

DEVASTATE ME



Anne



Storm

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Devastate Me

Savage Vipers MC #2



Anne Storm

Copyright

Moonlit Dreams Publications



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Dedication

To the readers who are brave enough to share their requests with authors, and patient enough while we attempt to bring it all to life!



Devastate Me started out as a fan-requested “cheater” romance.

If this trope in romance is NOT for you, then you should go no further.

For Ayla S. because she asked!

And also for Ashleigh H. and Lynn S.

They brainstormed ideas that looked like a lot of fun to write!

This is a combined version of their “unicorn” book ideas that contains cheating; a kinky, bad boy biker hero; a virginal, mousy, vanilla heroine who grows a backbone; and a happily ever after in spite of their rough beginnings.

I hope that my version of this story combined most of your wants in an enjoyable, entertaining way!



Anne Storm

Aka: Christine Michelle

Reader Content Warning

Book Specific Warning:

Tough subjects discussed in this book (first four listed are NOT detailed on page, but talked about): snuff, necrophilia, child predators, sexual assault, privacy violations with hidden video in bathrooms and bedrooms, and some aspects of human trafficking, violence, death, cheating, and explicit sexual scenes.

My books are not for the faint of heart.

They might contain °triggers and are not for “safe readers”. If you are a “safe reader” back away now and find something else!

DO NOT READ IT!



XO,

Anne Storm

°triggers may include: foul language, violence, cheating, sex between H and h, sex between H and others, h and others, and nudity described on the page. 😊

About the Book

Nova

I'm not even sure how I ended up working as a nanny for a biker and his wife. That's not true. I knew. It all started when we found out about my mother's years-long affair, and the fact that my father was not who we thought. The minute the DNA results came back, my father's side of the family cut me off and left me destitute like it was my fault my mother was a cheating liar. That meant, I needed to earn money for my next semester.

I didn't realize it also meant being immersed in a whole new world, with a different type of man than I'd ever been around. I knew he was bad for me – not just bad – the worst. He would be the worst kind of man for me and not just because he was a biker. As my mom said when she was found out – “The heart wants what the heart wants.” I should have remembered how sad she sounded when she said that.

Breakneck

The sweet little honey Kip hired to watch his kid caught my attention immediately. I could smell the innocence on her and all it did was paint a target on her I couldn't ignore.

I'd have her, own her, make her my one and only. She'd just have to come to terms with the fact that I'd never be hers in return. She could have the parts I was willing to give her, but not the whole. I should feel bad about that. That's what I've been told anyway.

I don't.

I live the way I want. Always have. Not about to change for anyone. Not. Even. Her.

Someone should have warned me that her innocence didn't mean she wasn't full of fire and brimstone. My little angel turned she-demon and it changed everything.

More Books

[Anne Storm](#)

Savage Vipers MC

Wait For Me · Devastate Me

Loved for the Holidays Series

Cupid Broke My Heart · Ghosted by Texas

~*~

[Christine Michelle](#)

Aces High MC – Dakotas

*Dancing with Danger · Whiskey Tango Foxtrot · The Restart
and the Remedy*

Aces High MC – Charleston

*The Other Princess · A Love So Hard · The Princess and the
Prospect · The Killing Ride · A Twist of Fate · Everlasting · A
Year and a Day · The Broken Beginning – Part One · The
Broken Beginning – Part Two*

Aces High MC – Tallahassee

Crushed

Aces High MC – Cedar Falls

*Redemption Weather · Proven · Smoke and the Flame ·
Redemption Duology Box Set*

S.H.E. MC

Angel Girl · JoJo · Keys

Dark Leopards MC (paranormal)

Ridden by Darkness · The B Team

T.I.E. Series

The Infinite Something · The Infinite Beat

Valhalla Rising

Revived

Standalone Books

The Groupie Journal

Letters to Lily

His Bittersweet Regret

TFO

The Fortunate Ones

Robeson Family Novels (standalones)

The Forgotten Wife

The Awakening Series

Birthrights · Revelations · Incarnations

~*~

[Christine M. Butler](#)

(these books are being transferred to the Christine Michelle name by the end of 2023, as this pen name is being retired)

The Ancients Series

Shadows of the Ancients · Falling into the White · Branches of the Willow · Bound by the Moon

Vukodlak Brew Series

Entwined · Enraged

Death Viewers

Breathless

Upper YA Titles

The Voodoo Follies

Catch a Falling Star



Chapter 1

Nova

~ May ~

“Your nasty, disease-riddled cunt couldn’t do one fucking thing right in our marriage?”

In the space of a minute, my entire conception of my father changed. He’d never been a man to curse, belittle, or even speak sharply to anyone. And yet, he stood, right in front of me, his cheeks red, hurling abuse at his own wife – my mother.

I turned my attention to Mom, whose shoulders were slumped inward, even as they heaved with her sobs. She wasn’t even trying to deny the accusations.

“I’m sorry, Jer. I always thought she was yours,” my mom managed to squeak out through her sobs.

My laundry bag, which was slung over my shoulder, seemed to have doubled in weight in an instant. I was long past having Mom do my laundry, but I didn’t want to share the community machines with the petty thieves in my dorm, so I always brought it home. A moment ago, I’d carried the bag effortlessly, but now it was like a giant boulder, weighing me down. Surely she wasn’t saying...

“But you knew there was a chance she wasn’t and never said a fucking word. You let me go on believing I had a daughter this whole fucking time when it was all a lie.”

It was true.

My knees buckled and the bag fell from my shoulder, its weight suddenly unbearable as the momentum of the bag, and maybe the moment, pulled me down along with it. My knees smacked on the marble floor, making a noise which echoed in my ears like a gunshot.

It was true.

The laundry bag hit the floor a moment later, making another sound which reverberated inside my skull.

“Oh God!” My voice came out in a ragged whisper as my eyes flitted to my father for reassurance that I hadn’t just heard him correctly. For a moment, everything seemed normal. His lips turned upward, and when our eyes met, I could see the love he’d always held for me. But then his eyes narrowed. His jaw clenched and lips pressed together in a hard line. He didn’t say it, but he didn’t have to: He wasn’t my father anymore.

I hugged my arms to my chest, fighting a sudden chill in the air.

“Clean your mess up here, then pack your shit, and get the fuck out of my home. You know what our prenup says. You will get nothing. Abso-fucking-lutely nothing.”

My father -no, Jeremy Williamson- glanced back toward me one more time, his fingers twitched by his side, as if he was fighting the urge to come comfort me. In a twisted way, he won the battle, even if doing so destroyed me instead of offering the comfort we both needed. Without another word or gesture in my direction, he turned and stormed off. The slam of the front door resonated through the echo-chamber like

space before the stagnant nothing that was left behind finally forced me to move.

As I lifted myself to my feet—a difficult task with my head spinning— I tried to make sense of what had just happened. If Jeremy wasn't my father, then who was? If I ever learned his name, if I ever met him, could he possibly compete with the lifetime of memories running through my mind on a loop? Jeremy watching as I opened presents on Christmas morning. Jeremy telling me how proud he was when I made the honor roll. Jeremy bringing me ice cream after I managed to punch my self-defense instructor where it counted most, because I felt bad about it afterward.

How could anyone else ever be a dad after that?

I turned to my mother and asked the only question I could think of. “What did you do?”

“Nova, darling,” she said while offering nothing more than an emotionless stare. Her fake sobs had stopped about the same time the front door slammed shut. My mother was ever the trophy wife, who always exhibited whatever emotion was necessary in a moment. I'd known that for years. But even knowing that, I would never have suspected she'd keep this from me.

“What did you do? If that man is not my father, then who the hell is, and where has he been all my life?”

“Listen, we'll get this straightened out, I promise.”

“What exactly are we straightening out? Is my last name even supposed to be Williamson? If not, what is it? Mom!”

Her name came out more like a tragic whimper than the angry growl I really wanted to use. I knew better though. My mother didn't respond to loud, angry, or incensed. She was the only person allowed to show those emotions, and only if the dramatic effect would garner her the response she was looking for from her intended target. Psychology class had given me the words to define my mother, to identify her genus and species: She was a classic narcissist. A sociopath. I wasn't sure true emotions were in the realm of possibility for her.

“What have you done to us? To him? To me?”

“Oh, stop the dramatics, Nova. It's not that big of a deal.” She swiped away the tears now that no one important was around to see them. Obviously, she didn't care if I knew they were fake.

“Not that big of a deal?” My mother didn't seem to notice the quiet in my voice, but that wasn't really a surprise. Reading the room had never been her specialty. “WHO IN THE HELL IS MY FATHER?”

She flinched away from me. That was a first. Then again, I had never screamed at her, or anyone else for that matter. My even-keeled temperament was supposed to have been inherited from my father, and maybe it was, just not the father I'd always thought it had come from. Her wide eyes stared into my enraged ones for a long time, and once she realized that fire of hatred she stoked that day wasn't going out anytime soon, she reluctantly answered me.

“Clark.” The name came out as no more than a whisper. For a moment, I thought perhaps the impossible was true. Did Mom actually regret what she'd done? Maybe it had been a

one-night stand that went wrong. Not great, but fixable. Maybe this was all still fixable...

“Did he know?”

“Of course, he knew.” She snapped at me, almost as if she had been trying to take a bite from my flesh and those words were her teeth. “I suspected your father couldn’t have children, since I’d been pregnant once before you came along, and it certainly hadn’t been Jeremy who’d gotten me that way. After a while, he wondered why I hadn’t managed to get pregnant again, so I stopped being as careful with...” She hesitated a moment before naming him again. “Clark.”

“You did this on purpose?”

“Of course not. I would never have done it, if I’d known for sure back then that he couldn’t have children. I certainly didn’t want any. Clark and I were normally careful, but there were a few times where things might have gotten out of hand.”

My stomach wanted to fall out of my body. She couldn’t even keep her own lies straight anymore. It wasn’t a mistake. If anything, *I* was the mistake... She hadn’t even wanted me. From the sounds of her first supposed admission, she had me to keep my father happy, and now she was telling me that she never wanted a child, and that I was an accident. Never in my life had I wanted to hit someone before, but my mom was pushing the limits of my sanity.

“You... you...”

“Y-you, you...” My mother mocked me with a fake stammer. “I fucked Clark because he was good in bed and your father was rarely around in those days. He was always at

the beck and call of his parents since they lorded their money and the company over him until his grandfather passed away. If you're looking for someone to point the finger at in all of this, you might want to shake it in the direction of your wretched grandparents."

I couldn't believe the way my mom was speaking to me about all of this, as if our lives hadn't just fallen completely apart. Her marriage had just imploded, which might not mean anything to her, but it had taken my whole life with it. Jeremy Williamson wasn't really my father. Which meant...

"They're not really my grandparents though, are they?"

Mom chuckled. "I'm sure they'll throw an ungodly fit when they find out." She sneered at their picture which hung on the wall. "Serves them right for being unbearable tyrants all these years."

"I wonder why they never liked you?" I questioned, though she didn't miss an ounce of the sarcasm.

"Your problem is that you grew up believing all their bullshit about remaining a good girl until marriage, and keeping your nose clean, so that you wouldn't mar your future husband's reputation." She rolled her eyes and proceeded to head up the stairs.

"I suggest you pack up anything that has any meaning. Jeremy was serious when he said he didn't want to see us when he got back."

"He said he didn't want to see *you!*" My voice was cold, just like Jeremy's had been.

Her quiet laughter rang out in an ominous tone before explaining her version of reality to me. “Keep telling yourself that he’ll still want to be your dad. Mark my words girl, he won’t. He’ll throw you out with the rest of the trash, and if he doesn’t, those pretentious nitwits he calls family will do it for him.”

~*~

Two weeks later

My mother hadn’t been wrong. After she and Clark took off to parts unknown and left me behind to suffer the fallout from their betrayals, their karma came calling for me. They hadn’t even offered to take me with them. I wouldn’t have gone if they had, but it stung to be left behind without so much as a backward glance from my biological parents.

I tried to go about life as normal and finish out my semester, but the dirty tissues that covered my desk and overflowed my trash can made it very clear how I spent my private moments.

