hours, man." I felt Cormac's disgust as clearly as though it were my own. His dramatic eye roll clear even in his smokey voice. "Cal, buddy, you just fucked up the best thing you've ever had with a woman, and I can't say that I blame her for running out of here. Maybe I'll say fuck you too and make a move on her. After all, I have been jacking off to her for months."

I swung around to face him, rage simmering in my veins at even the thought of my best friend making a move on her. "You fucking touch her and I'll fucking destroy you, asshole," I snarled. "I'm nowhere close to being done with her!"

Cormac grinned like an idiot and gave my cheek a playful tap. "I can't fucking wait to watch her spank your ass."



She refused to answer even one of the twenty million calls or texts that I sent her. I needed to give her time since I really had been a fucking jackass about the whole situation, but the silent treatment she was giving me was killing me. I hated not being able to talk to her. I'd even thought about messaging her on her CamGirls account but she had disappeared from there as well.

I'd fucked up. I knew it. But as long as she refused to even speak to me, I couldn't fucking fix what I'd broken between

us.

I paced the length of my living room, ignoring the idiots that were my friends sitting on my couch, their attention divided between the video game they were playing and my angry movements.

“Do you think if we asked Lenny nicely, she’d give Cal back his balls so he wouldn’t be such a sucky baby?” Cormac asked, dropping back against the couch when he was killed for what had to be the hundredth time.

Noah laughed as if that was the funniest thing he’d ever heard, evidence of just how punch-drunk he was by the cans surrounding him. Adam had shown up an hour ago, acknowledging that he would rather be with our dumbasses than be alone since he’d ended shit with Stacy after the charity gala. The guy had admitted the breakup had been coming for a while, which was why he’d had Lenny’s videos in the first place. He hadn’t been getting shit on the home front from Stacy so he’d mentally checked out.

“His game would probably improve if he had ‘em back, that’s for sure,” Fry chuckled. “Coach is gonna bench his ass if he gets in another fight.”

“You know, I can hear you, right?” I ground out.

“Why don’t you just tell her that you love her already? She’ll forgive all your shit if she knows you’re so ass over teakettle in love with her that you can’t even hang with your boys without acting like a grumpy baby,” Noah laughed. “Then we

can stop losing all our games because we aren't trying to cover your miserable ass."

I stopped in my tracks, narrowing my eyes angrily at him. My jaw clenched together, grinding my molars to dust. "That's not what this is, Ayers. I'm pissed because I hurt someone that didn't deserve it. That I hurt her because I can't deal with my own shit, okay? And I can't figure out a way to fix it."

"Uh-huh, and I'm Mary Fucking Poppins," Core laughed. "Why the fuck do you think you're so pissed that she got hurt? If you didn't have feelings for the girl, you wouldn't be losing your shit over it. You loooovvvvee her."

Fry shook his head with amusement and a small dose of pity. "Okay. So you don't want to admit Lenny has you wrapped around her dainty little finger. Fine, got it! Have you talked to Coach yet?"

"Oh, that's a great fucking idea. Remind Oscar over there about the other reason he's such a miserable old fuck," Core groaned. "I'm going to need another drink if we're tackling that particular elephant."

He stood, stretching his arms out wide and letting loose a groan we all felt. We were all so fucking sore from practice, dryland training, and the back-to-back games we'd had this week. After ten days of busting our asses, we finally got time off for good behavior, and I was ruining it with my drama. I rubbed my hands over the back of my neck, where all the stress from the last couple of weeks had settled.

I'd thought all I wanted was hockey. I could tell anyone and everyone that all I needed was some skates, a stick, and a puck and I'd be happy as a pig in shit, but I'd be lying through my fucking teeth. I needed Lenny. I wanted her more than I wanted to be on the ice. I was basking in my misery because I was just months away from losing both hockey after already losing the girl I'd fallen for.

Wracking my hands up through my hair, I dropped my shoulders in defeat. "Coach will be announcing my retirement in the new year."

"And there's nothing you can do to fight it?" Fry hesitantly asked.

I shook my head. "He told me that he's working something up for me, something that will keep me on the ice without putting so much strain on my joints, but he can't offer me anything until I'm out. It's all very hush, hush and it fucking pisses me off." Dropping down onto the loveseat they'd left empty, I groaned again and covered my face with my hands. "I'm barely fucking holding on, I feel like I'm on some out-of-control fucking circus ride that's making a mockery of my life. The only thing that was keeping me from spinning out and letting all hell break loose was fucking Lenny."

The shocked expressions from my friends at the truth bomb I'd just dropped should have been amusing. Instead, it had my irritation growing exponentially. I dropped my head back against the couch, my eyes closing to shut out the world. I didn't want to see the slack-jawed looks on my three closest

friends' faces or the pity that would ultimately follow. If any one of them decided to tell Doc...or Coach, I'd be done for sure. They'd take me off the ice, plunk me down on some shrink's couch to talk about feelings and thoughts until I got my head on straight.

I didn't need a shrink to tell me that I was suffering from depression and some mild anxiety. I'd have to be a robot not to be. I'd played my whole goddamned life and one bad hit was taking it away from me. My insecurities about my worth had played right into my losing the best girl out there. All I wanted to do was close my eyes and imagine that Lenny was curled up beside me, her perpetually cold fingers dancing over my flesh. That I hadn't completely fucked things up with her and that she was going to walk through my front doors wearing her favorite pair of curve-hugging jeans and my jersey any second now with another one of her caffeinated creations. I'd even take one of the ulcer-inducing if it meant having her back.

Cormac's snort of laughter had me cracking an eye open to glare at him.

"You're trying to tell us, after dropping that little nugget, that you don't have *any* feelings for the foxy little coffee shop girl you couldn't keep your hands off of?" Cormac choked out. "Yeah, and I'm fucking Tinkerbell!"

"Shut the fuck up, asshole!" I groused, tossing one of the decorative pillows at his face.

"Jesus, Sin." Noah groaned in exasperation. "There's nothing wrong with catching feelings for the girl. Doesn't

make you a weak ass bitch. It just makes you a lucky sonofabitch because you found someone to put up with your dumb ass.”

I lifted my head from the couch, eyes narrowed in disgust. “Yeah, okay. Maybe I do feel something for her, but it doesn’t matter now, does it? I fucked it all up so now I get to be the miserable prick who lost not just his girl, but his career too.”

A resounding chorus of groans followed my self-pitying words.

“God fucking save me from love-sick fools,” Core groaned.

A pillow hit my face with a *thud*. My eyes popped open, glaring at Core and fighting off the urge to punch him in his smirking face.

“There’s an easy solution to at least part of your pathetic troubles, Cal,” he stated, one dark eyebrow cocked in arrogant amusement, his expression claiming he had answers that I probably didn’t want to hear.

“And what’s that, oh great one?”

The smug smile did little to take away from the mischievous glimmer in his dark eyes. “You learn to crawl and make her see that there’s no better man for her than you. Whatever it takes.”

Nineteen



LENNY

I DIDN'T GO HOME that first night. Or even the next. I couldn't. I knew Callum would follow me home and I couldn't see him, couldn't hear him try and charm his way out of the shit that he had said. The gala had been three nights ago and I was still hiding out in Marcus's apartment, just blocks from my own place.

Marcus knew enough not to try and ask me what had happened. He knew that the only thing that I needed was his strong arms to hold onto me, to keep me safe and grounded while I let the mess of emotions spin out inside me.

I hadn't had the strength to put up a fight when he dragged me into his bedroom and stripped me out of the black dress I had been so excited to wear. It wasn't like Marcus had never seen me naked before, even if it was the first time he had been the one to undress me, simply replacing silk and lace with sweats and ratty cotton before tugging me down onto his bed with him.

Three days later and I was still an emotional wreck. The sound of Marcus pacing beyond the bedroom door, along with his furious voice broke me out of my dreamless sleep. My eyes felt like I'd shoved sandpaper behind my eyelids, so swollen that it actually hurt to try and open them, and my head felt like a pair of bongo drums had set up residence inside. I decided then and there that the physical pain sucked just as much as the emotional heartache and I squeezed my eyes shut tight while trying to concentrate on Marcus's conversation.

"I went to bat for you once, I won't fucking do it again," he snapped, telling me all I needed to know about who was on the other end of the conversation. Maybe it was weak of me but curled up beneath my best friend's comforter, I could only say a prayer of thanks that it was Marcus dealing with him and not me.

"She's cried herself to sleep because of you, I don't really give a flying fuckitash if this hurts you, she's what matters to me."

I found little humor in listening to his tirade, descending more and more into insults and profanity as the conversation continued. It did my poor heart a world of good to hear him defending me, sticking up for me without a single iota of information to go off of but he was that kind of friend. It didn't matter what had happened, just that I was a wreck and the most likely cause was on the other end of that phone.

"Leave her the fuck alone, Sinclair. If...and that's a big fucking if...she decides that she wants to talk to you, then she

can make contact.” His footsteps approached the bedroom and I heard him muttering under his breath, making me smile tearily in response.

There was a part of me that wished I could have pretended I was still locked in the sleepless state of mind where nothing mattered but now that I was awake, there was no shutting down my brain. It seemed like I couldn't stop the memory of Callum finding me in that hallway, making me replay the hurt, the anger, the betrayal, picking up little things that I had been too upset to notice in the first place.

I saw his regret every time that I flinched away from him, the flash of pain when I turned and walked away from him. I'd need to face him eventually, for closure and for peace of mind, for both of our sakes. I wasn't going to kid myself and say that I didn't feel like a complete fool, because I did, but now that the moment had passed, I knew I had handled the whole situation just as badly as he had, acting more like an angry child than a grown-ass woman. I'd let the hurt and anger cloud my judgment, making me lash out when I should have walked away before we both said things that we couldn't take back.

“Oh goody, you're alive,” Marcus teased, pulling the feather duvet off of me and giving me a look that told me the time for playing possum was over.

“Nope,” I groaned, grabbing for the blanket to pull back up over my head.

“Quit being a brat and get up, we need to talk about what the fuck happened with Cal. He's been blowing up my phone for

the last two days.”

He was calling me out. Making me face what had happened instead of letting it fester into something that I couldn't recover from. I wasn't sure if I should thank him, or tell him to fuck right off.

“What did Callum tell you happened?” I asked him, curious to see what he'd learned from his phone call.

“I'll tell you after,” he promised.

Groaning, I crawled out of bed. “Fine, but I'm taking a shower first.”

Showering made me feel a bit more human, the heat of the water easing muscles that I hadn't realized were so tense. Once more wearing a borrowed sweater and boxers, I went in search of coffee and my best friend. He was in the kitchen making grilled cheese sandwiches to go with the tomato soup I could smell simmering on the stove, comfort food that his mom used to make for us when we'd had a bad day at school. A mug of steaming coffee sat on the table and I hesitated to take it, remembering the last cup of coffee I had let Marcus make me.

“This is regularly brewed coffee, right, Marcus?” I lifted the cup, letting the strong scent of coffee soothe my jittery nerves.

“Just a good ol' dark roast spiked with a little liquid courage.” He plated us both a sandwich, setting it in front of me while he turned to ladle up the soup. “I thought you two were solid.”

“So did I...I don’t know.” I sighed heavily, lifting a portion of the gooey sandwich and nibbling on it. “One of the girlfriends pulled the classic mean girls’ act, telling anyone who would listen that I was a working girl, getting paid by the hour to be Callum’s arm candy. I confronted her, called her out on being a bitch, and left it at that. I’d already been having these fucking feelings and insecurities where Callum was concerned because things had been off since he got back to town. I thought it was just a matter of time before he ended things so when she started mouthing off about how I didn’t belong, that Callum was just using me to his own end, I believed her. The damage was done.” I gave him a look of disgust, dropping the sandwich in favor of the spiked caffeine. “I played right into her hand.”

“A couple of douchebags cornered me and propositioned me, told me they’d double whatever Callum was paying me if I went up to their room with them. They weren’t taking no for an answer so I started to panic, right up until O’Brien found us. I grabbed the one guy’s junk because I knew that Core wouldn’t let anything happen. I told him I wouldn’t fuck him for all the money in the world. Callum walked in just as I was letting him go so I can only imagine what he was thinking.”

I grinned when I caught Marcus’s grimace. “Actually, I can imagine what he was thinking because he told everyone in that hall that Cormac had been using my videos, my pictures, basically my entire CamGirl’s profile as his spank bank material for the last few months, while he was the one fucking me.”

Marcus's eyes went huge with shocked surprise. "No way, you told him about NerdyGRL?"

I shook my head. "I don't know how he knew, but I never told him. I had overheard him talking about CamGirls but didn't think anything of it. What were the chances that they'd subscribe to my account, and know who I was? It's fucking ironic because I'd actually started thinking about stopping because it hasn't felt the same, not since *him*."

"Seriously? You were going to quit for Cal?" At my nod, he threw his head back and roared with laughter. "You fucking fell for him."

"Obviously, that is part of the problem here, asshole," I sassed, rolling my eyes at him. "You think I'm just hiding out in your apartment because of some mean girl antics and a fight with a boy? Oh no, I had to go and fall for another jock that was playing a game of hit-and-quit."

"Well, you've never really caught the feels for a guy before," Marcus chuckled. "It's a bit of a surprise."

"I got in my head, I know that. I fell back into that insecure little nerd that felt like no one could want or love. It all sounded like a...a game to him, like he got off knowing that it was him fucking me while his friends jacked off to the idea of me. It fucking hurt," I admitted. "It really fucking hurt."

"Do you actually think that's why he was with you?" Marcus asked, reaching out and taking my hand in his.

“I don’t know, okay? Part of me says that’s complete bullshit, that he’s not that kind of asshole while another part of me is saying otherwise. I don’t even know if I want to know which part is right!” I squeezed his hand, holding on tight while I tried to calm the rising emotions. “I hate being this girl, Marcus. That’s why I love camming because there aren’t all these fucking emotions. You know why they’re there. There’s no ulterior motive behind their presence. They want the same thing that I want- anonymity. A place to feel safe to want what you want, to be who you want to be without judgment.”

Marcus stood and closed the space between us, crouching down in front of me to pull me into his arms. “You may hate being this girl, doll face, but I love her. I love you and all the nerdy, emotional, bratty bits that make you the fucking awesome person you are. Nothing will change that for me, you’re my ride-or-die, bury a body together bestie. If he can’t see how amazing you are, then that’s on him, not you.”

“Even if I never want to see Callum again and we can never, ever go to another hockey game again?” I teased, sniffing against his chest.

He made a disgruntled noise that rumbled his chest. “Even then.”

I lifted my head to meet his gaze. “I love you too, Marcus.”

elle

I took two weeks off from The Coffee Drop, from camming, from life, and instead focused on getting my shit together, on finishing up projects for school that I'd been putting off and needed to be turned in before the holidays hit. I had yet to decide what I wanted to do about Callum, whether I wanted to hear him out, or if I just wanted to let him go. Sooner or later I was going to have to make a decision, especially since he continued to blow up my phone. Every text got left on read, every call went straight to voicemail.

Thankfully, he had yet to drop his ass into my doorway.

I had a feeling that my luck was about to run out as I made my way to work.

Nothing like entering the new year with a case of shit luck and a broken heart.

Shaking the snow from my coat as I simultaneously tugged my hat and scarf off, I contemplated hibernating for the rest of the winter, running away to some far-off tropical island with just me, myself, and Bob, the new battery-operated boyfriend that I had gotten for myself for Christmas. Winter just seemed that much colder now that I didn't have my own personal furnace to curl up next to at night. I fucking hated the cold!

Doesn't help that you've got a cold, dead heart thanks to a certain hot-blooded, tattooed douchebag.

I mentally shook myself, shoving the depressing thought as far down as I could. I made my way to the front, pausing only long enough to clock in and hang the million pounds of winter

gear up. Marcus barely spared me a look, while Jess, the other girl working grinned at me.

“Girl, am I ever glad to see you! Maybe now *he’ll* quit being an ass to everyone.”

I followed Jess’s pointed glare, landing on Callum sitting at the same table as he had the first day he’d come in. This time, he wasn’t alone though. Cormac sat next to him, leaning back in his chair as relaxed as could be while he read. Haley and Niall sat in the club chairs, little Liam snug as a bug in his father’s arms while Haley tapped away on her phone. Noah was at the register, loaded down with a plate of cookies and coffee. There were even players whom I hadn’t even met, all taking up an insane amount of space.

“What in the fuck is happening here?” I asked her, unable to move another foot.

Marcus finished up with Noah and strode to my side, grabbing my hand and pulling me into the back behind him. I’d never seen him look so annoyed as he was at that moment. He dropped my hand and spun around to face me, his brows furrowed together in frustration.

“You need to figure out what the hell you want from that man because I swear to God, if I have to deal with a shop full of testosterone-ridden hockey jocks for one more day, I am going to lose my shit. They’ve been in here every fucking day since the gala, and each day more and more of them show up. Yesterday, the man-bun-wearing asshole broke two- not one, but two- of our mugs and a plate. You’d think a man capable

of stopping tiny rubber discs flying at his face, wouldn't be such a goddamned clumsy oaf!"

I wanted to laugh, truly, I did because Marcus looked so put out. But all I could think was that these people had shown up for me, for days and days. Callum I could understand his need to be here, but the rest of them? Why? I didn't understand what was happening.

"They've been here? Every day?" I asked, baffled.

Marcus nodded. "Cal shows up when we open, leaves for a couple of hours, and then they all show up. While business is great, word is spreading that they're here are on the daily and showing up like this is some kind of meet and greet spot. It's getting real fucking old."

"Are you serious?"

"All because of you," he grouched. "Callum isn't leaving until he talks to you, and the rest of them...well, who knows what the fuck they're all thinking."

I rubbed a hand over my face, already tired at the prospect of dealing with all of his people. "Ugh, I'll deal with him," I promised. "Just...give me a minute to figure out how."

Marcus gave me a side hug, pressing a kiss to my temple. "I'm so fucking glad that you're back. I've missed your face."

He had barely left me alone before I started pacing the length of the kitchen. I had no idea how I wanted to handle the situation because I had no idea how I wanted to handle Callum. I missed him like a limb had been ripped from my

body and I was now forced to function without it, thrown into the deep end of life. But I also couldn't forget the way he had looked at me and the things that he had said.

Sticks and stones, my ass. Whoever said that words can never hurt had to have been the pricks saying all the damn words.

A throat cleared from behind me and I jumped in surprise, whirling to find the 6'3 blonde defenseman with the girlfriend from Hell standing behind me. He scrubbed a big hand over the short beard he wore, a look of contrition on his attractive face.

"Can I help you?" I asked, trying not to sound as annoyed as I felt. He may have horrible taste in women, but this wasn't on him.

He nodded, took a deep breath, and met my gaze. "I owe you a fucking apology for what Stacy said to you, to everyone. You didn't fucking deserve what happened, and I wanted you to know that had I known that she was that type of person, I never would have kept her in my life."

"It's not on you to apologize. We're all responsible for the shit that comes out of our mouths, for the actions that we take. You aren't responsible for that she-witch anymore than I am," I told him with a shrug. "But I appreciate it, all the same."

He continued to stand there, his hands shoved into his pockets, shoulders hunched up around his ears like a shamed toddler waiting to be reprimanded. The man obviously had more to say, and I couldn't do anything but wait him out.

“I’m not seeing her anymore,” he told me. “When I heard some of the shit that she had said about you, about what she did, I ended it. Not only did she attack you, someone that she didn’t even know, but she dragged all of us into her shit.”

“You’re talking about the CamGirl’s?” I asked with no small amount of confusion.

His green eyes met mine. “Yeah. Cormac had been the one to bring it to our attention, but no one on the team outside of Callum knew that it was you. Stacy admitted that she had gone through my phone and seen some of the shit I’d saved. She’d recognized your voice and that’s why she attacked. She thought it was because of you that I had been pulling away, not that I’d been hearing rumors of her sleeping around on me.”

Well, this is fucking awkward. There was a reason that I posted shit anonymously!

“So...I wasn’t the topic of conversation in the locker room?” I bit out in embarrassment.

“Not like she made it sound, but yeah, you kind of were,” Adam admitted with chagrin. “I just wanted you to know that Callum was as much a victim of Stacy’s as you were. And for you to know how sorry I am that you got hurt.”

“Thank you,” I acknowledged.

When he turned, he jerked to a stop, coming face to face with Callum leaning against the doorframe, listening to every word we said in silence. A look passed between them, a barely perceptible nod in acknowledgment of whatever had silently

been discussed before Adam clapped him on the shoulder on his way by.

Callum looked like I felt. His dark eyes were tired behind the black framed glasses he usually only wore to read, his whiskers had grown out into a full beard that I wanted to run my hands over to see if it was as soft as it looked, and it looked like his shoulders had the weight of the world on them. Even his skin looked pale and drawn, a stark change from the bronzed glow he usually had going for him.

“I know I probably don’t deserve it,” he started gruffly, his deep voice rough and raspy. “But I had to try and make things right. I was a fucking asshole, you didn’t deserve any of the bullshit I said, and I want to make it right. I *need* to make it right because it turns out, I can’t fucking lose you.”

Twenty



CAL

SHE WAS SO FUCKING beautiful it hurt. The last two weeks had been hell on earth, not being able to see her, touch her, talk to her. It made me realize just how bad I had it for the girl. I'd been lying to myself, saying that I wasn't completely head over fucking heels in love with this woman. A day had felt like a year, a week a lifetime, and I wasn't going to go another day without trying to make shit right between us.

“You look like shit.”

Those four little words were enough to make me crack a smile. “I feel like shit too.”

As much as I wanted to pull her into my arms and never fucking let go, I couldn't do anything more than drink her in. She'd pulled her long hair back into a thick braid, her face was pale and void of makeup, and she was covered from neck to toe, the sweater with the Coffee Drop logo hanging well past her hips over thick leggings, and her boots came up to her knees. There was a mystery stain on the olive-colored sweater

just under her right tit that was oddly enough, shaped like a mini hockey stick.

She'd never been more appealing than in that moment.

"Maybe that's a sign you need to change up your diet," she suggested. "Less bullshit, more fiber?"

"God, you're such a brat," I chuckled.

She shrugged in indifference, "And yet I can't seem to get rid of you no matter how much I ignore you."

Shaking my head, I took a chance and stepped forward. She stood her ground, unwilling to back down even a little and I felt a burst of pride for the woman that she was. I could see the nerves in how she fisted her hands at her side and shifted her weight from foot to foot, but her eyes held mine.

"What are you doing here, Callum?" she asked me, relaxing back against the kitchen island.

"Didn't have a choice. You weren't answering a single text or phone call," I reminded her. "How else was I going to get you to talk to me?"

Lenny crossed her arms over her chest, lifting one hand to her chin like she had to think about my question.

"I think maybe you should have taken that as a sign that I didn't *want* to talk to you," Lenny sassed. "There's not much more that you could say that I'd want to hear."

"Not even to hear I'm sorry?" I asked, moving closer and shoving my hands into my pockets to keep from reaching out

and grabbing her. Having her this close was wreaking havoc on my system, the need to feel all those curves she had hidden away pressed up against me was driving me batshit crazy.

“Callum...” she sighed out, low and husky and just a little heartbroken.

“Lenny, I’m so fucking sorry about that night. I was pissed off at Coach, pissed off at finding you with two men that have fucked their way through Boston, and I let that fuck with my head,” I admitted. “And I shouldn’t have. I should have believed *in* you!”

“So I should want to give you the time of day because you took your anger out on me? What you’re asking of me sounds like taking masochism to a whole new level,” Lenny informed me. “And that is soooo not my kink.”

“I know, Len, I know!” I snapped. “I own my shit, Lenny, but we didn’t get here just because of me.”

Shut the fuck up, Sinclair! You want the girl back, not to keep driving her away.

Lenny narrowed damning eyes at me, a pretty pink flush heating up her cheeks as she all but blew smoke from her nostrils. Her hands dropped to her side, closing the distance between us, and planted her hands on my chest, shoving me with all the pent-up anger and hurt she had locked up in that petite body of hers.

Taking advantage of the contact, I grabbed her forearms and yanked her in flush against my chest, ignoring all common

sense that warned me she'd have my head for making the move. My mouth dropped to hers in a punishing kiss, demanding and hard and consuming. I heard her shocked breath escape, felt it like a punch to the chest, and plunged my tongue past the seam of her lips to taste, to claim.