I was thankful for the cozy little studio apartment Jeremy had insisted on putting me in after he walked me to my dorm last semester and saw my roommate being spit-roasted by two men from the football team. Not being in the dorms meant that no one had to see me cry tears over being left behind by my mother and her long-time lover while the man I’d always known as my dad ignored my calls and texts.

When I got up the courage to go see him at his office, I was told that he was out of the country on business. His secretary also informed me that he had no interest in a meeting when he returned. A meeting. That’s all my relationship boiled down to with the man who raised me from birth.

It left me concerned about my future. The rent on the apartment was paid up through the end of September, since he'd signed a year lease and paid in advance. It had been Jeremy's way of getting around the waitlist for the place, considering it opened midway through fall semester after a student dropped out.

Technically, I had a college trust fund. I hoped that it would continue to pay the bill for my tuition and books, but my belly was aflutter with nerves that it wouldn't be the case. Try as I might, I couldn't focus on the book in front of me. While good grades had always come easy, studying and learning from a book never had. It was why I was so adamant about never missing a day of school. I needed to be in person to hear the lectures and participate in labs, otherwise the material didn't sink in.

A rapid knocking on my door startled me. I slowly shuffled my way there, hoping against hope that this was not the knock that would end everything for me, all the while knowing that it most likely was. Another, more impatient, knock sounded before I heard a key turning the lock.

"What in the world?" I pulled my phone out to dial 911, but the service wasn't working. It had worked just fine that morning. I stuffed the phone into the back pocket of my jeans just as several strange men piled into the too-small space.

"Are you Nova Antares Anderson?"

I shook my head. "No. My name is Nova Antares Williamson."

"Either way, you're being evicted."

“You can’t do that. My apartment is paid for until September.”

“Correction, Jeremey Williamson’s apartment is paid for until September and he doesn’t want you squatting in his place any longer.” The man reached into his coat and pulled out a stack of papers that were held together with a paperclip before tossing them at me.

I caught the papers, and after glancing down at them, realized it was the lease for my apartment.

“Check the last page – see who signed for this place,” the man instructed.

I already knew what I’d find there – Jeremy had signed the lease, not me. My heart sank. This was really happening.

“Let me talk to him. He’s still my father. He can’t just-” Even as I said it, I knew it wasn’t true, something the goon cut me off to reiterate.

“You’re over eighteen. He can do whatever he wants. And what he wants is you, out.” He made an “out the door” gesture with his hand.

Jeremy might as well have hit me with a train. I had no energy to argue. No energy to do anything. “Let me get my stuff.”

“Just your clothes. That’s all you’re allowed to take. The rest belongs to him.”

“I need my books and laptop to finish out the semester.” I grabbed my laptop and clutched it to my chest. “I’ll return it as soon as school is done. I have two papers on there that need to

be printed. If I have to re-write them while I'm homeless, I might as well quit school now and-"

The man shook his head. "Listen kid, I understand that life ain't fair. But facts are facts. Jeremy Williamson, who is not your dad, doesn't want you to have them anymore. From what he told me, the man who really is your daddy is loaded. Get him to help you out."

He tossed a couple t-shirts at me and the rattiest looking jeans he could get his hands on. "There. I've been fair and gave you some clothes. That laptop or those books leave this room, I have orders to call the police."

"What about underwear and..." I started to ask but the men just laughed.

"If she's anything like her mother, she won't need that shit anyway," one of them offered snidely.

"Please," I begged again.

"Be glad that piece of shit Toyota that's parked out front was put into your name, otherwise we'd be taking that too." I didn't bother to tell them that Clark, the man now known to be my biological father, who I had referred to as "Uncle Clark" my whole life, had given that to me for my sixteenth birthday when Jeremy said that I wasn't allowed to have a car until I went to college.

"Please, don't do this," I begged again.

"Kid, it's already done. You're just too stupid to get gone. You should have hauled ass out of town with your mother."

"Why would I do that? She ruined my life!" I argued.

The man shrugged indifferently as if none of it mattered at all. To him, I supposed it didn't. Putting the laptop down, I grabbed the bag he'd thrown at me and turned to leave, knowing that I had nothing.

Jeremy hadn't allowed me to work because of appearances. No child of his would hold a job while going to school. It was unbecoming, and made it look as though he couldn't provide for his family. The car Uncle Clark – my biological father – had given me at sixteen was embarrassment enough when I failed to refuse the gift.

I was so thankful that it had been the one thing I put my foot down about in my life. I'd probably be living out of my car until I could figure out how to do simple things like pay for food, a place to live, and some fresh underwear to change into. I cried harder as my numb body carried me down the steps and out the door of the building to the one thing I owned that couldn't be taken from me.

How was I going to stay in school when I couldn't even afford to feed myself? That thought made me head straight to the bursar's office, where I found out that my meal card was good for one more week. No, my tuition had not been paid for the summer semester as it was meant to be. I had until August fourteenth to come up with the \$5,624.00 that I'd need to pay for the next semester's tuition. Thankfully, I had chosen to stay close to home and attend a state university. Still, that left me two and a half months to earn the money I'd need. Plus, I still had to find a place to live, a job, and food.

I sat in my car outside the bursar's office and cried until campus security came by and threatened to write me a ticket or

have me towed. I truly couldn't catch a break.



Chapter 2

Breakneck

~September~

I glanced up to see Kip walking my way and immediately wished I'd never made eye contact. It was obvious by the determined look on his face that he needed something from me. One glance down at my dick and the mouth that engulfed it, should have been enough of an indicator that he shouldn't approach me. Kip gave zero fucks about me getting off before asking his favor.

“Suck harder, honey. You have to work for my cum.”

Charlotte, who we called Lotta because she took a lotta cock, made glugging noises as I stuffed my prick further down her throat. She wasn't the greatest cocksucker in the clubhouse, but the lack of a gag reflex worked in her favor.

“Hey man, I need you.”

I turned my eyes back up toward Kip's. “I'm in the middle of auditioning my second for the night,” I explained coolly while guiding Lotta's head, so my shaft was fully immersed in her mouth and each thrust sent my length down her throat. She was slobbering, which wasn't necessarily a bad thing, but it was leaving a massive wet spot on the crotch of my jeans.

“Ashlynn can't get away from whatever the fuck she's doing. Can you give us a lift back to the house? The new

babysitter is supposed to meet us there at noon and I can't lose her. No-fucking-body wants to babysit for a biker in this town."

"Why don't you use one of the old ladies?" I asked my brother. Fuck if I cared what happened with his nanny problem. I had a date with a hot piece in my room and had made a detour to the common room to see if one of the club girls was around who could pop in and be a decent second for what I had planned.

"There aren't any available when we need them, Viv is recovering from cancer, and..." His voice faded away mid-whine. At the same time, Lotta tried to tap out from the position I was holding her in. Since my cock was stuffed down her throat, I guessed she was having trouble breathing.

"Look, I just need a fucking ride, all right?"

"Why can't you get one of the club girls to watch your kid?"

He scoffed at me. "Are you serious? Ash would fucking gut me. You know they've given her a hard time since we married. That's why she barely comes here, even on family days. Besides, the only one I'd trust with my son is Scout, and you already know why that's an impossible ask for her and for Ash. Look, it will only take you a few minutes and then you can get Lotta to suck your cock again while whoever you have stashed in your room rides your fucking face."

I rolled my eyes at Kip, unwilling to tell him that it was Scout waiting in my room for me to grab another chick. His situation was exactly the reason I was never fucking settling down. That shit was nuts. There was always somewhere to be,

someone to check in with or answer to, and it wasn't even the person he really wanted to be with. Fuck that. What was the point in riding free when a ball and chain kept you from gunning the fucking throttle?

Still, I pulled out of Lotta's mouth because I felt sorry for my fucking club brother. "Let's roll then. I was about to double the pussy, double the fun. You owe me."

"Yeah, whatever. Get me there in under ten minutes and you can have my marker."

I raised a brow at that. A marker from a brother was no small thing. "Fuck, man! How important is this old broad you've got sitting with your kid?" My dick was soaked as I tried to put it away. "Give me your fucking shirt," I demanded of Lotta.

"My shirt?" She asked as the dim glint in her eyes dulled out even more. Swear to fuck, the girl was hit in the head at some point and lost a few too many brain cells.

"Jesus, fuck! Never mind." I snatched someone's left-over fast-food napkins off the coffee table and used them to wipe the bitch's slobber off my cock. Kip shook his head and chuckled. "Wettest fucking blowjob," I muttered which only made the bastard laugh harder as he ran down the hall and grabbed his kid from his dad, the club's president.

Kip smirked at me as he tucked his kid up in the car seat he hooked up in the back of my truck. My truck stayed parked at the clubhouse for anyone to use, in case they needed to haul shit, but I started to regret it when Kip strapped his kid in and then moved to jump on his bike.

“What the fuck man?”

“Ash dropped him off. I had the bike today. Just follow me.”

“Motherfucker!” I muttered under my breath. He made it sound like I would be driving both of them, suddenly I’m playing uber driver for a slobbering, squirming...

“What the fuck is that smell?” I yelled and turned narrowed eyes on the little brat in the back. “You can sit in it and marinate for your daddy. I ain’t touchin’ your shit, little man!”

It took me under six minutes to get to Kip’s house. I drove with the windows rolled down to help fumigate my truck. When I got there, an older model, silver Toyota Corolla sat in front of the house. The driver’s side door opened as I pulled up. Kip slipped past me to pull his bike in close to the garage.

As I applied the parking brake, a girl got out of the Corolla. The second our eyes met; she turtled the fuck up. Her head sunk back as her shoulders flung up, making her look like she was hiding away in a shell. Interesting.

I continued to watch her, and she began to rock back and forth while chewing on her thumbnail. *Fuck!* My dick grew hard at the thought of how uncomfortable I made her. Sure, that made me a special kind of sick prick. I didn’t take what wasn’t offered – ever! That wasn’t my style. Fuck if I didn’t like to break my toys sometimes and she looked the type of timid little mouse to be beautifully broken.

“Hey sweet thing, you gonna stand over there and hide all day or you gonna come say hello?” I called out to her.

The woman's eyes rounded in surprise as she finally managed to glance up long enough to get a good hard look at me. The way her pupils blew out, allowing the black to swallow all that light color, I knew she liked what she saw.

The sweet thing wore a piece of shit bra, too. It was fucking noticeable because her nipples were waging war on the flimsy device and flashing her high beams through the too-thin t-shirt that she'd pulled on top of it. It was only then that I realized what her shirt said. There was a roll of toilet paper with a sad face on it, front and center, but the words written above it were the kicker.

There are worse jobs!

I laughed as Kip finally made his way back over to us. "What's so funny?" He asked. In response, I pointed toward her chest, and he immediately jabbed his fist into my side. "Don't be a dick!"

"What? I'm laughing at her fuckin' shirt, asshole."

Kip looked at her shirt and started chuckling. The dick couldn't say he was sorry though. Not that I blamed him. I wouldn't have if the roles were reversed.

"Is one of you," she glanced down at her phone for a second, obviously looking for a name. "Kipling Martin?"

I chuckled as she spoke Kip's full name because he hated it. Must have been his loving wife who revealed the full thing.

"Hey, I'm Kip! Sorry for the wait. Ashlynn got held up at work, so I brought the baby with me. Hope that's okay."

She gave him a funny look. I realized why before Kip did. "Relax, the kid is in the back of my truck. Dirty little fucker

stinks to high heaven though.”

“My kid doesn’t fucking stink!” Kip’s growl let me know I was in for another punch. Unfortunately for him, I sidestepped before his hit could land. The bastard huffed before moving to open the back door of my truck, and then, to my delight, he got a load of the damage his kid had done.

“Holy shit!”

“Yeah, there’s nothing holy about that shit,” I muttered. If Kip heard my response, he didn’t act like it.

“How in the hell does that happen? You made my kid explode!”

“Fuck you, your kid did that all on his own,” I shouted back at the bastard. Kip’s potential nanny started to back away as her wary eyes took us in. I snickered at the gesture because she clearly didn’t know what the fuck to make of us.

“I’m not touching that!” Kip stated and turned to me with his arms crossed over his chest.