Fuck, I had missed the taste of her. She was sugar and spice and woman all rolled into one delicious package. I could get drunk off kissing her alone, but I didn't just want her kisses. I wanted her everything.

In the space of a heartbeat, she was kissing me back with more fire and passion than I'd ever felt before. Her arms wound around my neck, her fingers driving into my hair and gripping tight. My hands dropped to her thighs and boosted her up until her legs wrapped around my waist, our lips never breaking from the kiss. We were a tangle of tongue and teeth, gasping breaths, and throbbing pulse. She consumed every sense, wrapping me up in her touch, her scent, until nothing existed outside of her.

I didn't care that we were in her place of employment, or that at any second someone could come looking for one of us and catch us trying to devour each other whole. My cock was hard as steel, aching against the zipper of my jeans at the feel of her wrapped around me. Our clothes the only thing keeping us from fucking like animals right then and there. My control was fading fast as she ground her heated core into me, both of us mindless with the need to be as close as humanly possible after being apart for so long.

It took every ounce of will that I possessed to pull away from the drugging taste of her lips. She blinked owlishly up at me, stunned by the force of her desire. If she felt even half of what I did, it was a fucking shock that we hadn't just combusted and set the whole place in flames.

"Lenny..." I moaned her name, leaning my forehead against hers as I drew in a ragged breath.

I cursed inwardly when her eyes cleared of arousal and fixed on me with a dirty look. Her legs dropped from my hips, her hands untangled from my hair. I kept my arms locked around her, in no way ready to release her. She felt too damn good pressing up against me.

She felt like coming home.

"Let me go!" she demanded, her lithe body wiggling against mine and made thinking really damn hard.

"Not in this lifetime," I told her, letting her know just how serious I was. "You can fight it all you want, I know I sure did, but I'm fucking playing for keeps. I love your sexy ass."

"That's just it, asshole. This isn't a game. I'm not one of your little rubber pucks that you play with!" she snapped, ignoring...or maybe not even hearing what I had just admitted.

"I never thought you were."

"Then why would you not tell me you knew about my CamGirl's profile?" she posed the question, leveling me with sad, serious eyes as her entire body stilled in my arms.

“Same reason you didn’t tell me, probably,” I mused. Lenny looked down, the sheen of tears in her eyes. “Lenny, I never told a single guy who you were, not even when Core was drooling over you wearing my jersey...not until that fucking night, anyway. Even when I wanted to tell him to find a new girl to jerk off to, I didn’t. I liked knowing that I got a piece of you that they never would. ”

“I don’t get it,” she murmured. “Why?”

“Why what? Why did I keep it a secret?”

“Why would you want a girl like me in your world? I don’t want to dress up and go out and deal with people. I don’t want to wear a pound of make-up and get all fancied up, I want to stay at home where pants are fucking optional and I can eat a tub of ice cream while binge-watching *The Kardashians*. I know next to nothing about hockey, nor do I really want to, even if it is hot as fuck watching you in all your pre-game glory. And yeah, I want to make sexy videos that a million strangers can watch simply because I like the way it makes me feel.”

The seriousness of her husky voice as she poured her thoughts out made me laugh. She didn’t realize just how much it meant to hear her say she didn’t want the rich and famous lifestyle. I’d never wanted to get serious with a woman before because that’s all they were after, one puck bunny after another. Women said men were bad, always trying to add another notch to the bedpost, but women loved chasing jerseys.

Lenny was the first woman since junior high that wanted nothing to do with being a hockey player's girl and god did it make me want her all the more.

“Baby, if pants are optional, I'll bring the fucking ice cream and give you my Hulu password,” I promised. “I don't want you to change a thing about who you are. Even when you're being a brat, you're still the sweetest, sexiest thing I've ever laid eyes on and I am ridiculously fucking in love with you.”

She stilled in my arms as my words finally hit, sniffing delicately and peeking up at me through her dark lashes. “You're the most confounding man I've ever dealt with,” she admitted. “Did you seriously just call me a brat and admit you love me in the same breath?”

I grinned down at her, running my fingers over her stubborn jawline. I couldn't say that I blamed her for the confusion, not even a little. When I met her, I'd told myself it was just for some fun until I got her out of my system, but the more time I spent with her the more she got under my skin, making me question everything that I thought I wanted or needed in my life. Those last away games had made me realize that I was done for and I'd gone into panic mode because I hadn't planned on falling for her. I'd welcomed the distance, needing the physical space between us since I couldn't detach mentally or emotionally from her.

I had missed her more than I'd ever missed anyone before and had actually thought about flying her out. When I'd gotten benched, I didn't want to waste her time just to come hold my

hand and make me forget the depressing self-pity that I was wallowing in.

“You like me this way. Right?” I asked her, kissing her forehead. “I can’t promise that I’ll never fuck up again, baby, but I can tell you I’ll fucking crawl to make it up to you.”

There was no way I was giving up hope that she’d give me another chance. That I hadn’t completely fucked myself in the ass and lost her. The thing about Lenny was she kept me guessing. She was a contradictory mess of innocence and smarts, self-doubt and confidence. It was one of the things that I loved about her, what made it so much fun being around her. It made life interested, unpredictable.

It was why I needed her so badly in my life, especially with what came next for me.

“Lenny, baby, don’t fucking shut me out.” My voice dropped low, emotion ripping it to shreds. “I fucking need you. It’s so fucking cold without you.”

She was quiet for a moment, slowly putting space between our bodies and a wave of panic crested, hitting me hard in the chest. She was going to end it. Walk away from everything that I was and that I offered her. My entire body went rigid, aching with the loss that I could feel coming.

“That’s because of the cold front we’re experiencing, not because of me,” she sighed with a heavy eye-roll. “I need to get to work before Marcus mutinies and you need to clear out my shop. People are going to start protesting if they can’t get their daily caffeine hit.”

I let out a frustrated sigh even as the weight seemed to lift off my shoulders. Even if she hadn't given the go-ahead, she hadn't flat-out rejected me either so I had to believe there was hope. That there was a chance that she wasn't going to kick my ass to the curb. She didn't get to kiss me like she had and just walk away without a fight.

I may have deserved it, but if she was even a tenth of a fraction as miserable as I'd been over the last couple of weeks, I had to believe that she'd want to do whatever she could to make it better. Even if that did mean forgiving my dumb ass.

"I'll clear them out, but I'm not leaving until you tell me that this isn't over. If this is all I get of you, I'll park my fucking ass at my table and order every weird, fucking drink you can come up with every damn day until you see that I'm not leaving."

Lenny rolled her eyes, a small smile turning up the corner of her mouth. "Yeah, I've noticed that you might not be the smartest when it comes to your choice of drink."

Stepping out of reach, she turned, and I breathed out a sigh of relief that she wasn't telling me to get the fuck out. She stopped at the door and glanced back over her shoulder at me.

"I'm not saying it's a sure thing, Callum, because I need to figure out if you're worth all the frustration... but you don't need to subject yourself to disgusting drinks just to get on my good side."

"Does that mean I can order my plain americano without fear of drinking trash-can coffee?" I teased.

She winked with a slight shrug of a shoulder, her sexy laugh hitting me straight in the gut and making me feel all warm and fuzzy. Fuck, how I had missed her.

“Not promising anything,” she giggled. “But if you’re on your best behavior, I’ll pass the word along that whatever you do get tastes like heaven.”

Lenny sashayed out into the main area, looking a million times lighter than when I’d first spotted her. I followed her out, and watched her smile at Marcus, tossing her head back and laughing at whatever shit he’d just whispered in her ear. I felt confident enough that even if she had to think about what she wanted from me, the future looked brighter knowing that there was a possibility.

Core and Noah stood waiting for me, their eyes darting from me to Lenny and back again, looking for signs that the disaster of my relationship had been averted and directed back on course. I shrugged, not giving anything away and jinxing my chances.

“Oh fuck a duck, can you do nothing right?” Core groaned. “Why can’t you just get down on your knees and beg the girl to take your dumb ass back?”

“Maybe he did and she’s smart enough to know that his stupid ass isn’t worth the trouble?” Noah suggested, smacking Core upside the head. “Respect to Lenny for knowing when to quit while she’s ahead of the game.”

“Sinclair!” Lenny shouted across the café, hands planted on her hips as she leveled me with those big green eyes. “Get

these people out of here, or each and every one of you will be getting that trash can coffee you're so scared of until hell freezes over."

"Yes, ma'am," I grinned. Looking around at my family, I pointed at the door. "You heard the woman, time to vacate the building."

I watched everyone start to pull gear on, laughter and cheers lightening the place up. My shoulders felt like a weight had been lifted, not just because I was one step closer to getting Lenny back, but because my people had become her people too. They accepted her as one of their own and wanted Lenny to know that even if she wanted nothing to do with my dumb ass, they valued her friendship and were one hundred percent behind her.

Groaning, I watched as Cormac approached her, heading in their direction before he could put his foot in his mouth or make the tenuous peace go up in flames.

"No offense, but Ayers and I aren't comfortable leaving the dumb fuck alone with you without him blowing it all up again. We are, for the foreseeable future, designated chaperones to keep Cal in line because we like you, Lenny," I heard him tell her.

She caught my eye, grinning mischievously, and planting a hand on his arm. "Don't worry, Cormac, we'll be on our best behavior for you. After all, I've always performed better with an audience."



Checking the time for what had to be the millionth time, I groaned and rolled out of bed. I'd been trying to fall asleep for the last hour but sleep seemed to be as elusive tonight as it had been for the previous two weeks. I'd gotten so used to having the soft, warm curves of a little blonde curled against me that I spent the majority of the night tossing around in bed, trying to find that magic spot that would let me rest.

It wasn't too late yet, so I picked up my phone on my way out to the kitchen, typing out my message and hitting send before I could think better of it.

Me: When can I see you again?

Me: I close my eyes, and all I see is you...It's been a real issue lately. It's making it really damn hard to get to sleep cause I miss you like a fucking limb.

Maybe I was pushing too hard, after all, she hadn't completely agreed that she was giving me a chance to redeem myself. I grinned to myself when her name flashed across the screen.

Lenny: You can see me every day this week at the shop. I'm covering for Marcus.

I ignored the disappointment that came with her words. The haze of uncertainty clouding my brain because she didn't seem as eager to see me as I was her. I had to remind myself that I was lucky she was giving me another shot. I couldn't let my needy ass push her away.

Me: Can I convince you to come over after work?

Lenny: I'm pretty sure that you haven't groveled nearly enough for that.

Me: Ahh. You want me on my knees for you. Puts my mouth in the prime position for kissing your perfect ass.

Lenny: I don't want you kissing my ass, Callum!

Me: Fine, no ass kissing, only pussy kissing

I couldn't seem to help myself. The thought of being on my knees for Lenny was enough to have my dick leaping to attention, ready for action. Being between those long legs of hers was one of my favorite places, whether on my knees or not. It may have only been two weeks since I'd been wrapped up in her body, but it'd be a cold day in hell before I forgot what it felt like to be buried between her legs.

My phone pinged again with a message, making me jerk out of the memories. I took a second to adjust myself in my sweats before tapping on the new message.

Lenny: Good night, Callum.

I groaned at the image she sent of her sprawled out on her bed, the camera aimed over her shoulder to show off the jersey that she wore. My name. My number. And by the way that her hips were canted up, she wore nothing but my name and number.

Me: Good night, Lenny.

I pocketed my phone and headed back to bed to deal with the hard-on that she'd left me with.

Twenty-One



LENNY

THE FLOWERS CAME FIRST, then the candy. The spa gift card was delivered to the coffee shop an hour before I closed and I had to roll my eyes at the extravagance.

When I had told him the night before that he hadn't groveled nearly enough, I hadn't thought that he would seriously start bombarding me with gifts. The flowers I could understand. Everyone knew that if a guy fucked up, the best way to apologize was with some flowers. Even the candy I could get behind, especially if I didn't have to share.

I pulled my phone out of my purse and for the third time that day, sent him a text to thank him for the gift.

I had barely been home long enough to strip out of my work clothes when I heard the doorbell. I slipped my fluffy blue robe on and went to answer the door, my emotions warring as I both hoped that it was Callum on the other side and prayed that it wasn't. I had missed him every second that we'd been apart, but I also couldn't quite get his voice out of my head as he'd spit his venom at me. He'd shown his tendency for

lashing out when he was angry and I wasn't quite ready to jump back on that particular ride.

Of course, it wasn't him at my door and I swallowed the disappointment.

"Yes?" I studied the young blonde man standing at my door in confusion, a brown paper bag of delicious-smelling food held out in his hands toward me. "I think you've got the wrong place, I didn't order anything."

He shrugged, pushing the bag into my arms. "Food's been paid for already and this is definitely the address, so today must be your lucky day."

The guy turned away as soon as I'd accepted the bag, not bothering to wait for a tip or even a thank you before taking off. I shut the door behind me, breathing in the tangy scent of Italian. Opening the bag, I found several to-go boxes inside, the plastic lids imprinted with the familiar logo of The Italian Table and I knew instantly that Callum had ordered me food.

He was making it really hard to stay away.

It took me three days before I finally caved and agreed to see him outside of the coffee shop. Three days of random gifts showing up throughout the day and food from a different restaurant arriving within minutes of me getting home each night.

Callum had mastered the art of groveling because he wasn't just randomly sending me shit. The food he ordered was some of my favorites, the gift cards were to places I enjoyed. The

gift that was my favorite was the cartoon drawing that he'd done of when I'd gotten all decked out in hockey gear, surprising me with how good it actually was. It was framed and sitting on my dresser, along with the little ceramic figurine of a hockey player, and a puck autographed by the team.

It was shrimp tacos tonight, the bag I gripped in my hand so full I could eat three times over by myself. The second I'd seen how much food he'd ordered, I made the decision that I wasn't going to be eating alone. I suspected that it was all part of his master plan, and while I was okay with eating leftover pasta and pizza and burgers, there was just something inherently wrong about eating day-old tacos.

Decision made, I showered and dressed in one of my favorite hoodies and a baggy pair of sweatpants. It may not have been the sexiest of outfits, but it was definitely the most comfortable one, and that's what I was going for tonight. Sitting in the back of the Uber with a bag of food and an extra pair of panties tucked in my purse, I headed for Callum's to surprise him with dinner.

Standing outside his front door, I could hear the commotion inside and hesitated, uncertain if it had been a good idea to just show up at his door without talking to him first. I jumped with a start when the door was flung open just as I raised my hand to knock. Cormac wasn't the one I'd been expecting to answer, especially looking like some lucky lady's wet dream. His hair was pulled back in a messy bun that should have made him look silly and his ripped torso was on display because he'd forgotten to put on a shirt before answering the door.

I was there for Callum, but that didn't mean I was blind to the eye candy in front of me.

“Well, well, well. You don't look like the DoorDash delivery guy,” he grinned, pulling me in for a hug.

“You sure about that?” I asked, holding up the bag of food that was going to need to be reheated.

Cormac grabbed the bag from me, pulling it open and leaning in to inhale deeply. “Fuck me sideways, that smells better than the burgers we ordered.”

“I should have called-” I began, reaching for my food before it disappeared with the oversized goalie.

He grinned and threw a big arm around my shoulders, drawing me into the condo before I could make an escape. It was hopeless to try and get away, not when he kept me anchored against his side. Deciding to roll with it, I let him lead me inside.

“Which one of you assholes ordered the blonde?” Cormac called, raising his voice to be heard over the noise.

The living room was full of oversized men, most I recognized, while others were strangers. A hockey game was playing on the TV; an assortment of food and drinks spread out on the coffee table. All eyes turned to where I stood, but I only had eyes for one.

Callum shot to his feet, his lips turning up in a huge smile.

“That's definitely for me,” he said, dodging bodies to get to me.

His hand reached out the moment he was close enough, wrapping around the back of my neck, and pulled me forward out of Cormac's hold. His lips crushed mine beneath his, stealing my breath away and swallowing the whimper that I released.

His big hands roamed my body causing goosebumps to follow in their wake. I'd always thought it was such a cliché whenever a girl went weak in the knees over a kiss, but clinging to the hard bunch of muscles of his shoulders beneath the thin t-shirt he wore, I suddenly understood where that particular phrase came from. I felt like I was going to melt right into his arms, every muscle in my body turning to mush as molten fire swept through my body.

I was an idiot for ever thinking that I'd be able to get over him. For believing that I'd ever find another man who set fire to my soul as he did.

"Get a room," someone laughed.

Callum pulled away, dropping his forehead to mine and dragging in a ragged breath. "Hi," he whispered huskily.

"Hi," I returned, wrapping my arms around his neck and just holding on, breathing in the scent of winter pine and smoke that was uniquely him.

"You're stuck with me now," he told me gently, pressing a kiss to my forehead before he turned to smirk at Cormac. "There's no fucking way that you're keeping those tacos, asshole."

“Boo!” Cormac laughed, even as his hand dipped in and stole one before he handed the bag back to me. “Lenny likes me enough to share!”

“I probably should have called instead of just showing up,” I admitted as I got pulled deeper into the room. I’d definitely interrupted boys’ night or game day or whatever the hell they were calling it.

“Sweetheart, if I have my way, there isn’t any other place that you’ll be calling home.” He chuckled at the surprise on my face. “What? I told you, I’m playing for keeps.”

Sighing, I let him pull me into his lap when he dropped into the recliner, sinking deeper into his touch as his words warmed my heart. I might have had a nigggle of doubt lingering, but I couldn’t deny that I wanted exactly that. I just had to figure out what keeps meant for him.

I knew what it meant for me.

I wanted ring on fingers, same last names, forever and a day kind of keeps.



Callum lounged on my couch, completely relaxed, focused on the *Mario Kart* game he was currently destroying his friends at. When Cormac had told me that they weren’t going to leave Callum alone with me, I had thought for sure they were just fucking around. I didn’t expect them to follow us around like puppy dogs. It had been five days since I’d crashed their game day and in that time frame Callum had taken me out on three

different dates, making sure to include the over-protective guard dogs.

However, it had been five long fucking days and I was over it.

Callum had been the perfect gentleman. A little too perfect, if you asked me. He'd snuck only a handful of kisses, barely anything more than chaste closed-mouth kisses that made me yearn for more. He hadn't stayed the night, nor had I stayed with him, which meant that I was spending more and more time with the battery-operated boyfriend so that I wouldn't embarrass us both and jump his bones.

I was ready to scream in frustration.

Enough was enough.

Striding to the TV, I pulled the plug, smiling in triumph at the outcry from the three grown-ass men. Planting my hands on my hips, I turned to face them, letting each one of them see just how serious I was.

“Playtime is over, boys,” I informed them.

“What? We were in the middle of a game,” Cormac pouted. “Cal, your girlfriend is being a meanie-head!”

Callum laughed, tossing a throw pillow and hitting him square in the face. “Act your age, asshole.”

I pointed to the door, leveling the three men with my best, most intimidating look. “Sorry boys, I'm tired, horny, and beyond frustrated at not being able to do a damn thing about it.

So unless you plan on watching while I jump your buddy and fuck him right there on that couch, I'd be packing it in."

"Oh shit, is that an actual option?" Cormac asked with a grin. "Like, we could-"

"No, fuckhead, it's not an option," Callum kept his eyes locked on mine, darkening with the promise of said jumping. "You've had a thing for my ass for far too long for you to just sit back and watch."

My eyebrow arched at the implication of the two of them together, the fantasy easily playing out in my head and making the heat in my belly burn hotter. As hot as the idea was, my need to take Callum hard and fast overrode everything else.

He quickly herded Noah and Cormac to the door, dropping the apartment into sudden silence when the door shut heavily behind them. Watching Callum stalk toward me I knew exactly what a mouse felt while being hunted. My heart was pounding so hard I heard it in my ears, my breathing turned ragged and shallow, and my panties were so wet I could easily ring them out and they'd still be soaked.

Callum stopped before me, bare inches separating our bodies. He didn't make another move, even though his fingers kept curling in an effort to keep from touching, from taking me. His jaw was clenched tight, pupils blown as his eyes danced over my features.

"You are so fucking beautiful, you know that?" he asked in a raspy voice.

Taking the initiative, I laid my hands on his chest, drawing them up until I could feel the scratch of his whiskers against my palms. “Remember that the next time you even think about fucking up,” I teased. “You won’t get another chance.” I tiptoed up as he leaned down, pressing my lips to his softly.

That was all it took for the desire to explode between us, just a simple, sweet kiss and it was like a bomb had just gone off. His arm wrapped around my waist, pulling me in tight against his body, molding me to his hard contours with so much force that I had to arch back, bending back over his forearm. His free hand fisted in my hair, turning my head just so and devouring my lips with such hunger and passion that it bordered on terrifying.

I’d never felt this kind of all-consuming desire before, intensifying with each touch, each kiss until he was all I could feel. I didn’t even realize he was moving us until he sank down onto the couch, dragging me down with him so I straddled his hips, the hardness of his erection pressing right where I needed him most.

His name was a breathy moan on my lips as he trailed open-mouth kisses down my jaw, my throat. Sucking, nipping at sensitive points I never knew I had, kissing down my neck until he was blocked by the sweater I wore.

“You’re wearing way too damn much clothing,” he growled, fisting the material in his hand and pulling it up over my head. The grey sports bra I wore was about as interesting as dirt,

definitely more functional than sexy, but I hadn't thought I'd cave to my desires when I'd gotten dressed this morning.

Callum didn't seem to care as he stripped it off me, palming my tits and drinking me in with his hot gaze.

"I've fucking missed these beauties," he told me, dropping kisses across the tops of my breasts.

I never felt self-conscious about my curves when he touched me like this, the evidence of how much he wanted me pressing insistingly against my center as I rocked against him. He sucked a nipple into his mouth, playing with the other like I was his favorite toy. Gripping the material of the long sleeve Henley he wore, I tugged on it, needing to feel all his gloriously hard muscles against my body.

Our hands tangled together, both working to get him free but impatience had us working against each other. With a huff of breath, Callum grabbed hold of my wrists, anchoring them in one hand behind my back. His free hand reached behind and had the damnable shirt off in one swift jerk.

I hungrily devoured the sight of his tattooed skin on full display. When he refused to let my hands go, holding them captive at the base of my spine, I leaned down and let my tongue dance over the lines of ink decorating his chest.

"Fuck me, Lenny," he groaned, letting his head drop back.

"Trying to. You're not getting naked fast enough," I teased.
"All this kissing is distracting."

I squealed in surprise when he shifted us, landing me flat on my back on the cool leather. It took mere seconds before he yanked both leggings and the plain-Jane cotton panties beneath down my legs, leaving me naked and so turned on I couldn't think beyond his next touch.

“I fucking really missed this,” he leaned down, dragging his tongue through my center like I was a tasty treat. “I could die happy with your sweet juices all over my fucking face.”

Shaking my head in denial, he cocked an eyebrow. “You haven't fucked me nearly enough to die happy.”

He chuckled as he slid into position between my thighs, nuzzling against my pelvis before he dropped an open-mouthed kiss on my pussy. He attacked me with a vengeance. Dragging his tongue through my arousal, sucking my clit into his greedy mouth, and plunging two thick fingers deep inside like it was his mission in life to make me shatter into a million fragmented pieces before giving me his cock.

“Cal,” I tugged on his hair, demanding his attention. I wanted more, so much more than what he was giving me. I wanted to touch him, taste him, fuck him like he was me.

“Quit interrupting my meal,” he growled, flicking my clit with the pointed tip of his tongue and making my hips arch deeper into contact.

“I don't give a flying fuck if you keep eating me, but let me play too, damnit,” I pleaded in desperation. “Let me have your cock, pretty please?”

His head lifted, meeting my gaze over the expanse of my naked body, eyes gleaming in pure delight at what I offered. He got to his feet to shed the dark wash jeans he still wore, pulling me up before him.

“Are you offering to sit on my face while you swallow me down, baby?” he teased, stroking his thumb over my bottom lip in a sensual caress.

I shrugged a shoulder, running my hand down his chest, fingers playing over the rippling muscles of his abs before wrapping around his shaft. I stroked once, twice, before pushing him back to the couch. It took him mere seconds to stretch out across it, his tattooed skin a stunning contrast against the cream leather. His hands shot out, grabbing hold of my hips and pulling me forward. I giggled as I turned, my knees bumping against his shoulders as I eased down. I slid my hands over his chest, feeling the rumble of arousal he made as my palms traveled over his torso.