“I didn’t seed that thing. You need to deal with the mess you made. Get it out of my truck so I can get gone.”

Kip’s nose scrunched up and then the fucker gagged. He took another step closer and gagged again. I peeked inside to see why and lost it.

“What did you feed that kid? It’s every-damn-where. Why the fuck does it look like your kid got in a fight with a bottle of chunky mustard and lost?” I couldn’t even laugh at Kip because I was too busy gagging alongside him. His retching noises were making it worse.

“Oh shit!” I moved quickly and made it to the gutter at the edge of the road before I lost my fucking lunch. Then I heard the softest little laugh that sounded like those damn chimes my grandmother used to hang on her porch. Kip’s fine-as-fuck babysitter was standing there grinning so widely that I could see all of her straight, white teeth, as her slender shoulders shook with mirth.

I realized then that the flimsy bra she had on was a fucking Godsend because damn, those tits of hers jiggled with the movement and made me hungry. I wanted to sink my mouth into all that plump, juicy, tit-flesh and leave my fucking mark. Fucking them would be next on the list and then I could leave a different kind of mark behind. She’d look good painted in me. I just knew it.

Those light bluish colored eyes of hers met mine again as her giggles subsided. “I’m sorry,” she apologized sweetly. “I’m guessing there was a blowout in there?” I nodded my head vigorously because that was a fucking understatement if I ever heard one.

“You could say that.”

She grinned and moved in closer, ignoring Kip who sounded like a bitch choking on cock for the first time, while trying to figure out how to get his kid out of my truck without contaminating himself. The woman handed me her bag. I glanced down at the hefty weight of it and realized it was a backpack, not a purse.

I didn’t think she looked quite young enough to be in high school, but I’d have to check with Kip and lock my fucking fantasies down if she wasn’t even of age yet. Jesus. Fuck me. I

did not need to feel like a Goddamn pervert. *Please, let her be of age!*

“I’ll need that after,” she declared as she climbed up onto the foot rails of my truck and leaned across the seat to unbuckle the little shit factory that Kip stashed in there.

“Damn! That ass!”

Kip’s laughter clued me in to the fact that I said that shit out loud, but I didn’t give a fuck either way. It was true. The little bitch had an ass that was almost as mouthwatering as her tits. You’d never know at first glance. She attempted to hide that banging body beneath baggy style clothes, another protective shell for her, no doubt.

“Tell me that this,” I wiggled the bookbag at Kip, “doesn’t mean she’s in high school.”

“College,” he corrected immediately while we watched the woman, who remained unfazed by the toxic situation as she attempted to rescue my truck from Kip’s spawn.

“Aww, sweet baby. Did you have an accident?” She hummed in a gentle voice to the kid while lifting him up from his seat, without getting shit on my truck. Good for her. Unfortunately, she wasn’t spared. The kid – shit and all – was tucked up on her t-shirt. Though, considering it had a picture of sad shit paper on it, maybe it was appropriate.

“Sweets, you’re getting shit all over your shirt.” I’d taken a few inadvertent steps backward, and thank fuck for that, because it kept the scent of Knoxville’s rotten ass from wafting toward me. Mad respect for her though because she

was smiling all angelic-like at the baby and ignoring the stench and mess.

“It’s okay. It all washes.” She cooed again, as if her words were for the baby when she was really answering me. Damn. There was just something about that. I could almost picture her holding our baby with another one blowing her tummy out and suddenly, a new fetish was born right before my perverted fucking eyes. I didn’t want to be tied down with responsibility, but the images...

“Simmer down, asshole. She’s my nanny and you’re not running her off by tryin’ to stick your cock in her. She’s not the type to be your second for the night, and wouldn’t put up with you going to get your dick wet elsewhere either.” The words were grumbled near my shoulder so she couldn’t hear them, but fuck, Kip should know warnings like that only fueled the desire. It was like he didn’t understand that waving the red flag was what made the bull charge. Fucking idiot.

Kip sighed. “Come on, I’ll unlock the door and show you where the bathroom is.” He glanced toward the side yard, and I knew what he was thinking immediately. I grinned as he suggested using the hose while the sexy-as-fuck shy girl in front of us scoffed at the idea.

“You can’t rinse the baby off with the garden hose. It’s... That’s... No. The bathroom will be fine.”

“But the mess,” Kip argued.

“Will get cleaned up. If you could get the car seat out of the truck, I’ll get that cleaned up too, once the baby goes down for a nap.” After the little mouse ordered the big, bad biker around, she took off like someone lit a fire under her ass.

“You heard the lady!” I pointed toward the backseat of my truck. “Don’t let a drop fall out either.”

“Fuck you!” Kip called back to me.

“Nuh-uh, man! I got two warm bodies waiting on me back at the clubhouse. One for my cock and one for the cock warmer’s face.” I bragged because Kip was supposedly too good to step out on his woman, who had apparently gone cold fish on him after spitting his kid out. Like I said before, fuck that loss of freedom.

As much as I wanted to stick around and see more of the shy girl – maybe scrub her down in the shower – I had things to do, women to fuck, and no more patience left to try to get sweet little Virgin Mary to come out of her shell. Maybe another day. The minute the car seat was out of my truck, I hauled ass back to the clubhouse. The windows stayed down the whole way to fumigate that fucker.



Chapter 3

Nova

“Sorry about the mess.”

“You really don’t have to keep apologizing to me,” I told the man. He was intimidating, and I wasn’t sure about being home alone with just him and a tiny little baby, but I really had no choice. This family was willing to pay me a whole lot of money to babysit their kid a few days a week and they didn’t mind working around my class schedule.

“I owe you bonus pay on top of my apologies for being late, my wife not being here to meet you, and then twice more for the shit-fest little man created.”

“Does that mean I got the job?” I asked, considering I’d only shown up for what was supposed to be an interview.

“There’s no way I’d let you out of here without sealing that deal,” he teased. I didn’t think he meant anything by it, but I backed up a step anyway and put some much-needed distance between the man and me.

“Listen, first thing we need to get straight is this: you are safe here. I won’t ever come on to you or whatever. That’s not my thing. I’m married.”

“Married people do awful things all the time,” I countered.

Kip nodded his head. “True enough, and despite the fact that you won’t trust my word, I don’t back out of my promises and marriage vows are just promises made legal.” He tipped his head toward the couch. “How about we take a seat and hash out the details of your employment?”

“Okay,” I offered hesitantly. I kept his son in my arms the entire time. The baby wasn’t a shield, but in a way, he felt like the only security I had when meeting with a strange man about a job I’d be doing in his home. After dealing with the creeper who I rented a room from, I was a little skittish when it came to new people.

“First thing, like I said, you’re safe here. I might be a biker, but I was raised by a mom and dad who loved me. More importantly, until my mom died, she instilled a lot of ‘do right by the women in your life’ lessons.” He chuckled at a memory before smiling at me. “She’d come back and haunt my ass if I ever even thought about hitting on my son’s babysitter.”

“Okay, I believe you.” For some weird reason, that was true. The man put me at ease in an odd way. Though, I supposed after being around Creepy Dave too often, an actual axe murderer would probably put me at ease in comparison. I shivered at the thought, but luckily the man sitting in the same room with me twisted to grab something out of his back pocket and missed it.

“Now that the security issue is out of the way, I’m Kip Martin. My wife, Ashlynn Martin, is a real estate agent. She covers a few counties and travels a good bit throughout the day. That’s why we need someone who can be there for the little man. I work and have club shit.”

“Club shit?”

He pointed to the leather vest he wore that declared him a member of the Savage Vipers Motorcycle Club. “My father is the president, so I have a lot of responsibilities down there.”

“I see.”

“I know you mentioned a class schedule, and we’re okay with working around that, but I need to know if you’ll be available for any nights and weekends too, if something comes up.”

“I’m available,” I answered him without hesitation.

“You’re a college student. Never went myself, but from what I’ve seen in the movies there’s lots of partying and shit. I’ll try to make sure we don’t infringe on your weekends and-”

I cut him off there. “I don’t mind. I’m going to school for an education, not the parties. This job will mean that I might be able to afford to finish getting that education without having to resort to jobs I’d rather not take.”

Kip’s gaze seemed to take in more than the average person would as he weighed my words and then nodded his head. “It’s hard for us to find a good nanny because I’m in a motorcycle club. Some people are too frightened to work for me because they see a “biker” and can’t get past it. Others want to party with my club more than watch my kid.”

“Like I said, the partying won’t be a problem. I just want to be able to afford school and get finished, so I can start a career and get on my feet as an adult.”

Kip nodded again. “Great. Sounds like a perfect fit then.” He watched for a minute as I rocked his son back and forth.

“We’ll pay you \$800 a week to be here when you’re not in class. Sometimes, that will mean you get off at five, other days, you might be here until ten. Depends on what’s going on between Ash and me.”

I nodded, as Ashlynn had already discussed that possibility with me over the phone. “I don’t mean to look a gift horse in the mouth, but can I ask? Why are you paying so much for one child?”

“If we need you to stay overnight or on the weekend, we’ll tack on an automatic \$200 extra for that night,” he started to say at the same time I’d spoken. “It’s simple. Supply and demand. We’re in demand and no one wants to supply the time we need. Not to a biker’s family, anyway.”

If he was going to pay me a possible \$1,000 a week, I wasn’t about to argue. The \$800 was more than anyone could hope for when watching one tiny baby for a few hours a day in that person’s home. They didn’t live too far from campus either and only about a fifteen-minute drive from where I rented a room.

“Everything sound good?”

“It does,” I agreed. “My only stipulation is that I don’t like to miss classes. If I have a class on the schedule, I won’t be available. There is absolutely no getting around that, for any reason. I was able to email you my class schedule since the semester already started. I won’t know what the spring semester will be like yet, but when I find out, I will pass that to you immediately. Hopefully, the new schedule will work out, too.”

“Honey, if you work out through the rest of this semester, we’ll make it work when the time comes for a schedule change. The way you handled Knox’s blowout today...” he whistled just as the door opened.

“What’s going on?” A woman asked as she slammed the door shut behind her, startling the little baby in my arms. Luckily, he went right back out as I gently rocked and reassured him that everything was okay.

Kip said that his wife was a realtor, but she looked like she’d run a race, complete with sweaty hair and her mascara caked under her eyes, almost as if she’d slept in it all night.

“Ash, this is Nova, our new nanny.”

“Oh? You decided that without me?” Her tone was more than a little condescending and my hopes for the excellent pay were almost immediately dashed when she looked me over with a cold indifference that made me shiver.

“Well, since you couldn’t be bothered to show up for her interview,” Kip threw back at her. “She showed up just after Knoxville had one of those awful blowouts that stunk up Breakneck’s truck and covered our boy from head to toe in nastiness. She didn’t even gag on the stench.” Kip informed his wife, as if that was the only quality necessary to possess when watching his baby.

“Yes, well, we’ll see about that.” She turned her glare from Kip to me. “It’s Ashlynn,” she corrected because apparently, I was not allowed to call her Ash. “Only friends and family call me Ash, and you are neither.”

The woman then proceeded to grill me about my schooling, what I wanted to do with my life, if I enjoyed hanging around bad boys and bikers, and if I had a boyfriend. When I answered all of her questions, she finally huffed and sat back on the couch watching me swap her son to my other arm because the one he'd been laying in was going numb.

"We'll run a background check," she finally threw out when she couldn't think of anything else.

"That's fine. There won't be anything, but I understand if you need me to wait on the results before I start work."

"Fuck that," Kip called out before he picked up his phone and started to text someone.

"You better not be texting who I think you are," she growled at her husband.

"The club does background on everyone who joins. They can do it for our babysitter, too."

"Nanny," Ashlynn corrected him.

"Whatever," Kip called back with a roll of his eyes as his fingers continued to fly over the screen.

"Okay," he finally said after receiving the response on his phone. "I have your schedule and we'll go over it tonight and let you know when you will start." He stood, pulled out his wallet, and peeled two hundred-dollar bills from it to hand to me.

"What's this?"

"Your pay for the day."

“This was an interview. You don’t get paid for interviews,” I argued, for some stupid reason, like I didn’t need every penny I could scavenge up.