“Quit teasing and sit your ass down,” he ordered, yanking me down until his mouth connected firmly with my pussy.

Giving myself a minute to enjoy the way he touched me, I leaned down and set my mouth against the defined muscles of his abs and worked my way down to where his cock jutted up, pre-cum glistening from his tip. My tongue licked from root to tip while my hips rocked against his mouth before sinking down his length.

Time ceased to exist, our whole world narrowed down to just him...and me, twined together until all that mattered was the

next touch, the next kiss. He wrapped an arm around my hips, holding me steady against the onslaught of his lips while I palmed his balls in one small hand. The other hand was clasped tightly in his grip, fingers merged together. There was something intense about the moment, something immensely intimate about holding hands while we orally satisfied one another.

That first orgasm surprised me, sending me flying over the edge before I realized I was close. I moaned around his cock, body thrumming with the shockwaves pulsing through me. Every time with him was like being ripped open and flayed alive, consumed with the need to be owned and own him in return. He was a fucking drug that I never wanted to come down from.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck,” he groaned, releasing my hips to wrap my hair around his fist and pull me off his cock. “I don’t want to come in your mouth, not yet. I want my cum dripping from your tight cunt before I come in that pretty mouth of yours.”

He sat up, dragging my quivering mess of a body down his muscled frame. My swollen clit slid over hard muscles, quivering as I fought back the rising tide, the urge to roll my hips over every one of his sinewy muscles to another shattering orgasm nearly overwhelming. I wanted him buried inside me when I came again. I wanted to clench down on the hard length of his cock, strangling him with my pussy until he couldn’t fight his own release.

“Quit. Talking. And. Fuck me already,” I moaned breathlessly, trying to adjust so I could take the initiative and just fuck him like I wanted, but he kept his hands firm on my hips, holding me captive so I could do nothing more than rock over his erection with stilted moves that did nothing to take the edge off.

“Patience, baby, patience. Let’s see if we can’t make you fly again before you take my cock,” he chuckled.

Turning my head to look at him from over my shoulder, I shuddered at the smug smile he wore and the dangerous glint that darkened his storm-cloud eyes. I saw my destruction in him; knew without a doubt that there would be no recovery from this man. There would never be another man who could turn me on like Callum Sinclair, who could make me come with nothing more than some dirty words whispered against my skin.

Callum shifted me into position, his cock spreading my pussy apart so that I felt every veiny ridge along his shaft. Manipulating my hips into rocking back and forth over his length, my arousal coating him with each smooth glide of our bodies. He rolled his own hips up to meet mine and no matter how I tried to shift, I couldn’t gain the penetration that I needed.

My hands dropped to his, dragging them up until we were both cupping my breasts, my hard nipples demanding attention. Whimpers of pained need slipped from my lips. Callum slipped one hand from beneath mine, sliding up until

he could collar my throat and press me back into him. My head turned just enough to capture his lips with mine in a hard, wet kiss, tongues tangling in a frenzied rush.

As though he knew I wasn't getting enough stimulation from the position, he gave my nipple a final pinch and dropped his hand to my belly, low enough that he could put pressure on my pelvis and still slip his calloused fingers into the slick, wet mess of my pussy to press against my clit. That was all it took, a glancing brush and rolling my hips once more over his hardened flesh for me to come with a startled cry.

Callum didn't even wait for me to come down before he lifted my hips, adjusted the angle of his cock, and dropped me back down, impaling me with one rough move. There was no stopping the scream that ripped from my body, or from arching my back like I'd just been hit with the full force of a live wire, shockwaves of pleasure all but tearing me apart.

"Ride me, baby, make yourself come on my dick. Show me how much you missed having me buried in your sweet pussy," he crooned against my neck, nipping sharp teeth against my jawline.

Adrenaline spiked, my breathing rapid, and chest heaving, I did as he asked, finding a tempo that suited me just fine. He responded with a rumbling growl, thrusting up into me in an attempt to quicken my brutally slow pace. Keeping him buried deep, I rocked, I rolled, I circled my hips, feeling every inch of his cock against the swollen walls in indescribable pleasure.

The air was chilly against my heated skin, but I couldn't feel anything but him.

Having enough of the slow burn that I teased him with, Callum put one big hand on my back and pressed me forward until I had no choice but to catch myself on the arm of the couch. I yelped as his hand landed on my ass, moving me until my face was pressing into the soft leather, and my hips were angled up for him to take me hard and fast. He drew back, leaving just the tip of his cock inside before thrusting in so hard, so deep I swore he was going to rip my cervix open.

“I fucking missed this the most. Your tight pussy choking on my cock,” he groaned, spanking my ass once more. “You ever try and freeze me out again, I swear to fucking God that I will bury myself so deep inside of this sweet cunt that you'll never be free of me.”

I whimpered at the idea, knowing that the way he was currently fucking me, I'd be so deliciously sore I'd be feeling him for days after. My eyes burned as I realized just how badly I needed him, not just in an emotional sense either, but physically he was the only one who made me burn. The only one who took the edge off the insatiable need that ran in my blood.

My orgasm claimed me with that final thought, my vision blurring as he pounded into me like he was trying to climb right up inside me. Everything exploded around me, nothing else mattering but clenching down around him and letting go of all thought, all feeling until there was nothing but Callum

and me. His name was a breathy chant on my lips, the answering sounds he made as he drove himself higher barely audible through the rush of blood in my ears.

“Oh fuck,” he roared, pumping in once, twice, three times before I felt him swell even bigger inside me. A smaller, no less intense orgasm rippled through me as he came, releasing inside my pussy with a flood of hot cum, his fingers digging into my hips almost painfully as he held himself rigid against me.

This man and his fucking magic cock. I may as well stamp Callum's name on my pussy because he's destroyed it for anyone else.

The little whimper that slipped from my lips when he finally pulled out and shifted us enough so he could collapse beside me on the couch was embarrassing. He chuckled deep against my ear, wrapping a strong tattooed arm around my waist and dragging me flush against his body.

“Fuck, you're perfect, Len,” he murmured, placing a kiss on my shoulder. “I should piss you off more so we can have explosive sex more often.”

I tilted my head back, eyes narrowing in on his stupidly handsome face. “You got lucky this time.”

His fingers tangled in my hair, tugging lightly, playfully. “Damn straight I got lucky. I've always been a lucky fucking bastard.”

“Cocky bastard, more like it,” I groaned, rolling my eyes and wiggling closer to his hard body. My head fell to his chest, his skin still heated and slick with sweat, the scent of him intoxicating. I pressed a kiss to where his heart slowed to normal, sighing sleepily. “Lucky for you, I happen to like you as a cocky asshole.”

Twenty-Two



CAL

AT SOME POINT, I managed to haul our asses from the couch into the bathroom to clean up, resulting in another round of explosive sex against the wall of the shower. I was kidding myself if I thought this was just us making up for lost time when it was impossible to get enough of her.

Lenny curled around me, her head nestled on my chest while her delicate fingers traced over the ink on my chest, and her slim leg was thrown over my hips. Every breath I took was filled with her scent, that subtle hint of cherry blossoms and warm peaches that now held a trace of sex.

“You still haven’t told me why you were so pissed off at that gala,” she informed me with a sleepy voice. “Are you ever going to or are you going to make me guess?”

“It’s not important,” I told her, not wanting to revisit the conversation with Coach that I had walked away from.

“I think it is, especially since it was part of what almost blew up our relationship,” she shot back, pinching one of my

nipples playfully, but still hard enough for me to feel that bite of pain.

“Fucking hell, ouch,” I groaned, slapping a hand over hers on my chest. “Keep that up and I’m going to return the favor.”

“Only if you tell me.”

She shifted, draping herself over me as if she were a sexy, naked blanket that had my tired cock stirring back to life. She stacked her hands on my chest, propped her chin up, and grinned down at me. Her legs fell over mine, the wet heat of her pussy cradled my hardening dick. She was temptation at its finest.

“You tell me and I’ll let you do anything you’d like to me,” she teased.

My brow arched at the delicious bribe. “Anything?”

“*Anything!*” she promised.

“Even-” I slid my hands down the silky smooth line of her back until they fell on the plump curves of her ass, squeezing. “-if I want to fuck this perky ass of yours?”

Locks of blonde hair fell into her face as she jerked her head in affirmation, the hard tips of her tits rubbing against my chest with each shaky breath she drew. Her damnable green eyes were wide, pupils blown with desire so that only a sliver of emerald showed. You’d think I hadn’t just delivered her several orgasms and had been edging the hell out of her with how quickly her body responded to me.

She was fucking delicious.

“My latest scans came back on my knee, Coach is worried that it’s not holding up as well as we’d all hoped. He thinks that one more bad hit and I’ll be crippled for good-” I admitted, that familiar rise of fear bubbling up. “Or at the very least, a knee replacement. He wanted to know my thoughts on riding the bench for the remainder of the season.”

“Callum-” Lenny whispered my name, her eyes locked in on mine.

“I told him he could fuck right off with that idea. I’m not sitting out just because there’s a possibility of-”

“I know you love the game, Callum, but what happens-”

“I don’t just love the game, Len,” I snapped, cutting her off again before she played the what-if game. I’d been playing that fucking game for longer than I cared to admit, a tiny little voice of reason that created a web of self-doubt and uncertainty every time I laced up. “I fucking bleed hockey. It’s the only fucking thing I know. I was shit in school, the second that I could enter the draft, I was in it because it was the only thing that I wanted. The longest I’ve ever been off the ice was when I took that hit last year. I’ve known the risks of playing since I was old enough to play the fucking game. You take that away from me, and I’m nothing but a washed-up, grumpy fuck with a fat bank account.”

Lenny rolled her eyes at me, clearly exasperated with everything I’d just admitted to. “Don’t be an idiot,” she huffed. She propped herself up on my chest so that she could look down at me. “You’re smart, funny, sexy as hell...” she

moaned when I ran my hand over the swell of her ass once more.

“Angry, bitter,” I added to her list of attributes.

“Stop,” she ordered, covering my mouth with her hand, her big eyes sparkling with mirth. “If that was all you were, I would never have fallen for you.”

Her words were soft, her voice like raw silk wrapping around me. When I made no sound of argument, she moved her hand away from my mouth, tracing the curve of my lips with gentle fingertips, and pushed herself upright. My gaze raked down the lithe line of her body, all that pale skin on display just for me. I raised a hand, running it up her belly until I was cupping a breast, my thumb flicking over the dusty rose of her nipple.

“I’ve seen your kindness every time that you get stopped by a fan, even when you’ve been having a shit day.” Lenny leaned down and pressed a kiss to my chest. “I’ve seen the love that you have for your team, for your friends...” Her lips moved south along with her body. “And...” My stomach clenched as she licked a path down my abs, all the blood in my body rushing to my dick. “Even if you’d already played your last game, laced up your skates for the last time, that wouldn’t change. You’d be pissed, sure, but you’d still be the same irresistible man that we all love.”

“You’re just biased because you like my dick,” I teased, my hips arching so my cock pushed between the small valley of her tits.

I wasn't about to admit to her just how much her words meant to me, how much I needed to hear them. I wasn't going to let her see just how uncomfortable it made me that she could see me so fucking clearly when I had a hard time seeing anything else. I knew she was right, especially with her by my side, but the truth was a hard pill to swallow. It had hurt like hell to have Coach suggest I ride the bench for the rest of the season, even when I was scared shitless that he was right.

Lenny smiled up at me, scooting farther down until she was level with my dick. She pressed a kiss to the crown, mischief dancing in her emerald eyes. "I do like your dick, but I like so much more than that." She darted a teasing lick over my shaft, my dick twitching against her tongue, wanting more of what she had to offer.

"Len, for fuck's sake, you're killing me here," I groaned, sinking my fingers into her blonde locks.

"I'll give you everything you want, but first, I want you to admit it. Admit that there's more beneath the sexy looks and hard edges."

Her hand wrapped around me, stroking slowly from root to crown as she leveled me with her words. They wrapped around my heart with the same firm grip as she had on my cock.