Kip turned to Ashlynn. “Look at that, honest from day one.” Then he turned his attention back to me and waved the bills again. “Take the money. You more than earned it, especially since my son ruined your epic t-shirt.”

It wasn’t ruined. I’d managed to get worse stains out of the thing than a little baby poop. I shrugged my shoulders and took the money. Arguing over it would only lessen my chances of being able to eat later. Besides, it was getting late, and I needed to stop by the gym for a shower before I went home to my crappy room in the creepy house owned by the man who was the reason that I showered at the local gym instead of where I lived.



Chapter 4

Breakneck

“Fuck me harder! Yes, daddy! Fuck my pussy with that big ol’ cock!”

“Shut up!” I ordered. Connie must have gotten confused about who the hell was fucking her again. There was a lot of kinky shit I was into, but that daddy-daughter shit wasn’t hitting on it. If one day, God fucking forbid, I had a daughter, there was no way I could look her in the eye if she called me daddy after playing adult games like that. Just the thought made me shiver.

Connie moaned loudly, thinking my reaction was a result of our fuck session. It sounded so fake, that after that bullshit she just spewed, I damn near lost my fucking erection. Before letting that happen, I pulled out, slapped her ass and flipped her over. Her hands spread out above her immediately and I threw them in the cuffs that were attached to my headboard rails. Then I grabbed a pillow to put under her ass and lift it to just the right height.

“Break, hurry. I need you pounding my pussy with that thick slab of meat.”

I reached over to my nightstand, pulled it open and grabbed the ball gag out of the drawer. In minutes, I had it fastened so she couldn’t ruin shit with her mouth again.

“Should have brought a second bitch in here and dropped you face down in her cunt to keep that mouth of yours shut before I lose the mood,” I grumbled. Connie’s cheeks flamed with heat as her eyes flashed with annoyance. Thankfully, she had no way to verbalize it with that ball gag keeping her mouth busy.

I leaned over toward the nightstand again, because now that she’d shown annoyance, I no longer wanted to look at her while we fucked. There used to be one of those masks in the drawer that women use to block out the light when they sleep. It was missing. I shrugged because there was no telling how it ended up there to begin with, since it hadn’t been me who’d thrown it in there. One of the club bitches thought she could move shit in one little piece of themselves at a time, no doubt.

Since I couldn’t find it, I yanked one of my pillows out of the pillowcase and tossed the fucking thing over Connie’s head. The pillowcase, not the pillow. I wasn’t trying to kill her, just make her invisible so the pussy I fucked could belong to anyone.

Once that was done, I gave my cock a few good tugs and closed my eyes, imagining the sweet young thing that I’d met at Kip’s place. She wouldn’t be the type to toss out fake moans and stupid ‘fuck me daddy’ comments. I could just imagine what it would be like to break her in, fuck her for the first time, because there was no doubt in my mind that she was a virgin.

I imagined it was her body that I sank my dick into as Connie squirmed beneath me. The sight and sound deprivation

made the bitch squirm in a similar way to an inexperienced woman, which only heightened my fantasy.

My cock slammed into her pussy over and over as I wished she was a bit tighter. My little virgin girl wouldn't feel this used up. I reached over Connie's body once more and dug around in the drawer until I came back with a tube of lube. Her pussy wouldn't cut it for this fantasy.

I lubed up my condom covered cock and squirted some directly into Connie's asshole. I could hear the rumblings from her but knew she didn't really have an issue with what I was doing. Connie's club girl contract specified that anal was okay, but even so, she hadn't used her safe word. Granted, she couldn't talk around the ball gag, but her legs were free of restraints, and she had a way to signal me if she wasn't okay with anything I was doing.

She didn't.

So, I sank my cock into the tighter heat that her ass provided. Then I closed my eyes and imagined the cute babysitter beneath me again. It might have been a little fucked up that I pictured her wearing that silly-as-fuck t-shirt with the toilet paper roll on it. That's all she wore. Her bare pussy was open to me as I took her for the first time, sinking deep and taking her innocence. I would leave her hands free to explore my body for the first time, so she could rake those pretty little nails down my back as her real, breathy moans, sent puffs of air along my chest and neck.

I sped up my thrust from the gentle first few pumps and started hammering into the hot, tight hole as I imagined it was the beautiful babysitter beneath me. Her blond locks spread

across my pillow, those icy blue eyes, that held the slightest hint of another color from far away, would be half-lidded with desire as she stared at me in wonder. I'd give her the only orgasm she ever had with a man and then I'd pump her full of my cum.

There would be no fucking condoms between me and my virginal sweet thing. I wanted to feel every inch of her as I popped that cherry and...

“What in the fuck is going on in here?” I turned to see Vamp standing in my doorway laughing. “Jesus, Break. I've seen a lot of shit, but that takes the cake! Who do you have under there? I didn't think we had any truly ugly bitches that had to be bagged before they were tagged.”

That did it. Connie kicked her leg up and down, flailing in the signal to let her go because she'd had enough.

“Fuck you, Vamp! Now, she's gonna bolt before I get to cum.”

I pulled my cock free from Connie's gaping ass and shook my head in disgust. Hers was not the body I wanted to see lying there.

“Church in five,” Vamp called to me before shutting the door. His laughter was the last thing I heard as I stared down at my flagging cock and groaned. Blue balls were going to be a bitch to contend with while sitting in church. There was no way Connie could get me hard again, and then still get me off, in four minutes. The bitch was already thrashing around, demanding that I release her anyway. Obviously, Vamp's ‘ugly’ comment hit a nerve with her.

“Calm down, I’m getting to it,” I told her as I got off the bed and disposed of the condom first. Then I pulled the bag off her head to see her eyes narrowed in fury before I released her hands from the cuffs. I purposely left the gag in place though.

Before she could reach behind her head to release it, I offered up a warning. “One fucking word, and you won’t be back in my room ever again.”

Then I turned, pulled my jeans back on, and grabbed a shirt to throw on under my cut before heading off to church. “You have five minutes to vacate and don’t touch a fucking thing that doesn’t belong to you.”

Fuck Connie’s attitude. She was a club whore and should expect the fucked up shit the men of the club sometimes did to get off. A little pillowcase over her head was nothing compared to shit some of the assholes in the club got up to with the women. I heard one of the older fucks liked to piss on girls. I would think that would be worse than being bagged during a fuck.

I shook off my Connie problems and turned my mind toward Kip’s little babysitter as I moved down the hall, heading for church. There had to be some way to get my beautiful little sweetness off my mind. I’d find it before I let the flash of innocence, that was so attractive to me for some reason, end in something more than a little fantasy play.



Chapter 5

Nova

“Hey Nova!”

I turned to see one of the boys from my class. We were walking in the same direction, so I continued and simply offered him a tiny smile to be polite. He took it as encouragement and hustled to catch up to me.

“Hey, I was wondering if I could buy you a cup of coffee?”

“That’s not necessary,” I quickly tossed out even as my mouth salivated over the idea of a piping hot fresh cup of anything with flavor. It sounded so much better than chugging the water from the tap in my rented room situation. It was like playing a science experiment game where you tried to figure out which chemicals the county water treatment facility had overdone this week. Not to mention what was probably floating around in the aged pipes of the house.

“Oh,” he hummed dejectedly. “I just thought...” His sentiment trailed off when someone called out to him. He took off without even a backward glance or so much as a goodbye. It was all for the best anyway.

It wasn’t that I would have outright turned him down, but my first defense was to make people believe I wasn’t as destitute as I appeared. I had to sink every penny I’d made over the summer, while working three different jobs, into paying my tuition. It left nothing but the \$75 a week I paid for rent and the cost to keep my car on the road. I barely ate

anymore. Part of that was because I couldn't afford to spend more on food, but the rest was because I was always too anxious, and my upset stomach would turn horribly if I put anything of substance into it.

My phone dinged and hope bloomed. For some stupid reason, I thought maybe it would be Jeremy or my mother checking to see if I needed anything. I wanted to cry because neither of them had my new number, so it was a pipedream to think that anyone cared about me. Let alone that one of them might rescue me from this existence where I lived with a creepy lecher who kept asking when I was going to take a shower.

When I glanced down, it was to see a text from Kip Martin.

***Kip:** Could you possibly meet me at the clubhouse after class to pick up Knox? Ash had another work emergency and dropped him off here.*

***Nova:** Of course, just send me the address.*

***Kip:** Thanks, you're a life saver.*

I laughed at the ridiculousness of that text. There I was, walking alone on campus, starving, fighting back tears, praying for someone to come save me from my life and he thought I was the person saving him. At least, it felt like I had a purpose when I took care of that sweet baby boy of his.

It was a twenty-three-minute drive from campus to the clubhouse. My gas gage taunted me the whole way. I hadn't budgeted for extra miles. My Corolla got okay gas mileage, but it was an older car, with older car problems, that made the efficiency lack a little of the luster it once had.

It had once belonged to Clark Anderson, the man who was supposedly my bio-dad. His father made him work for his first car when he turned sixteen, to teach him some sort of rich boy lesson. A week after he bought it, his father gave him a Mercedes or a BMW, or some other fancy vehicle, but he kept the Toyota running since his own work had gone into obtaining it. At least, that was the story he told Jeremy, who hadn't wanted me to get a car yet. Clark claimed it wasn't that big a deal since it had just been sitting around, mostly unused, since he was a teenager.

As it turned out, that car was a means to get me out of the house more often, so he could sneak over and be with my mom. I'd worked that out since everything went down. The number of times I'd shown up unexpectedly to find Clark at the house and Jeremy nowhere in sight should have been a clue back then. I was too lost in my simple teenage life, and the comings and goings of my parents and their friends was of little consequence to me.

I snapped out of my thoughts of the past when a gate at the front of the clubhouse property stopped me from gaining entry.

"Can I help you?" A man asked before leaning down beside my window. I promptly used the little handle to roll the thing down so my voice wouldn't be muffled.

"Um, I'm here to pick up Knoxville."

"Knoxville?" The man eyed me suspiciously.

"I'm Kip's babysitter." I pulled my phone out and showed him the quick text exchange between Kip and me.

“Yeah, okay.” The man muttered as he stood again and went to push a button that released the gate. I didn’t bother to give him a second glance as I drove through and pulled up as close as possible to what looked like the front door.

I sat there, nervously wondering if I needed to go inside, before I finally worked up the courage to turn my car off and do just that. Truthfully, I should have used my head and just texted Kip that I was outside, but then again, my phone didn’t have unlimited resources. I was lucky that the men who came to evict me from my apartment hadn’t taken the device.

I couldn’t afford my own phone plan with the original carrier and ended up putting a new sim card in it for one of those pay-as-you go deals. Walking through the clubhouse door was lost on me as I glared down at the offending piece of equipment. It took a minute or two for my eyes to adjust from the midday, sunny brightness outside, along with the screen brightness of my phone, to the dimmer interior lighting of the clubhouse.

I scanned the space, seeing the bar to the right that took up half the wall. It wrapped around to attach itself to the wall on either side with a length of bar and stools down the middle. To the left, there were random tables and chairs, a few couches, and pool tables in the back. Not many people hung around the space, but I did notice one familiar face right away.

The overly large man had a woman tucked up under each of his arms as they all walked in a laughing heap toward a darkened hallway. The women were barely dressed, and there was no doubt what they were about to get up to together.

Thankfully, he hadn't noticed me. His presence made me uncomfortable in ways that I refused to explore, for obvious reasons. The man was a biker with tastes in women that ran far outside the realm of me and my non-existent experience level. Besides, if I wanted to avoid being like my mother, he was the last man I should have been salivating over.

"Nova!" I heard Kip's voice and turned to see him coming from a hallway near the end of the bar, on the opposite side of the room from where his friend was about to disappear with the two women.

"Thanks for coming all the way here," he called out. Kip had his son cradled in his arms and a blue and white diaper bag with toy trucks printed on it slung over his shoulder.

"It wasn't a problem," I told him as I moved quickly to meet him halfway down the length of the bar. Kip dropped the bag onto a stool there and then relinquished his son into my arms.