"Are you fucking blackmailing me with sexual favors? Blowjob in exchange for feelings?" I traced a finger over the curve of her jaw, settling my thumb over the fullness of her

bottom lip and pressing in until she twirled her tongue over my skin. “Isn’t it enough that I love your bratty ass?”

She sighed, her eyes rolling up at me with a spark of mischief. I felt the bite of her teeth against my thumb, hard enough for my teeth to grind down together to keep from pulling away from the pain. Lenny released my thumb with a soothing swirl of her tongue, blood firing with the need to take, to dominate, to control. To make her see who she belonged to. To show her that what we had was fucking everything.

I sat up fast, barely allowing her to reposition between my legs before I planted her on my lap. She wiggled until her legs wrapped around my waist and her arms looped around my shoulders, every inch of warm, silky skin pressing against mine. Her pussy lined up perfectly with my cock.

“Maybe I’m not ready to share all my secrets with you, Lenny,” I told her, stroking one hand down her spine and pressing her closer. I could feel the wet heat of her arousal as she rocked against my shaft. The hard tips of her breasts rubbed against my chest with each wiggle of her body, each breath that shuddered through her. I could see her pulse jack-hammering in the hollow of her throat and my own raced to catch up. Wicked pleasure surged through my veins as I notched into her, just enough to feel her stretch around me.

“I want all your secrets, Callum. I want everything,” she whispered back in a breathy voice. Her hips arched into me, her ankles locked at the small of my back as she tried

desperately to draw me in deeper. Her lips dropped to mine, our breaths mingling together.

“Fuck my secrets,” I growled, stealing all her words with a hungry kiss. Tongues dueled, teeth nipped, all while I gripped her hips firmly and pulled her down, sinking my full length into her tight core. She cried out against my lips. “Christ, you feel so fucking good wrapped around my cock.”

Lenny’s fingers tangled in my hair, pulling until my head dropped back. “Callum-” she moaned, her hips rocking slowly, unhurriedly. Our eyes locked together, her big jewel-colored eyes hazy as she began to move over me. I’d never tire of seeing that look of pure blissed-out pleasure on her face.

I skimmed my fingers up from hip and over the quivering flat of her belly. They tracked over her ribs, felt each shuddering breath she took until I could cup one small, proud tit in my hand. My thumb stroked over the tight peak of her nipple as she continued to slowly grind her body into mine, her hips moving in a sensual dance. Giving the dusky pink nipple a pinch, I carried on until my fingers collared her throat, feeling the wild race of her heart beneath my palm.

“Fuck me. Ride me until you come all over my cock, Lenny. Be a good girl and show me how much you want this,” I ordered, dragging her down to steal a heated kiss from her lips. I nipped at her bottom lip, her jaw, the slender curve of her neck, licking a line over the line of her clavicle.

Lenny dropped the vise-like grip her legs had around my waist, shifting until she was able to do just that, her feet

planted beneath her as she rose up until just the tip of my cock remained in her cunt. Her eyes fell shut, her entire body shuddering when she dropped back down and took me deep. Her head dropped back and her long blonde hair danced over my legs. There was a laziness to the way she moved over me, lost to the sensual dance of our bodies.

This wasn't fucking.

Whatever the hell this was, was life-shattering, soul-sucking, mind-altering. Unable to take the slow ride, I wrapped my arm around her waist and lifted her, slamming her onto her back beneath me and thrusting balls deep into her tight heat. Her back arched as she cried out, her nails digging into my back as I lifted one lithe leg to my shoulder. My balls throbbed with need, aching to pour into her.

Her pussy clamped down on me as she came so hard I'd be surprised if she didn't bruise my dick with how hard she was squeezing me. My name on her lips spurred me on, driving my hips into her harder, faster, the sound of our bodies slapping together in perfect harmony with her shuddering cries of pleasure. I fucked her through her orgasm, needing more, demanding that she give me more.

"Stay with me, Lenny," I rasped, turning my head to lick the curve of her calf, feeling the tremors rippling through her body against my lips.

"I c-can't..." she panted. "Too...much."

Dropping her leg, I settled my body onto hers, keeping from crushing her by bracing myself on my elbows. With every

thrust of my cock, her soft curves moved against the hardness of mine. Her tits rubbed against my chest, her legs tangled with mine, and one hand fell limp by her side while she clutched me to her with the other.

Without thought, I took her hand in mine, lacing our fingers together the same way that the rest of us was tangled together. Her head turned to the side, green eyes wide as her gaze locked on our joined hands. I dropped my head, running my nose up the sharp line of her jaw until I was nuzzled into the curve of her neck, the scent of her skin hotter, headier, fucking intoxicating.

“Not a chance, it’s never enough,” I murmured thickly, running my tongue over her sweat-slickened skin. “Come with me. Give me one more, baby.”

My release built, my spine tingling as my balls drew up tight, and I had to grit my teeth to keep from coming without her. I slipped my free hand between us, ready to steal another orgasm from her because I needed to feel her body explode around me, regardless of her protests. I needed to feel her tight cunt squeezing around my cock when I dropped my load into her.

The moment my calloused finger stroked over her clit, she detonated, her pussy clamping down on me as she screamed my name. I thrust in hard once, twice, a final time before my orgasm ripped through me.

Time seemed to stand still as I pulsed within her tight heat. My reality narrowed down until the only thing I could see, was

Lenny fucking James. The only thing I could feel was the trembling body beneath me as her orgasm dragged on and on. The only sound was that of our ragged breaths and her whimpered moans. The heady scent of sex, sweat, and us filled the room. Nothing else existed beyond us.

Gathering what remained of my cognitive abilities, I shifted to the side so that I wouldn't smother Lenny beneath me since I didn't think I'd ever move from this bed again.

As long as I had her, I didn't give a shit what the rest of my life looked like. I'd lose myself in Lenny all day, every day, for the rest of my fucking days.

Twenty-Three



LENNY

“YELLOW? OR BLACK?” I stood in the bathroom doorway in nothing more than Callum’s practice jersey and panties, holding up the little bottles of nail polish for Marcus to choose. “I can’t decide!”

“Why not just do both?” Marcus suggested from his position on my bed. He didn’t even look up at me, his attention wholly on his phone. I didn’t even want to ask what he was looking at, not when I had posted a new video that morning with Callum’s help. He’d been all too eager to participate in creating content for my profile and I had to admit that it made things much easier not having to worry about getting the shot perfect.

“Ugh! You aren’t helping, asshole,” I huffed. “It’s an important game for Callum.”

He lifted his gaze to mine, a smirk on his perfect lips, his eyes racking up and down my body in amusement. “For Callum. Not for you. All you have to do is show up, look cute, and cheer your ass off for your man.”

I stuck my tongue out at him, both middle fingers raising up to salute him. “Marcussss!” I whined. “Help me!”

He rolled his eyes and stood up, stuffing his phone into his back pocket. “Fine. Black nails with yellow accents. Go a little heavier on the eyes but stick with that nude pink gloss that Cal loves so much.”

Marcus lifted a hand to my damp hair, tugging on a lock. “High pony because we both know he’ll want every man in that arena to see you wearing his name.”

I breathed a sigh of relief as every detail confirmed what I had planned. I didn’t know why I was so nervous for tonight, it wasn’t like I was the one that was going to be in the spotlight tonight.

Tonight was all about Callum.

His coach was announcing his retirement tonight. Recognizing his importance to the team. There had been talks of Callum taking on a management role and doing something behind the scenes so that they didn’t lose him completely, but I wasn’t sure if he had actually agreed to anything. That was going to be as much a surprise to me as it would be to everyone else that packed into the arena for the final game of the regular season.

I had no idea what his decision was going to be. He’d been adamant that he didn’t want to talk about his future in hockey, and I’d respected his decision. I didn’t want to push him before he was ready because I knew how hard this was for him. There was a restless energy that he couldn’t seem to

release, no matter how hard he pushed himself. He spent hours on the ice and in the gym with the goal to keep his body strong enough, fast enough.

Instead, we'd talked about what we would do once summer hit, the places that he wanted to take me. White sand beaches and fruity drinks seemed to be the one thing that we both agreed on. He wanted to see me wearing an itty-bitty bikini and I wanted to lick tequila from the rippling muscles of his abs. It was a win-win situation for both of us and after the never-ending winter that Boston had been plagued with, neither one of us wanted to deal with shitty weather.

Marcus leaned in and pressed a kiss to my forehead. "I'll never understand how you can be so nervous about Callum going out onto the ice when you're cool as a cucumber stripping naked in front of strangers," he chuckled.

"I have control. Complete control, but with him...it's out of my hands. I can't control what happens to him on the ice and that makes me want to puke," I told him honestly. "It's hot watching him play, watching the way that he moves so damned confidently on that ice, but good Lord, it kills me."

"Welcome to the wonderful world of being in love," Marcus teased, running a finger down my nose and bopping the tip of it.

He left me alone in my bathroom to get ready while he pulled my outfit for the day from my drawers. It took no time to finish doing my makeup, but my hair was a different story.

I'd let it grow longer over the last couple of months, the ends hitting the middle of my back now, all because of how much Callum loved wrapping the length around his hand when he fucked me from behind. The price to pay for that particular kink seemed to be that it took forever to blow it out.

By the time I was ready to sit down and do the live stream that I'd promised my adoring fans, I knew I'd have to make it short because I was running low on time before Marcus and I had to leave for Callum's game.

I changed from Callum's jersey into the black lace bra and panty set that did little to conceal but did amazing things for my body, knowing that the play of lace and shadows against my curves would play perfectly for the camera. I sank down onto the blush-cushioned bench before my vanity, curling one leg beneath me while I lifted the other to paint my toenails, the lace pressing tightly against my pussy so nothing was left to the imagination. My phone was propped up so that I could view any messages or requests that came in while I painted my nails with the black matte polish.

"I'm so incredibly ready for this cold chill to take a hike," I groused to the camera. "Is it too much to ask for warmth and sunshine so that I can lay naked beneath the sky?"

One of my regulars piped in, making me smile.

@2Hot2Handle: Nothing lasts forever, sweet girl, but if warmer weather is what you want, I'd love to take you somewhere where clothing is 100% optional and you'd never be cold again.

“I mean, I love that clothes are optional but I think if I stayed naked all the time, I’d resemble a lobster with my skin tone. I’d have to buy stocks in sunscreen,” I giggled, finishing up with the polish and grabbing some lotion to smooth into my raised leg. “This skin is simply too delicate for the endless sun.”

The scent of cherry blossoms filled my nose, the silky texture feeling like heaven as I rubbed it into my skin. I switched legs, making sure that I kept them spread open while I resumed painting my nails.

@HockeyDaddy34: Rain, snow, sun, that pretty skin would look so damn good covered in my cum.

@King_Cock: Show us those pretty titties, NerdyGRL. We wanna see those cute little nipples you keep teasing us with.

Lifting a hand to my throat, I teased my fingers over my collarbone and the little strap that sat there. “Maybe just a peek?” I let the strap slip off my shoulder, the lacy cup dropping from my breast so a dusty pink nipple popped free. I circled the hardened tip, releasing a breathy sigh at the way my fingers tickled lightly over my sensitive flesh.

It felt good, my fingers teasing over my nipples, the curve of my breast, but it wasn’t enough to get my blood firing. Not nearly enough. My fingers weren’t rough enough, calloused enough to set the sparks on fire. My hands weren’t big enough to cup my tit in my palm, conforming my shape while heat

arrowed to my core. I didn't want the soft touches of my own hands, I wanted his touch and his alone.

My phone pinged another notification, signaling a new message hitting my inbox. I arched a brow when I saw that it was from HockeyDaddy34 and tapped it open, curious to see what he had to say when I could see he was still viewing my Live.

HockeyDaddy34: You have no fucking idea how hot I find it that all these assholes will never know how sexy you sound calling their names. Go ahead and tease them, Len, but you ever let one of these motherfuckers touch what's mine, and I'll shove one of my sticks so far up their asses that they'll wish they'd never jerked off over NerdyGRL.

My eyes widened in shock at the words I'd just read.

HockeyDaddy34 was Callum?

I thought back to all the times that he'd engaged with me on CamGirls and felt a flash of irritation sweep through me. Yeah, he'd made me feel more comfortable than any of the other strangers messaging me, but I guess that made sense since it hadn't been some stranger sending me dirty messages. The flirtation that appealed to my inner geek hadn't been a stroke of luck, he'd known exactly how to get to me. What to say to get my attention.