"I need to get you a car seat." He huffed a string of curses as he ran around to the other side of the bar and turned his panicked eyes back toward me. "Dammit, Ash!" He ground out.

"What's going on?" a rumbly voice asked from just over my shoulder. I startled and turned quickly to find the big man standing behind me. A quick glance around him showed that the two women he'd left behind were staring daggers in my direction.

"Ash dropped Knox off earlier, but I don't think she left the car seat. How in the hell is Nova supposed to get him home now?"

“Don’t you have another one?”

“For what?” Kip asked. “I ride a motorcycle. Ash is the one with the family van.”

The man, Breakneck, according to his cut seemed to have an answer for everything. “Call your woman and tell her to bring it. She’s the one who forgot.”

“Yeah, and if I do that, and she loses a sale, I’ll never hear the end of it.”

A warm hand touched my back and the thin t-shirt I wore was no barrier against the feel of his palm there heating up my skin. “You good, sweetheart?” He asked and it was only then I realized my body was trembling slightly.

“Sure, you just snuck up on me,” I admitted. It made me wonder how such a large person could move so stealthily. The fact that I enjoyed the way his warmth seeped through my shirt and made me feel comforted, was something I tried to put out of my mind. Wasn’t he just walking away with two women at once? I should be disgusted, but I wasn’t.

“Why don’t you just let Nova stick around with Knox? She can do her schoolwork, take care of the kid, and wait for Ash to get back.”

Kip turned pleading eyes toward me after hearing his friend’s solution. “Would you mind? You’re already here, and I can make sure no one disturbs you.” He turned his attention back to Breakneck. “I have a pack-n-play in my room here. Could you go grab it while I get Nova situated?”

“Sure man,” Breakneck agreed quickly as he removed his hand from my body and turned to go retrieve the baby’s

playpen. He stopped suddenly and looked at Kip with a question in his eyes. “What the fuck is a pack-n-play?”

I giggled and turned to grin at the clueless man whose eyes met mine with a curious stare. “What?” He asked. “I don’t have any rug rats.”

“It’s a portable playpen,” I explained at the same time Kip answered.

“Man, it looks like those boxed up tents you see at the store. Long, blue nylon case with a handle and the picture of a baby in a playpen on the side. You can’t miss it.”

“Right. Be back in a minute.”

Kip got me settled in the far-left corner of the room where there was a couch with a coffee table and a little end table between it and the wall. The bar was on the wall to my right with the entry door somewhere in the middle. The pool tables were across the room from where I sat, but there was a set of stairs that blocked most of my view.

I realized it also blocked the view of the hallway where Breakneck and the two women had disappeared moments ago. Part of me wondered if he would forget to bring the playpen back, since he had his women to worry about.

“Do you have homework or something to do?” Kip asked as I continued to glance around and take in the clubhouse.

“I have a paper to work on, but it isn’t due for a few weeks. Knoxville and I will be just fine here.”

“Okay, can I get you something to eat or drink? We have a prospect here who cooks like a fucking chef.”

I grinned at him. “There’s no need to go to any trouble.”

Kip shook his head and grinned back at me. “Girl, you’re doing me a favor by coming here and staying to keep an eye on my son while I get shit done. It’s no damn trouble to feed you while you’re here.”

“Okay then,” I started to ask what they had to eat, but he ran off to go tell the prospect to get cooking. I guessed it would be a surprise.

“No clue how to set this damn thing up,” Breakneck called out to me as he approached.

“It’s okay,” I told him. “If you could just hold Knoxville for a minute, I can do it.”

The giant man glance warily at the baby, as if he was a bomb about to go off. “Not sure I want to hold the little shit factory after what he did to my truck.”

I laughed off his comment as a joke, and tucked Knoxville into the cradle of his arm before he could protest and run off. I took a moment to appreciate the view as he held that baby and stared down at him in equal parts fear and awe. The fantasy of seeing a man holding a baby we’d made together, while looking at him like that, sent me into a stupor for a moment before I managed to shake off the thought. That wasn’t a picture that was in the cards for me.

There was no way I’d bring a child into the world knowing that family could just walk away from them at a moment’s notice and not look back. It wouldn’t be fair. Not that I would ever be the one to do it, but what if my child’s father did? What if he behaved the way Jeremy, his family, or even Clark

and my own mother had? They all left me high and dry because of mistakes they'd made and dragged me into.

Nope. I was never going to have children.

"You gonna stare all day or put that damn thing together?" Breakneck asked with a hint of impatience in his tone.

"Sorry," I muttered and turned to put the portable playpen together, so that I had a place to put Knoxville when he went down for his nap. Two more men burst through the front door in a flurry of boisterous laughter and loud voices. I didn't miss the way Breakneck side-eyed them, as if in fear that their noise might disturb the baby in his arms. Knoxville wasn't sleeping yet, so the burly man had nothing to worry about. He was simply taking everything in. The boy was filled with quiet curiosity until he had a dirty diaper or became hungry.

"Breakneck," a whiny female voice called out from near where the steps cut off the view of the hallway he had gone down earlier. It was one of the women he'd had tucked up under his arm when I'd first entered the clubhouse. She was wearing even less than she had been before.

"What the hell do you want, Liz?"

"You were supposed to come right back. Dee and I have been waiting for you."

"If you can't keep each other occupied until I get back, then maybe you aren't the pair I need tonight," he insisted. It was cringy to think about how disposable the women in his life were. Not to mention the fact that he seemed to need two women at once, and from the way he'd spoken, it was a normal occurrence.

“Fine!” She huffed and turned to stomp out of sight once more. “Don’t know why Kip can’t deal with his own kid.”

“That shit ain’t your concern!” Kip yelled at her as he brought a steaming plate with a burger, fries, and what looked like freshly baked chocolate chip cookies on a plate. “I’ll grab you a drink as soon as I set this down. You want Coke or...”

“Water is fine,” I called out to him before he could walk off again. My mouth watered as the scintillating scent of freshly cooked food hit me. My stomach grumbled so loudly; I flushed in embarrassment. I finished snapping the last piece of the playpen into place as Breakneck asked, “Hungry?”

I turned to see him staring at my butt, since I was bent over to put the playpen together. My shirt had risen from where it was normally pulled down to hide my figure from prying eyes. My body was built a lot like my mother, with sultry curves most men appreciated. Fortunately for me, I knew firsthand just how much trouble it could get a woman into when the wrong man appreciated her assets.

“When’s the last time you ate a good meal?” Breakneck asked as he closed the distance between us, so that I could take the baby from him. My hands shook a little and his brow popped up, as if willing me to answer the question.

I shrugged. “I’m a college student. We’re not known for eating well.”

“Your clothes are too big for your body. Seems to me, you aren’t eating at all.”

I pointed at the plate of food. “As soon as I get him down, I have food to eat.”

He turned his body away from me when I moved to grab Knoxville again. “Nope. You sit and eat. When you’re done, I’ll give him back.”

“Weren’t you just scared of holding him moments ago?” I questioned, allowing a tiny bit of frustration to bleed into my voice.

“Yeah, and now there’s more important shit to handle. You eat. Then you get the baby back.”

“You have someone waiting on you,” I reminded him.

“Two actually,” he corrected, “and they’ll continue waiting.” The cockiness in his tone suggested that maybe he even enjoyed the fact that they would wait for him without question.

“I really don’t feel comfortable eating while you’re standing there staring at me,” I finally admitted.

“Don’t care. Eat the damn food. I can hear your stomach waging war with your insides as we speak.”

A warm flush suffused my skin again as I sat in a huff and stuffed two fries into my mouth. “There, happy?” I asked while still chewing. I’d been raised with far better manners, but things like that seemed to go out the window in a place like this.

His amusement made those bright eyes of his twinkle. There didn’t seem to be a way to decipher what color they were, since getting closer, in better lighting, was out of the question. It was almost as if they changed when he shifted in the light, though. One moment I would have sworn they were green, the next blue.

The ruggedly beautiful man's attention was pulled toward the hallway where he had two women waiting. As if Breakneck could no longer wait to get to them, he leaned over and placed the baby in my arms and took off like a bat out of hell. I guess he really didn't care if I ate more than two fries. The abrupt change was jarring, but the man owed me absolutely nothing.

Shrugging off my disappointment was all I could do as I got up to lay the baby down in the playpen so I could finish eating. He was right, that needed to happen above everything else because I felt weak and shaky from lack of sustenance. It wouldn't do anyone any good if I couldn't even pick up the slight weight of the child I was charged with caring for.

It was a little after ten in the evening, when Ashlynn finally arrived to pick up her son. She did so, while complaining the whole time that I hadn't taken him to the house and cared for him there. After about the third time she mumbled something about me just wanting to be a club slut, Kip shut her down and laid the blame where it belonged, with the baby's mother who hadn't thought enough about her own child to leave his car seat behind.

I managed to slink out in the middle of their argument and drove myself home. I lamented the fact that the gym had already closed for the night and that meant a shower was out of the question. There was no way I'd do it at the house, since I worried that there wasn't really any privacy there, considering how often my creepy landlord would ask when I was going to get one.

Instead of being able to get clean and wash the day away, I curled up under the threadbare blanket I'd found in a second-hand store and cried myself to sleep. Again.



Chapter 6

Breakneck

Watching the cute little babysitter shove those fries into her mouth was about all I could handle. When she tried to speak around the mouthful of food, I was done for. All I could picture was her taking my cock and trying to talk to me around it while looking up at me with those little orbs of icy innocence.

I didn't know how I was going to stand it if Kip made it a regular thing for the woman to come to the clubhouse to watch his brat. There was something about her that went beyond the natural beauty she wore without seeming to realize the effect she had on the men around her. Then again, maybe she knew and didn't like it, if her clothes were anything to go by. She certainly wasn't dressing to be noticed. Just the opposite. That didn't stop me from seeing everything she attempted to hide. The woman had lost weight since the first time we'd met. It bothered me that I noticed, because it meant something was going on to cause that much of a difference.

There was no way in hell I could stand to watch that ass and those magnificent tits waste away. It wasn't healthy. Then again, I also couldn't stand there and watch her eat. My dick got hard at the thought of feeding her. Not just my cock and cum either, though that was where my mind had wandered when I had to shove the kid off on her and leave. No, I wanted

to feed her some food, get that figure back that I'd seen when she first started working for Kip.

I nearly turned my ass back around and went to ask her out to dinner before I remembered that Kip had just brought her food.

"What the fuck is wrong with me?" I mumbled as I entered my bedroom.

"You kept us waiting a really long time, so I'd like to know the answer to that as well," Liz demanded with attitude that made me want to throw her ass against a wall, and not in a good way.

"Get out!"

"We've been waiting for you to show up and now you're going to kick us out?" Liz shouted at me.

"Nope. Just you. Get the fuck out and don't approach me anymore. You are no longer useful to me."

I didn't wait around for her to throw a fit. Instead, I grabbed the woman off my bed, and planted her on her feet outside my door, before shutting the thing in her face to let her know she wasn't coming back in. We heard her pound a fist to the door once before moving away.

"That was kind of mean." There was no attitude behind the words Dee muttered. She seemed more surprised by my actions than upset.

I shrugged. "Don't care. You know the drill. You're here for the pleasure of the brothers. If we want to keep you waiting all week, that's our prerogative. Don't like it, you all know where

the door is and there's nothing stopping you from going through it."

"One day, a woman is going to stop you in your tracks and make you wait for her."

I laughed at that. "Nah, honey. No woman is ever bringing me down. Seen that shit happen to far too many miserable bastards around here to let it happen to me."

"There are happy ones, too. Look at Mack and Viv." Dee seemed wistful as she talked about the couple. If love was what you were after, I supposed they were ultimate couple goals. That didn't mean it would ever happen for me.

"I don't deserve what Mack has, so that ain't my fate." Before her pout could turn into questions, I shucked out of my pants and bent her over the bed. After donning a condom as quickly as possible, I slammed my cock home into warm, wet pussy.

"You two did good keeping yourselves ready for me at least."

"I had to do this on my own," Dee informed me. "All Liz did was pout about how long it was taking you."

I shook my head as I upped the pace. "No more talking," I demanded.

Of all the club girls, Dee was the one who I could get to play the part of little miss innocent and make it believable. She was a natural submissive and would follow damn near any command given when it came to sex. I knew she wasn't into the really rough shit, but still enjoyed being dominated. It was part of the reason I rarely used her.

The rougher the better, as far as I was concerned. It got the frustrations of the day out and kept the women from having any funny thoughts about calling what we did ‘making love’. It was never that.

Still, there was a part of me that wanted it. Wanted to lie a woman down beneath me, cage her in with my body, and fuck her so slowly that it would be torture for both of us in the best ways. I wanted to stare down into those icy blue eyes as her innocence was ripped away from her body and she learned the kind of sensual pleasure she was capable of. At my hands. On my cock. With my tongue.

I growled and continued to plow into Dee while imagining that she was the one fucking woman I couldn’t have and couldn’t get off my fucking mind.

“You ever been paddled, sweet Dee?”

“Yes,” she answered hesitantly.

“Did you like it?”

“Yes.” That time her answer was full of hunger, and I didn’t hesitate to slap a hand down on her ass and leave a red mark there.

“You ever had your pussy paddled before?”

“No,” she moaned, obviously liking the idea.

“Up,” I commanded as I pulled out of her wet snatch. Backing off the bed, careful to avoid the boots and pants I’d discarded, I pulled her with me until she was on her knees in front of me. I ripped the condom off and gave an order.

“Suck!” As she leaned in to suck my cock, I spun us both around so I could sit on the edge of the bed and enjoy the sensation of a hot mouth wrapped around me.

While Dee had blonde hair, it wasn't the right shade. I closed my eyes and imagined Kip's beautiful babysitter there on her knees, worshipping my cock with her pretty little mouth.

“That's it, suck harder,” I called out, careful not to say a name. Then I reached behind her as I stuffed her face further down on my cock and smacked the hell out of her pussy.

She tensed momentarily and then moaned around my cock, so I did it again, and received the desired result. Her mouth tightened on my cock as her moan vibrated up my shaft. It felt like heaven and had the added bonus of Dee's pussy releasing even more juices. The spankings made her wetter than I'd ever seen Dee before. She might not like the rougher play, but spanking that pussy got the girl off in spectacular fashion.

Despite how well this was turning out, I knew that I wouldn't be able to get off without a little something more. I pulled my phone from my jeans pocket, where I'd discarded them by my feet and texted Mitzi.

Breakneck: *Get to my room and bring a strap-on. Dee needs to be stuffed while she sucks my cock.*

Mitzi: *Be there in a minute.*

Yeah, that would do the trick and then maybe I could stop thinking about the little virgin babysitter while I watched Mitzi fuck Dee until we all came.



Chapter 7

Nova

For the second night in a row, I was left to watch Knoxville until well after ten at night. It had become a habit for Ashlynn to come back later each night. I wondered what on earth could keep a woman from her baby so long.

She was a real estate agent. They didn't work that late in small towns like ours. Most mothers didn't work those kinds of hours, no matter their job, when they had an infant at home to care for and a hotter than should be legal husband waiting.

Then again, Kip was rarely waiting on her, since my being there meant he was still at work, too. Kip already explained that he would be working later hours for the next couple of weeks because of some big project that had come up. I still had no clue what it was that he did for work. I assumed it was some shady business with the club and never asked. Maybe I should have. Then again, what would I do if the money that paid my bills was blood money or some such nonsense?

I couldn't turn it away no matter what. Instead, for the second day in a row, I dragged myself into the Victorian house where I rented a room and practically crawled up the stairs, dead tired. The gym was already closed again, so I was going on day three without a shower and the way my hair hung limp and oily on my head was proof enough of that.

“You should really get a shower before you get into bed.”

I was startled when my landlord’s voice took me by surprise. He was standing at the door to the cellar. Most houses in this area didn’t have basements in them because it wasn’t plausible with the low water table. Dave’s house had once been graced with a root cellar that had been expanded on. At least, that’s what he told me when he explained it was the one area of the house that was off limits to me. He claimed the moisture that could collect down there on a rainy day made it particularly unsafe.

That didn’t instill a lot of confidence for the rest of the house, but I hoped that I wouldn’t have to live in this situation too much longer. Once this semester was over, there was only one more before graduation. Then, my hope was that I’d find a decent job with some longevity, that would allow me to find a place of my own that didn’t have to be shared with anyone else. After dealing with Creepy Dave as a landlord, I wasn’t sure I wanted to stomach what a roommate might be like.

The babysitting position with Kip and Knoxville paid plenty for me to live on my own comfortably, except for the fact that I had to save nearly all of it for future tuition and book expenses. Still, it was also a time-limited job. Before long, Knoxville would grow old enough to be put into daycare, preschool and then eventually kindergarten. Where would that leave me? I already knew the answer to that question. It would leave me without a job. I had to think about the big picture and my security because no one else would.

“Did you hear me?”

“Yes, Dave, I did.”

“Well?”

“Well, what?” I asked, almost too tired for this conversation. I didn’t like the way the man always insisted that the shower should be my number one destination in the house.

“Are you going to go shower and clean up?”

I scrunched my nose as the hairs on the back of my neck and my arms stood on end. “I’m too tired. I’ll probably wait until morning.”

“You don’t pay a lot to stay here. The least you can do is have good hygiene. Otherwise, we may end up with an insect infestation,” Dave complained.

“I’ll get right on that,” I mumbled while taking the steps up one level to my bedroom. I would not, in fact, get right on that. Not in his house. When Dave first became insistent about me taking showers, it made me uncomfortable enough to take a harder look at the shower itself. It was one of those old claw foot tubs with a metal ring around it that held a shower curtain in place and a shower head stuck out of the wall.

The first time I noticed that there appeared to be something else just above the shower head, I swore I’d never clean up in that house again. I couldn’t afford to move out though, so I thought if the creepy bastard had been watching me shower, I’d take that from him and use the gym that was free for locals.

It wasn’t the most ideal option, but it was the best I had. Once I got to my room, I immediately pushed the dresser in front of the door, since there weren’t any locks on the door itself. I asked Dave about adding locks and he told me that I wasn’t allowed to alter the house in any way. The dresser in

front of the door was my only security at night. It wouldn't keep anyone out for long, but it would give me a warning if anyone tried to get in.

I was tired, but also frustrated. My thoughts drifted back to Breakneck, Kip's club brother. There was no good reason why I found that man so irresistible. There was no doubting that he was attractive. The man stood around five inches over six feet tall, and while he appeared bulky at first, it became clear rather quickly that he was just solid muscle.

Unlike a lot of the other bikers at the clubhouse, he kept his hair trimmed really close to his scalp. It was a lighter shade of brown and would probably be only a couple shades darker than my own hair if he'd let it grow out. His eyes were still a mystery to me. Sometimes, I got hints of blue, others they appeared green. It didn't matter. The mystery of his eye color only added to the fact that I couldn't stop thinking about him. I could still feel the warm imprint of his hand at my back from days ago when he'd touched me there.

I wondered what it would feel like to have him cup those large hands around my breasts. How would it feel to have him caress the achy heaviness out of them that was always present when he was around? I knew it was a state of arousal. I'd never had another person help me out of that state before, and curiosity made me wonder what it would be like.

I cupped my own breast, pinching my nipple slightly as I closed my eyes and imagined it was the man I'd become so infatuated with. His rough hands and his mouth would probably offer entirely different sensations. Would the five

o'clock shadow he always seemed to have irritate my skin or make for a delicious scrape against sensitive areas?

My mind wandered to him putting his hands between my legs, feeling my slick pussy waiting to be discovered by him. My own fingers traced along my crease, tantalizing my clit with teasing little touches as I thought of what it would be like to have Breakneck doing just that.

"Breakneck," I whimpered as I rolled my fingers with more pressure across my clit. What was his real name? I wished I knew so that his name would be on my lips when my climax hit.

"Yes, Breakneck," I moaned again while pushing my body closer to the release it craved. It didn't take long to get there, especially when he was at the forefront of my fantasies.

Most women dreamed of their first time being sweet and romantic. Breakneck was my fantasy for a different reason. The thought of him tossing me into whichever position satisfied him was what got me off quicker than any imaginings of sweet love making. Maybe one day, I would know what that felt like, but it probably wouldn't be the man who starred in my fantasies. He was off limits for several reasons, not the least of which was that he would most likely break my heart, since one woman never seemed to be enough for him.



Chapter 8

Breakneck

It was a little more than a week since I last saw Nova at the clubhouse. It came as a shock when I saw her for the first time since then, leaving the gym looking freshly showered, when there was no way that she had been there working out beforehand. She had been babysitting for Kip not even twenty minutes ago. My club brother had texted to tell me that he wouldn't be coming to work out since he had to let his babysitter off the hook, so she could get some studying done.

Something didn't sit right because there was no way she got off work, got a workout in, and then had time to shower. Instead of going to work out or heading out to the party I'd tried to get Kip to tag along for, I turned my ass around and made my way to his house.

“What the fuck are you doing here? I told you that I don't have a babysitter. Ash decided to fuck off and go see her mom without taking our kid along.”

“That's probably for the best. Bitch might get it in her head not to come back or something.” Kip nodded as if my suggestion wasn't that far out of the realm of possibility. I honestly didn't see that happening since the ice queen, known as his wife, didn't really spend a lot of time with their son. That was why he had to hire a babysitter in the first place.

“Saw your babysitter at the gym just now.”

“Yeah? Good for her. She needs a good workout. I’ve been worried about how tired and run-down she looks lately.”

“Then get ready to worry more, not less. She needs a fucking good meal, not a workout man. I don’t think she’s been eating right, and she was leaving the gym when I passed by. Looked freshly showered.”

Kip glanced at the clock on the wall. “That couldn’t have been much of a workout.”

“Are you paying her enough?”

“Fuck, man, I’m paying her more than I should.”

“I think maybe she’s living in her car or something. Seemed a lot like she got off work and went to go take a shower before the gym shut down for the night.”

Kip sat there thoughtful for a few minutes before he started tapping away on his phone.

“You just gonna ask her about it over text?”

He shook his head. “She doesn’t like texting much. I think she only gets a limited number of...” Kip’s eyes came up to meet mine as he realized the girl didn’t even have a decent phone plan.

“You sure you’re paying her enough?”

“Man, she mentioned something about family trouble before. Finances being cut off or some shit. She needed the job to be able to pay tuition and book stuff. What I pay her should more than cover that.”

“What’s with the rapid texts then?” I asked while tipping my head to indicate the phone in his hands.

“One of the prospects, Charmer, came to me a week or so ago. Said he saw her at the gym but thought I should know that she seemed to be there only to take a shower and leave again. I meant to ask her about it, but with the bullshit Ash has been pulling, and the workload increase at the garage, I haven’t had a minute to wrap my head around that shit.”

“Might be time to get to it.” A sick feeling brewed in my gut as I thought about the possibilities. Each one made me feel worse than the last. “If she has money troubles, you need to get to the bottom of that shit before your kid becomes a target.”

“I don’t think she has money troubles with loan sharks, drug dealers, or whatever the hell you’re insinuating.”

“Okay, then she’s living out of her car for a fucking reason. Dirtbag boyfriend who was beating on her, maybe? You see any evidence of that? I thought she was a virgin, but I’ve been wrong before.”

“Nah, pretty sure you’re right on that mark. She’s never mentioned a boyfriend or a social life. In fact, when I hired her, she told me weekends and late nights wouldn’t be an issue because all she did was go to school and study. She’s there for the degree not the partying.”

“Why don’t you have her come to the clubhouse tomorrow, so we can get to the bottom of this bullshit and find out what’s going on with your babysitter before she becomes a problem. If she doesn’t get some decent meals in her soon, she won’t be any good to you or your kid anyway.”

“Yeah, I’ll do that. She only has a morning class tomorrow. I’ll text to let her know to meet us there after class gets out.”

~*~

I didn't normally have problems sleeping, but after leaving Kip's house, I couldn't get his babysitter off my mind. Usually, she was there in my fantasies, but this was different. The girl had me worried about what the fuck was going on in her life. Something was up. Women didn't volunteer to shower at a gym they weren't even working out in for no good reason. Thanks to the sleepless night, I was up before the fucking dawn and in the kitchen grabbing coffee.