It had always been Callum.

I couldn't decide if I was mad at him for playing me or if his sneaky behavior turned me on. If I had to pick a lane, given

that my pulse was thrumming and every single nerve in my body seemed to have been hit with a live wire, I'd say turned on was the one I'd be riding.

My hand skimmed down my body, slipping beneath my panties as I thought about how many times it had been thoughts of Callum watching me while I made myself come. How many times had it been thoughts of him stroking his hard cock that had sent me over the edge. I'd been fantasizing about him since before we'd even been a thing. My only regret was that he hadn't told me sooner so that I could capitalize on every single one of those fantasies.

I'd stopped paying attention to what was happening on the Live, my sole focus on the way that my arousal was coating my fingers, the pleasure that was cresting as I circled my clit with frantic motions. I just had to close my eyes and I could see Callum braced over me, his fingers moving in sync with mine, mutually working together with one goal in mind.

"Oh god," I moaned, my breath panting out as my orgasm began to pulse through me.

My phone pinged again and I bit my lip to stop from grinning. Slipping my hand out from under my panties, I tapped on the new message.

HockeyDaddy34: You are in so much trouble, baby. Core thinks that the boner I'm sporting is for him.

I smiled slowly, still trembling as I came down off my high, my fingers flying across the keys with a response.

NerdyGRL19: You owe me, Sinclair, for every single time I got off while imagining it was you. Just think, if you'd said something sooner, I wouldn't have had to imagine.

I waited a beat after hitting send. Giving him a chance to answer before I turned my attention back to the camera I had set up and giving my audience a satisfied smile.

“Thanks for hanging out with me while I got ready for the night,” I wiggled my fingers in a playful wave. “I'd love for it to be longer, but if I don't hurry my ass up, I'm not going to be able to kiss my tattooed hottie good luck.”



I felt like my heart was about to burst right out of my chest, the energy in the stands explosive and chaotic. I couldn't take my eyes off Callum in his black and gold jersey. The intensity of his focus was terrifying and it made me wonder if there would ever be anything that could fill that place inside him where hockey lived.

Marcus and I sat just behind the players' box, three unclaimed seats to my left. Since every other seat was occupied in the arena, I knew that they wouldn't stay empty for long, and I had a pretty good idea who would be claiming them. It didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that Callum had plunked us right in the middle of the team's family seats.

I'd already met Cormac's dad, who was so stupidly good-looking I was shocked that he was single, and his younger brother, who could have passed as Cormac's twin. Noah's

parents were behind us, screaming their lungs out with every pass, hit, and everything in between. Haley sat just in front of me, huge noise-canceling ear muffs on Liam, who was busily chewing on the foam finger his grandfather had given him to play with.

My stomach was a ball of nerves about meeting Callum's family since he'd mentioned last night that they would be here.

The buzzer went off, scaring the shit out of me like it usually did, ending the first period...neither team with a goal on the board. Both teams hustled off the ice, disappearing down the tunnel toward their designated locker room for their coaches to regroup and strategize.

Callum and Cormac were the last two players to leave the ice, their heads bent together in conversation as they skated over.

God, he was a fine-looking specimen of a male.

I drank in the sight of him, all the way from his dark hair that he refused to cut and curled damply at the nape of his neck, down to the black skates that were as much a part of him as the stormy blue-grey of his eyes. His helmet dangled from one gloved hand, his taped stick in the other. Cormac said something to him and Callum's head snapped forward, his eyes scanning the seats before locking with mine.

The slow smile he gave me made all the knots of tension in my stomach unravel, warmth spreading through my veins. He pushed forward, leaving Cormac behind. The second that he

was off the ice and in the players' tunnel, he hopped up onto the rail, gesturing me forward with a crook of his finger.

I stood, handing Marcus my beer, and went to him. He grabbed the front of my jersey, fisting it in his gloved hand and yanking me forward so quickly that had the railing not been there I probably would have sent us both tumbling to the ground. His lips crashed down on mine, kissing me hard and fast. I'd barely had time to respond when he let go, grinning at the dazed look he'd put on my face.

"You look so fucking sexy wearing my name," he murmured against my lips. "I can't wait to have you on your knees taking my cock down your throat wearing nothing but that fucking jersey."

I gasped, pulling away from him and shooting a look around us, making sure that there weren't any innocent little ears around to hear his dirty mouth. Satisfied that we weren't going to scar any young kids or initiate a sex-ed conversation, I leaned back in and nipped at his ear.

"Is that how you're going to start paying off your debt to me?" I asked in a whisper. "Because win this game, baby, and I'll consider letting you mark me *any* way you want."

He dropped back down to the ground with a chuckle. He glanced over my shoulder, giving a nod and a little salute with his gloved hand to whoever he found there. I watched him disappear around the corner and then turned to go back to my seat, only to stop dead in my tracks as my gaze landed on the grinning couple before me.

“You must be Lenny.” The older woman stepped around her husband, wrapping me in a hug only to let me go and grin. She was a beautiful woman, tiny compared to the man she stood next to. Her light brown hair was cut short in a face-framing bob and her smiling eyes were the same blue as her son’s. “Cal has told us so much about you. I’m Jessica, and this is Malcolm.”

I’d never had a real relationship with my father so I was pleasantly surprised when Malcolm Sinclair pulled me into a welcoming hug. He wasn’t as tall or as solid as Callum, but there was no denying that the older Sinclair was a perfect example of what the younger would look like in the future.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you both,” I told them honestly once Malcolm had let me go. They took their seats, Jessica taking the one next to me. I introduced them both to Marcus, mentioning that Callum had been disappointed that his sister Madison hadn’t been able to make the game.

“That’s actually why we were late getting here,” his dad grinned. “Maddie flew in to surprise Cal but her flight was delayed.”

“She’s grabbing snacks,” Jessica confided when I looked around for the missing sibling. “Maddie can’t sit through a game without them.”

“That’s only because I turn into a nervous wreck watching. I have to have something to do with my hands,” a younger version of Jessica told her mother with a bite as she moved past us to get to the last remaining seats. “Hi, you must be the

girlfriend that likes to poison him with dog shit coffee.” She juggled a bag of popcorn, candy, and a drink until she could extend a hand in my direction.

I grinned and took her offered hand. “And you must be the little sister who has a thing for California surfer dudes that treat you like dog shit.”

She tossed her head back, sending long sun-streaked brown curls bouncing and laughed. “Oh, I think I’m going to like you!”

I grinned wickedly at her. “Tell me all Callum’s secrets, little sister!”

Jessica rolled her eyes and stood, motioning for Maddie to switch spots with her. “I am not even going to try and stop this from happening,” she sighed. “Maybe Lenny can convince you to move back home so you’re not all the way across the country.”

Before they had managed to settle back into their seats, the team exploded from the tunnel and onto the ice. The crowd went wild, cheering and screaming their love and support. Callum stopped for just a moment, a huge grin splitting his face when he found his sister next to me.

Maddie leaned into my side, mischief dancing in her grey eyes. “Is it just me, or is there an insane amount of gorgeously sexy men on the ice right now?”

I snorted out a laugh because I thought the same damn thing every single time I came to a game. I may have been biased in

thinking that Callum was the sexiest thing to ever don a pair of skates, but the others definitely gave him some stiff competition.

I mean, if Callum ever suggested getting down and dirty with Cormac, I wouldn't say no.

“Nope.” I popped the *p* in amusement. “I’ve often wondered if there isn’t some kind of pre-requisite that they all had to meet, because they’re all so stupidly good-looking.”

She stilled beside me, her hand frozen halfway to her mouth, the popcorn she held in her fingers forgotten as her eyes locked on one of the players. I followed her line of sight, landing on Adam talking heatedly to one of the other players.

“That’s Adam, single, and one of the nicest guys on the team,” I teasingly taunted her. “Way nicer than any California douchebag, that’s for sure.”

She hummed in response, barely acknowledging that I’d spoken and I gave a second to wonder whether it might be easier than the Sinclair’s thought to get Maddie to move back home. From the bitching that Callum had done regarding his sister’s love life out in California, getting attached to a man like Adam Friberg would be the best thing for her.

Maybe, when they won tonight- because there was no other ending that could play out for Boston- she’d find out for herself just what a catch he was.

Turning my attention back to the ice, I gave Callum a small wave, blowing him a kiss when he winked as he passed. He

deserved a win tonight. To end it all in the playoffs. To hold up that big ass cup as he hung up his skates. He'd have no regrets. Nothing to look back on years down the road and wonder what he could have done differently, what if he had played the game differently.

I'd never been much of a girl for praying, but right now, my knee bouncing from all the nervous energy racing through my system, I prayed to the Hockey Gods for a win.

Twenty-Four



CAL

WE WERE TIED UP with three goals each with only five minutes left in the third period. Both teams had a player sitting in the sin bin, and Adam was getting doctored up after taking a right hook in the face from one of Vegas's defensemen.

I poured water over my face before downing enough to satisfy my thirst. I was exhausted, my muscles aching as I waited for the line change. It was do-or-die time. Every single man on the ice was playing to win, killing it every second on the ice, because we knew that whoever took the win tonight would be heading into the playoffs.

And the other would be done for the season.

I hooked a leg over the boards, readying to jump out onto the ice for what could be the last time if we didn't pull out another goal. Cormac was on fire, keeping that damn puck out of our net as though his life depended on it. The defensive line was solid, keeping Vegas from advancing while our offensive line was pushing harder, *faster*.

All we needed was one more goal...and to keep Vegas from ever getting close enough to sink their own.

My eyes landed on Lenny as I took to the ice, a calm settling over me as everything snapped into place and I gave my all to the ice, to the game. She looked good sitting next to my family, like she belonged right there with them and I wanted to prove to my family that all the sacrifices over the years had been worth it.

Shoving thoughts of Lenny and just how right she felt, I focused on getting in front of the puck, on keeping it away from our end. I didn't see the hit coming until it was too fucking late.

My body slammed into the boards, my bad knee twisting in a way that had me dropping to the ground in a heap of excruciating pain. My vision blurred and my stomach rolled, my eyes squeezing shut to fight it off. I distantly heard the ref call the penalty, heard the angry voices of my teammates, the reassuring voices of my coaches, but none of their words penetrated the haze of pain.

I knew without a fucking doubt that I wasn't getting off this ice without help.

I'd be lucky if that hit hadn't undone every surgery, every second of PT, all of the rehab that I'd spent on this fucking knee. White hot agony lanced through muscles and tendons, my teeth grinding down to dust as I tried to shove the pain down. I tried to straighten my leg, to ease the pain and tension

in some way, only to release a pained groan that echoed across the ice.

“Sinclair.” I opened my eyes at the sound of Coach Cooper’s voice.

“Coach-” I groaned, “I think I done fucked up, Coach.”

“Let’s let the doctor determine that, shall we?”

I could see it in his face, the disappointment, the sadness, the devastation in his brown eyes. He knew as well as I did, that I was done. Once again, I’d been taken out before the end of the season, only this time, there wouldn’t be a return. He’d warned me over and over again about the risk I was taking and I had to be the stubborn jackass and push back. I had thought I knew what I was doing, and I couldn’t do anything but accept my fate.

“Yeah.” I pushed up until I was sitting, tugging my helmet off my head and shoving my wet hair out of my face. Panic flared to life in my belly when I tried to adjust my position once more and pain exploded through me, so intense that I had to physically swallow down the urge to vomit, the anger and fear that I’d battled for the entire season a distant memory.

“Let’s get you off the ice and see how bad it is,” Coach suggested in a calm voice, placing a big hand on my shoulder.

“Fucking hell, I’m not getting carried out of here like last time,” I swore, memories of the last time I’d gotten laid out playing out in my mind. I hadn’t walked off the ice on my own that game and my parents had feared the worst. I couldn’t do

that to them again, and I definitely could freak Lenny out like that. “Help get me up. My goddamned family is here, I don’t want them freaking the fuck out thinking the worst.”

Coach nodded, motioning Noah over, and between the two of them, they pulled me to my feet. Bracing myself against them, I let them drag my broken ass off the ice, applause and cheers doing little to lighten my spirits and following me down the tunnel to the tiny little room where good ol’ Doctor Harper could press, poke, and prod the damaged joint to his heart’s content.