“Has hell frozen over, and no one told me about it?”

I turned to see Scout standing there with a teasing grin on her face. Once upon a time, she'd been Kip's girl, before he fucked it all up, lost her, and got stuck with Ash. Now, she was a club girl, but had some weird deal worked out with our president, so that she didn't have to fuck any of the brothers who had a significant other standing by somewhere.

“How's it hanging, Scout?” I asked as I took a seat with my mug in hand.

“Could ask you the same. What's got you up this morning?”

“Kip's babysitter,” I mumbled.

“Oh? Are you ready to settle down with the innocent schoolgirl?”

“That's creepy as fuck, Scout.”

She shrugged her shoulders. “You have all sorts of kinks. Maybe the schoolgirl fantasy is too played out for you, but I've heard the men talking about her. Others seem to be into the fact that she looks fresh out of high school.”

“Who?” I growled.

“Calm down, big guy. She hasn’t given anyone the time of day, except the boy whose ass she wipes and mouth she stuffs with a bottle all day long.” Scout refused to say Knox’s name, and for good reason.

When Kip accidentally knocked Ash up, while he and Scout were on a break, it ruined the chances of the two of them ever getting back together and staying that way. She didn’t hold it against the baby but was smart enough to know that if word got back that she’d even whispered his name, Ash would blow a fucking gasket.

“So, what’s going on with Kip’s babysitter that has you up this early sucking down java?”

“She’s been showering at the gym.”

Scout laughed. “Lots of people shower at the gym.”

“Usually, they do so after they get a workout in. She goes, showers, and leaves.” I gave Scout a look that meant she was to surmise the rest of what that could mean.

“She homeless?”

“Don’t know. Kip is having her meet him here later and we’re going to address that situation. Do me a favor and run a check on her. Kip mentioned family trouble that left her with the financial burden of college, but we need to know if there’s any other skeletons lurking in her closet that might get his kid into trouble.”

“You should check with Prez. I’m sure Tripp already ran a check on her since she takes care of his grandson most days.

I'll redo it for you. Just, don't tell Kip that I'm involved, okay?"

"You got it, sweetheart."

~*~

A couple hours later, Kip and I were sitting there with his son staring at us and refusing to take a bottle. The little guy looked miserable, but Kip couldn't figure out what the fuck was wrong with him. Before he completely melted down, Kip looked up and whispered his babysitter's name like it was a prayer.

"Nova!"

She laughed. "Having troubles, I see." The woman didn't hesitate to act. She dropped her bag and swooped in to peel the boy from his father's arms and the minute she did, the kid quieted down. Like fucking magic. Then again, she had his head pillowed on those soft, bountiful breasts of hers. I'd quiet the fuck down, too.

"Are you not feeling well, handsome boy?" She teased his bottom lip with her finger, and he immediately attempted to latch onto it. "Oh, you are hungry. Why wouldn't you eat for your daddy then?"

"Probably because I didn't have a tit in his face," Kip answered for his son. Nova's wide-eyed, shocked expression sent Kip backpedaling. "Sorry, Nova. I didn't really mean it like that, but you know, babies they like breasts."

She rolled her eyes at him. "So do men," she muttered as she scooted him over so she could take a seat. The minute she

sat, Knox lost interest in his bottle and got that grumpy look on his face again like he would start wailing at any moment.

Nova stood and rocked him back and forth before making sure his head was elevated a bit more. “I think he might be getting an ear infection,” she informed Kip.

“How do you know that?”

“I had to take a class. I’m an early childhood education major. I took a few extra courses when I was in high school, and it was one of the biggest issues new parents couldn’t figure out with their babies until it ended up with an emergency room visit.” She shrugged as if it was no big deal to know what she did.

Kips’ appreciation shown in his eyes as he stared at her in awe, though. “I’ll make an appointment with his doctor.”

“That’s good. For now, you can give him some infant Tylenol. It should help keep any fever away and of course, reduce some of the pain he’s probably feeling. You still need to take him in, because they’ll have to prescribe antibiotics for him, if it is an infection.”

“Thanks, Nova.”

“No problem. It’s my job, right?”

“It’s not really your job to know more than his own parents,” Kip argued.

“We all have our own areas of expertise. Parents learn as they go.”

“Nova?” Kip asked and waited until he had her undivided attention. “I have something to ask you, and I want you to be

honest.”

“Of course,” she insisted.

“Do you have somewhere to live?”

She blanched. “Why would you ask me that?”

“I saw you last night,” I explained.

“Saw me, where?”

“Coming out of the gym, freshly showered.”

“Don’t you shower after going to the gym?”

“Sure, but I don’t go to the gym just to shower,” I countered.

Her face fell and shoulders drooped all at once. “It isn’t what you’re thinking,” she suggested and obviously hoped we would leave it at that.

“You need to explain,” Kip demanded.

“I’m not homeless. I rent a room out of a house, but the man, David, my landlord, I call him Creepy Dave,” she rambled.

“Why the fuck do you call him Creepy Dave?” I asked, unable to control the growl in my voice.

“He, um, well, I think he has a camera in the shower. Like he watches or something. When I realized, I stopped showering there. He’s always pestering me to take a shower though.”

“What the fuck?!” Kip yelled as he came to his feet. His son did not like the tone of his voice one bit and started squalling after spitting his bottle out.

“Shh, it’s okay, sweet boy,” Nova cooed to him as she rocked him once more in her arms. The woman hadn’t even sat back down because she was doing everything in her power to make the baby more comfortable. God, I wanted to give Kip his kid back just so Nova and I could go make one of our own.

No. Fuck that thought all to hell. What the fuck was going on with me?

“Do you know for sure that there are cameras in the shower?” I asked, while trying to get my mind off having babies with the beautiful woman who starred in too many of my fantasies.

“Well, there is something strange around the showerhead, but I didn’t want to look too closely when I found it. Truthfully, I was more concerned about getting out of the shower just in case. What if he was watching me? I was naked,” she tacked on, as if that wasn’t the natural state of someone taking a shower. She shivered at the memory though, and I wanted nothing more than to pound Creepy fucking Dave’s head into the concrete.

“Nova,” Kip spoke her name in a calming voice that I wasn’t capable of in that moment.

“Yes?” She asked hesitantly.

“Gonna need your address.”

“Please, don’t do anything,” she begged.

“Why the fuck not?” I asked angrily.

“You don’t understand. It’s all I can afford right now. We’re mid-semester, so most places aren’t available anyway, even if I

did have enough to put down deposits and stuff. I don't mind showering at the gym. It's not that big a deal.

"I need almost \$7,000 before January rolls around to afford my last semester of college. I won't be available as much to watch Knox because an internship will be required. Internships don't pay. That means I need to save enough for my tuition plus a place to live, gas for my car and..."

"The food you're obviously not buying," I tacked on for her. She blushed and looked away. It was clear that she was ashamed of her circumstances, even if she shouldn't be.

"Nope. This shit is not going down on my watch. Your family may have fucked you over, but my family won't stand for it!" Kip's demand made her look back up. "You ready to be a full-time nanny? I'll find out from the college if that experience can qualify as your internship. I'm sure they make special exceptions for people and situations all the time."

"I still need a place to live though," she whispered.

"And you'll have one. I have an extra guest suite in my house. It has its own private bathroom, so you never have to worry about anyone else going in there."

"What about Ashlynn?"

"What about her?"

"Don't you need to talk this out with her first?"

Kip shrugged. "With the hours she's been keeping, it only makes sense to have someone who can be around at all hours. We'll just set your pay at \$800 a week plus room and board will take over for what I've been paying when we need you on nights and weekends."

I had to look away when the girl started to get teary-eyed. Kip seemed to be bothered by it too because he quickly ushered her into a seat with his son, who had thankfully settled down.

“I’m going to get some Tylenol for him, make an appointment with the doctor, and go take care of something really quick. You stay here. If you need anything, or Knox gets worse, you yell for Tripp. He’s my dad, if he doesn’t come right away, someone else will go get him for you. I shouldn’t be gone long. Okay?”

“Okay,” she agreed quietly. The girl looked like she was fucking shell-shocked. Probably was. It was certainly a lot to take in, even for me.

“Need that address before I go,” he reminded her. She quietly offered it up and then bit into her plump bottom lip in what was most likely a nervous habit. She was worried that everything was about to fall apart, but that was only because she didn’t know who the hell the Savage Vipers were – not really.

“I’m going with you,” I told Kip.

“Wouldn’t expect any less,” he called back as we both headed out of the clubhouse to go find out just what exactly this Creepy Dave fucker had been up to. Kip was so slick; I didn’t think Nova realized that he took her keys along with him as we left.



Chapter 9

Breakneck

“This place looks like a creepy pervert lives here,” I mentioned as both Kip and I stood out front of the old Victorian house his sweet babysitter had been living in.

“We need to have someone run this asshole’s information.”

“I’ll get my guy on it as soon as we get back,” I promised Kip. He nodded and then we both set out to the front door of the house.

Kip knocked all polite and shit, but there didn’t seem to be anyone home. “Are we going in, or what?” Even though I asked the question, there was no doubt in my mind what the plan was. If Kip wasn’t willing, I was still going in to see for myself what this asshole had been up to.

“Fuck yeah, we’re going in. We need to get Nova’s shit out of here and I want to see the bathroom situation for myself.”

“Let’s do it then,” I suggested with a tilt of my head toward the keys he held in his hand.

Kip stuck the key in the slot and turned, then realized there was a deadbolt engaged as well. Once he unlocked that with the same key, we were both shaking our heads at the idiot who thought that was a good idea, especially since the slimy motherfucker clearly had shit to hide.

We walked into the house and immediately felt a chill in the air that had nothing to do with the temperature. It's what pure fucking evil felt like when you walked by it. "Kip," I mumbled his name.

"Yeah, man. I feel that shit, too. Something ain't right here."

"She said she's upstairs, second door on the left, bathroom across the hall," I told him.

"How the fuck do you know that?"

"I had one of the women ask her after we left." He didn't ask which woman, but there was no doubt in either of their minds that he knew just who I had put on the job. Sucked for her, too. Asking Nova questions for me put her in direct proximity to Kip's kid. Scout would never hold the kid against him, even if the baby was the sole reason he and Scout couldn't be together. That didn't mean it wasn't hard for her to be around him.

"Let's do this," He growled before taking two steps at a time on his way up to the second floor.

When we got up there, the first place we both went was to the bathroom, curious to see what was hidden there. At the last minute, I stopped him from entering and tapped my phone.

***Breakneck:** If cameras are running, we might spook him, and he'll be in the wind.*

***Kip:** Fuck! Hadn't thought of that. I'm going to take a leak and have a quick glimpse. You go to Nova's room and pack her shit up. We need to have someone sit on the house for a while and wait for this asshole to come back. When he does, we're snatching him up and taking a closer look.*

I nodded in response and turned to go in Nova's room. The first thing I noticed, upon opening the door, were the drag marks on the worn wood floors in front of the door. It made me take a second look at the handle. There wasn't a lock on the door at all. There wasn't even a fucking flip latch on the inside to pretend she had any privacy. The tiny dresser next to the door fit the grooves in the floor perfectly. She had been using it to protect herself while she slept. Dave, the creepy fucking landlord, was going to get a mouthful of my boots whenever we were able to drag his ass back to the clubhouse for a little one-on-one chat.

My eyes drifted from the dresser to the rest of the room. There was a twin bed in the middle of the wall to the right. It was a box spring and mattress on the floor, no frame. The only blanket on the bed was a threadbare blanket worn so thin in spots that it was nearly transparent. Probably the only thing saving Nova from freezing to death in the drafty monstrosity of a house was that we had mild winters in southern Georgia. It still slipped down into the thirties at night starting in December. She was lucky we found out where she was living before she had to endure that shit.

There was no closet to be found in the room, but I did notice a lamp on a table that was placed directly across the room from Nova's bed. It didn't take long to see that there was a camera hidden there. It was something we were going to need to keep to ourselves until we found out if he'd been filming her in the bedroom, too. Not that there was much doubt, but no need to panic the girl further. At least, not yet.