“I’m his goddamned mother, I don’t care if no one is allowed in!”

I grinned loopily when Doctor Harper opened the door to leave. He glanced back at me, arching a brow in a silent query if I wanted the company.

He’d given me a shot for the pain, wrapped it for stability, and told me to use the damn crutches until I could see the specialist. I was to ice it, heat it, rinse, and repeat until the swelling had subsided or until told otherwise. Harper had done all he could, the rest was up to me.

Now, I just wanted to get the hell home.

“Might as well let her in, Doc. She’ll raise hell until she gets her way.” I scooted farther up in the exam chair, reaching for the crutches he’d brought in for me.

He nodded, giving me a stern look. “Remember what I told you, Cal. You’re damn lucky that you can even move that leg.”

I shot him a cocky salute. “Ice. Heat. No weight. Stay on top of the pain. Got it.”

“You played good, Cal.”

I waved him off, the platitudes doing nothing but fueling the grief I’d yet to recognize. I didn’t want to think about it. Sure, I’d been heading out the door but I had been offered an assistant coaching position on Boston’s farm team, a role that would have let me do what I loved while taking away the risk. I hadn’t expected a coaching position to be offered when Coach had called me into his office to talk about my future, and after giving me a couple of weeks to think about it, I’d readily agreed. Coach had told me that he was working on something but I hadn’t expected a coaching position. I’d figured it was going to be some half-assed pencil-pushing job that would bore me stupid inside of a second.

Now...until I talked to the specialist, I wasn’t sure that I’d ever step foot out on the ice again. In any capacity.

The door flew open again, my mother barreling in with concern etched in her features. Her eyes filled with tears, her arms wrapping around me before I could reassure her that I was okay. I raised a hand to her back, patting her awkwardly while she cried out her emotions.

My gaze locked on Lenny and my sister standing in the doorway, my father just behind them talking to Doc, nodding in agreement with whatever he was being told.

“I’m not going to need a shower after you get finished crying,” I teased my mother gently. I held out a hand to Lenny, wanting her close, needing her touch. “You didn’t stay and finish watching the game.”

Lenny smiled and rolled her eyes, taking up a spot on the other side of the chair. “Yeah, ‘cause we care about the fate of that stupid puck when you were tossed into the boards like a rag doll.” Her hand found mine, lacing our fingers together and squeezing tight.

The weight that had settled on my shoulders and chest eased with her touch, making it easier to breathe. She reached out with her free hand and pushed my damp hair off my brow, her touch gentle as her emerald eyes softened on me, a hint of a smile on her glossy lips.

“How bad is it?” she asked quietly.

My mom finally let me go, pulling back so that she could look me over. When she was satisfied that I was- for the most part- in one piece, she stepped back to stand with Maddie, the two of them wrapping an arm in support over each other’s shoulders. My dad finally came into the room, studying me as though he could X-Ray my injury and determine how accurate Doctor Harper was in his assessment.

“I can bend it and straighten it, but I won’t know the full extent until I see the specialist tomorrow.” I lifted Lenny’s hand and pressed a kiss to the back of it.

I heard her phone ping with a series of notifications and watched her pull her phone from her back pocket. She swiped

it open, giving me an amused look when I refused to let her hand go.

“Congratulations, you’re going to the playoffs,” Lenny told me with a huge smile, turning the phone so I could see the texts from Marcus.

Marcus: They won in overtime. 4-3, baby.

Marcus: Heading to the playoffs!

I dropped my head back in relief because I’d been worried I’d fucked up our chances. I had some fucked up idea that taking that hit had tanked the morale of my team and Vegas had used it to their advantage and won. That they had pulled out a win made it all worth it, even if I couldn’t be there to see it happen.

“They’ll be going to playoffs, I’m done,” I told her.

“You’re hilarious if you think you won’t be right there with your team.” She dropped her head down, resting her forehead against mine. “I don’t care if you’re on the ice, on the bench, or in the fucking locker room, you’re going to be right there with your team...and you’re taking me with you because I want to be there when you hold up that cup.”

“What about the café?” I posed the question, heart thumping heavily as I realized just how much I wanted her by my side. She’d never come on the road with me before so I knew that this meant something to her.

“Don’t know, don’t care. I’m sure I can talk Marcus into picking up my shifts since he’s one hundred percent *Team*

Sinclair. He's been rooting for you since you called me a bimbo, it's the least he can do," she teased.

I heard my family choke back their laughter and glanced over Lenny's shoulder at where they waited. Maddie had a hand pressed to her mouth, her grey eyes sparkling with mirth, giving a valiant effort at keeping her amusement under wraps.

"You seriously called her a bimbo?" Maddie giggled.

"I could have sworn I taught you better than that," my mother scolded, the smile she wore completely at odds with her words.

"She started it," I laughed, pulling Lenny back down to press a kiss to her full lips. "Never said I was the smartest guy out there, but at least I still got the girl."

"If you say so," she murmured softly against my mouth. "You might not be the smartest guy out there, but you're still the one who makes me smile, makes me laugh, makes me so fucking happy all the damn time, so I wouldn't change you one bit."

I crushed her lips against mine once more, needing to show her just how much I loved her, needed her. I had no clue how the future was going to play out but that was okay.

It didn't matter if I never laced up my skates or picked up a stick to shoot a puck again because as long as I kept her laughing, kept her smiling, I'd be good.

I'd played the game, made some real stupid mistakes, but I'd still managed to pull out the best kind of win. I was taking my

shot with her, playing the game of life, side by side, by our rules, until time ran out.

Even if she made me drink the most god-awful coffee concoctions for the rest of my days, Lenny was my forever nerdy girl.



LENNY ~ 2 months later

“**W**HAT THE HELL IS this?” I demanded, my eyes locked on the small chalkboard that sat next to the cash register. I shrugged out of my coat, hanging it up on one of the hooks with my purse, extremely distracted by the new sign.

“What’s what?” Marcus didn’t even bother looking up from the new espresso machine he was trying to figure out.

“What exactly is the Sinclair? And why are we promoting it?” I asked. I knew he was bullshitting me, after all, it was his writing, his art on the board.

“Oh, that! It was all Cal’s idea,” he laughed, pointing a screwdriver toward the front. “Ask him.”

I took one last look at the sign, fighting to keep a straight face. The little hockey player holding a coffee cup on the end of his stick was a nice added touch, a little inside joke for those that knew our story.

Lifting the carafe, I wound my way through the tables, studying the man in question as I moved toward him. He was fully engrossed in the smutty romance novel he'd stolen away from me this morning, telling me how he was fully invested in finding out if the girl managed to convince the big goalie to join her harem of hockey players. He had his bad leg propped up on one of the cafe's chairs, the long sleeves of his white Henley pushed up to show off his strong, tattooed forearms, and those talented, inked-up fingers held up the thick book easily as he consumed the pages.

Boston had won the playoffs, taking home the Stanley Cup in a nail-biting series against Seattle. Callum had had a moment of bitterness and resentment that he hadn't been out there on the ice with his team, but I'd helped pull him out of his funk that night in our hotel room. His knee was healing, but he'd finally accepted that he'd never have the full range of motion he once had and that the brace would most likely be a permanent part of his wardrobe. Especially once he started coaching.

"Care to explain what's going on here?" I asked in a low voice, popping a hip and waiting for him to acknowledge my presence.

Callum lifted his head from the book, those damned black-framed glasses making my pussy throb. He just looked so fucking good in them, the way they perfectly amplified the blues and greys in his eyes. Too bad he hated wearing them, even when he knew how much they turned me on because I would love to be his naughty student. A slow smile crept

across his face as though he knew just where my imagination had gone, his tongue coming out to wet his lips drawing my attention to that sinful mouth and I bit down on my own lip to keep from whimpering. I knew just what that mouth was capable of, how talented he was with that tongue.

Get it together girl, he already made breakfast of your orgasms this morning. You can at least try to keep your panties dry while at work.

“I’d rather you tell me what naughty thoughts are going on in that beautiful head of yours,” he teased, taking the coffee carafe from my hand and setting it on the table. He pulled me down onto his lap, nuzzling into my neck with a whispered groan. “Are you thinking about the other night when I helped you close up? How I made you ride my cock ‘til you came all over me right here in this chair? Because I sure as fuck am.”

I wiggled in his lap at his words, feeling his hardening cock, thick beneath his jeans against my ass. “I wasn’t but now I am, dammit.”

He hummed against my neck, nipping gently at my ear, his tongue hot against my neck as he licked a path over the sensitive cord of muscle there. “I must not have fucked you hard enough then if you can walk in here and look at this spot and not remember how it felt having me buried inside your sweet cunt.”

“Callum,” I groaned, my head falling back as he continued his sensual exploration. “I just wanted to know what the hell that is.” I waved my hand in the direction of our latest

promotional sign. “Not have my panties turned into an uninhabitable wetland.”

His laughter was muffled against my skin, but I felt it all the way to my bones. Glancing over at Marcus, I caught him watching us with a knowing smirk on his face, like he knew exactly what Callum was doing to me, saying to me. Inhaling heavily, I shoved out of his arms and stood, needing to put some distance between us or I’d never be able to get to work.

“Are you going to tell me what a Sinclair is?” I demanded, throwing up a hand when he reached for me again.

“I would have thought it was self-explanatory,” Callum grinned. “I thought The Coffee Drop needed a drink named after me.”

“And why is that?”

He slowly rose to his feet, adjusting his stance to favor his bad leg and wrapping his arms around me. I squirmed against him, planting my hands against his solid chest to push against him but he held strong.

“Well,” he drawled out against my hair. “The Coffee Drop has this amazingly sexy little barista that stole my fucking heart while nearly killing me with one wrong order after another. It was the least that this place could do to make it up to me.”

I choked out a laugh, unable to help myself because of how he’d just summed up the start of our relationship. “But what is it?” I whispered softly.

Callum shrugged, kissing the top of my head. “I figured if one wrong order can have such drastic, life-changing results for me, who’s to say it can’t happen again? It’s whatever the Coffee Gods decide it to be.”

“Are you calling me a coffee god, Callum?” I teased, content to never move again. Forget about working, life, responsibilities.

“Nah,” he said after a long minute. “I wouldn’t call you a coffee god, Len, but I would call you my forever girl.”

“I’m good with that,” I sighed happily, all but melting into his hard body at his words. Closing my eyes, I breathed in the scent of winter and man, and let the warm fuzzies of being his consume me.

And to think, our love story all started with the wrong order and some spilled milk.

The saying it takes a village to raise a child is just as true for authors too. I wouldn't have been able to do this without my village.

For a bit, I didn't think that this story was going to get written. I lost my spark while dealing with the health issues of my son and wasn't sure if I was ever going to get it back. I need you all to understand that my kids, my family are my whole world, and without them, I'd be a very different person. I want them to always know that I pushed myself to write, to be better, even when everything inside of me wanted to snuggle down and pretend that adulting wasn't required. I want my son to know that he's my hero. That his strength is out of this world and that I love how he hasn't let any of the shit he's had to go through dim his light. I want my daughter to know that I love how smart and creative she is. Even when she's driving me nuts because of the chaos she breathes, I love seeing everything that she creates. I want my hubby to know

how much I love and appreciate him for the sacrifice he makes every day because without it, I wouldn't be able to do this.

I want my besties to know how much I appreciate all their support. Faune, Yumi, Erin, Nikki. Each one of you plays such a different and unique part in my life and yet I wouldn't have it any other way. Faune, you've stuck with me for longer than I can remember. You've become not just my best friend, but also a sister to me. Every single important event in my life... from the birth of my children to putting a ring on my finger... you've been my rock, my person. I want each one of you ladies to know just how important you all are to me. Thank you for being my people.

To the women in my Romance Author Club Group Chat... ladies, you are all some of my favorite humans that I've never met but love to consider you friends. Your advice on all things, the support and accountability that you provide has been much needed and much appreciated. Thank you for letting me jump on this crazy train with you all. I've learned so much from each of you and I can't wait to see everything that you guys put out. You ladies are an amazing group of authors and I couldn't be more proud of you.

And then we have all the readers that have taken a chance and picked up my book. To you I say, thank you a million times over. Without you, none of this would be possible!

Also by Riley S. Baron

Dark Contemporary Romance

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