I moved to the dresser and flung drawer after drawer open, surprised that there was absolutely nothing inside. A quick

spin around the room showed there was nowhere else to stash any of her shit. There was no way to hide anything under the bed, since the box spring was directly on the floor, but on the other side of the bed was another backpack, overfilled with textbooks. I snatched it out and went to haul it up on my shoulder when I heard a ripping sound.

“Damn, you didn’t have to stuff everything in that one bag.”

“I didn’t. Found it like this tucked up on the other side of the bed, out of sight.”

“Okay, where’s everything else?”

“There isn’t anything else,” I told my club brother as both of us spun around the tiny space once more looking for a possible stash spot.

“Nothing?” He opened the drawers, obviously not believing my initial assessment. “You think that sick fuck has been stealing her shit?”

I shook my head. “I’m starting to wonder if she has any shit to speak of.” I pointed to the pitiful blanket on the bed. “Doesn’t look like she has much at all.”

“Fuck me,” Kip muttered under his breath as he turned to leave. “I called a prospect.”

He wouldn’t say much while we were in the house, but I understood him to mean that we’d wait on the prospect to show up and then give him his orders to sit on the house and call as soon as he saw someone come back to the house. I glanced back once and felt something in my chest squeeze at the thought of my sweetness having to live like that.



Chapter 10

Nova

“Oh God! What if Ashlynn comes back and decides that she doesn’t want me to live in her house?” I asked the baby, who had no say and couldn’t answer me anyway.

“I wouldn’t worry about that,” a gruff sounding man answered. When I glanced up, it was to see someone who resembled Kip, but with a lighter complexion, longer hair, and a silver mustache and beard that hid his smile. I could tell he was doing it because of the way the skin at the corner of his eyes crinkled.

“We haven’t officially met yet. I’m Tripp, Knox’s grandfather and President of the Savage Vipers MC.”

“Nova Williamson,” I said as I offered my free hand to him.

“Nova, you want to fill me in on why you’re going to live with my son in the first place?”

I managed to get my whole pathetic story out as the man sat there and listened with the patience of a saint.

“Where is your family?”

“I don’t have family anymore,” I told him.

“Sorry to hear that. Well, my son has taken you under his wing, that means you get club protection. Don’t worry for a minute about this pervert you’ve been renting a room from.

He'll be dealt with, and you won't have to be subjected to that bullshit again."

"I was serious about Ashlynn. What if she doesn't want me there? She hasn't exactly been very nice and welcoming to me just as a babysitter."

"Let my son worry about that, okay? She won't be a problem, and if she is, we'll find you a place to stay. My brother-in-law has a house with a detached garage that has an apartment above it. My daughter used it before she went on a trip across country. If it's open, I'm sure they wouldn't mind putting you up there, but I don't think that will be necessary."

I swiped at a stupid tear that fell.

"Aw, come on now, none of that. Can't be known as the asshole who makes women cry."

I chuckled at the man, which was his intent in the first place. "Thank you for being so kind to me."

"Thank you for taking such good care of my grandson. Don't think we all haven't noticed that you spend more time with the little man than his own mother does." He gave me a knowing look and then sighed before leaning forward and wrapping a hand gently around Knoxville's head.

"He's growing so fast," the man lamented. "Seems like just yesterday that I held Kip when he was this small." Tripp shook his head. "Damn if time doesn't fly like a motherfucker."

There really wasn't anything for me to say to that, so I remained quiet and watchful as the man stared at his grandson with a wistful expression that reminded me of the way Jeremy

used to look at me when I was growing up. It was a wish that time could pause on that moment.

“You need anything, holler. I’ll be out here to handle whatever comes up. If any of the women here bother you, just yell and one of the men will set ‘em straight. I’ll let Scout and Mitzi know to look out for you and check in once in a while to see that you have everything you need.” He seemed to think about what he’d just said. “Probably just Mitzi, now that I think about it.”

He left after that without an explanation, and I had no clue who Mitzi was, so I supposed none of it really mattered anyway.

When I first started working for Kip and Ashlynn, I wasn’t sure what to expect from a biker and his wife. Everything I knew about motorcycle clubs was from things I’d seen on TV. It made me immediately want to feel bad for Ashlynn. If what I’d seen on TV had been any indication, she was probably treated like shit and cheated on all the time.

I also figured Kip would be an asshole, hard to deal with if he even bothered getting involved with his son’s care personally. All my preconceived notions had gone out the window as the first month passed. I thought that Kip would be the person in the relationship who was completely checked out, maybe hitting on the babysitter or asking if I had friends.

That hadn’t been the case. Kip was one hundred percent respectful, and if I were to suspect either of them of carrying on an extra marital affair, it would be her. No realtor worked the hours she did. Maybe if they lived somewhere like New

York City or Los Angeles, but not in the middle of nowhere, southern Georgia.

This was God's country where people believed in keeping business hours and taking the Lord's Day off every single Sunday. How else were they supposed to go to church and still have time to sip sweet tea on their front porches while talking about how little their neighbors tithed this week, or that Becky Sue's dress had been just a tad too scandalous for Sunday service?

I didn't think that Kip was dumb, but for some reason he seemed blind to Ashlynn's lies about her whereabouts. It wasn't my place to point that out, so I kept quiet about the things that I couldn't prove. Speculation could make me lose my job. Truth, with proof, would also probably cost me the job, but at least I'd be saving someone the heartache my mom put Jeremy and me through.

Kip was a catch. Even if he wasn't the right person for me, I knew that Ashlynn was lucky to have him. He loved their little boy something fierce, was a kindhearted man, and one who could still be tough and get things done when it was called for. He was the one who took care of his son when I was at school, not the child's mother. In fact, I'd only seen the woman interact with her baby twice in the whole time I'd been working for them.

I'd always pictured myself with someone more like my dad. Well, more like the father I'd known growing up - Jeremy Williamson - the businessman who attended church faithfully every Sunday, never cursed in mixed company -unless he just found out that his daughter wasn't his biologically.

Maybe, knowing that the suits and money didn't help keep his wife faithful, had changed my attitude on where I should find happiness. I didn't think I'd find it with a man like Breakneck, who regularly took two women to his bed, but the appeal with him was in knowing exactly what to expect.

I couldn't see Breakneck sticking around after an unwanted pregnancy the way Kip had done, but I also figured he'd never lead a person on to believe he was in love with them while creating a whole different family with someone else. He was the happy medium between the duty and obligation Kip lived by and the insanity my mother created.

Besides the physical aspects of Breakneck's unbelievable body and handsome face, I truly thought that was what appealed the most about him. You always knew where you stood with the man.

It only took a little over an hour before Kip and Breakneck both marched themselves back through the clubhouse doors. They immediately headed in my direction as Kip started to explain himself.

"We went to pick your shit up. Your landlord wasn't there, but I think he may have stolen your stuff."

My eyes widened. That would be awful, since I only had about two bags worth of stuff to begin with, thanks to the books I'd purchased for the semester.

"My books?" I asked, unable to hide the fear in my voice.

"I dropped them off out in your car," Kip explained. "There weren't any clothes in the drawers though."

I blew out a relieved breath. “That’s because I have them all with me,” I explained.

“You what?”

“They’re out in my car in an old book bag.”

“You’re telling me that your entire wardrobe fits into an old bookbag?” Breakneck asked.

Knowing he was listening in, and had seen where I’d been living, made me feel deep shame for my circumstances. I shouldn’t have. Everything I had, I earned through hard work and never took handouts from anyone. Still, it sucked for people to know that I only had the clothes on my back and a few others besides and that I’d basically been living out of a single room in a house.

When I didn’t answer Breakneck spoke again. “We need to know if you’re being serious, because otherwise, that pervert was stealing your shit.”

“No. My stuff is all in my car. The only thing I left there were a few of my college books because they’re heavy and when I tried to lug all of them around, they ripped my other bag a bit.”

“Jesus.” Breakneck turned to Kip. “Get her to your house and straighten that situation out.” He turned to me then. “I’m picking you up at seven. We’re going to grab some dinner and get to know one another.”

He was not asking. The man basically demanded a date from me. At least, that was what he seemed to imply. “Like a date?” I asked as heat bloomed in my cheeks.

His answering smirk was only slightly humiliating, but the fact that he didn't even answer made things worse. He walked away as Kip lifted his son from the playpen.

“Come on, let's get you to the house, so I can show you to your new room.”

“Are you sure about this?” I asked again.

“Positive.”



Chapter 11

Breakneck

I'd been looking forward to picking Nova up to take her out on our date, but there were a few things I needed to deal with before that could happen. Unfortunately, none of my shit was going to get done that day, since the prospect we had watching the house where Nova had been living, alerted Kip and me to the owner finally showing up. Kip dropped off his nanny and son at his house before making his way back to the clubhouse to meet me, so that we could go take care of business.

“How's your new house mouse working out for you?” I teased Kip as he pulled up next to me in the clubhouse parking lot.

“She's not a fucking house mouse, ya dick.”

I grunted my disapproval at my brother. “She would be if that was my place. What your woman don't know won't hurt her.”

There was no way I wanted Kip to stick his dick in Nova, but the waters needed to be tested before I went there. If I had to come off like an asshole to figure out if he was into her, then so be it. He might have married Ash to ensure his son's safety, but she wasn't his old lady, since he'd never claimed her with the club and refused to allow her to be inked with his

name. The truth of the matter was, Kip being into Nova might not deter me from trying to go there.

Kip shook his head. “One day, you’re going to realize there is more to pussy than quantity, brother.”

“You’re just scared your old lady will put your balls in a jar over the bar.”

We both laughed at that, though Kip’s laughter was a little less comfortable than my own. No doubt, Ash would do exactly that and more.

“She’s not my old lady, man. That’s a title you give the woman who has your heart. Ash could have had that a long time ago, but she fucked up and that ship sailed. I think we both know that if I was ever going to cheat on Ash, there’s only one person that would hold my interest and she...”

As Kip spoke, one of the prospects kicked their ride in gear and made a hellacious noise, causing me to miss some of what he said. I thought I got the gist of it but couldn’t be sure if he was talking about Nova, or if he was still infatuated with Scout.

“What the fuck, now?” I asked.

“Fuck’s sake, Break, pay attention. I said that if I was going to cheat on my wife, it wouldn’t be with my nanny. There’s only one other woman I want.”

“Wait, are you saying Virgin Mary isn’t your type?”

“That’s what I just fucking said,” Kip chuckled his way through the answer. “Damn, man is that what you’ve been calling my nanny?”

“What? Virgin Mary? Hell yeah. Tell me it’s not fitting.” I’d only thought it a few times, but I wasn’t about to admit to Kip that I’d thought of her more as *my sweetness*.

Kip shook his head at me. “Try to remember it’s Nova when she’s at the clubhouse with my son, okay?” I shrugged my shoulders as we both turned our bikes around and got situated. “Let’s go make that fucker pay.”

“Who?” I asked, thinking there was something else I might have missed when the prospect revved his too-loud monster of a bike.

“Dave, man.”

“Who the fuck is Dave?”

“Jesus, if I throw some lube between my lips, and pretend they’re part of a pussy, will you fucking listen to what they’re saying?”

I laughed so hard that I damn near fell off my Harley. “Probably not, man. Don’t give a fuck what pussy lips are saying, just how snugly they hug me. I’m thinking you don’t want to test out your snugness, brother.” I reached down and adjusted my cock to emphasize my point.

“Let’s go nab Nova’s pervert of a landlord. You have a date with her later, and if that doesn’t work out, I have no doubt that you’ll be fucking your way through the club whores. Do me a favor though,” he requested in a more serious tone.

“What’s that?”

“Don’t fuck the girl up.” He must have seen the question in my eyes but didn’t wait to let me ask it. Kip shook his head. “Don’t make her fall for you and then break her heart. She’s

the best damn thing that's happened to Knox, and honest to fuck, don't know what I'd do without her."

"I'm not careless."

Kip laughed. "Don't think I've ever seen you date anyone unless you call taking a couple whores to your bedroom for the night a date. Even then, I can't vouch that you're not careless with them in other ways."

"Nuh-uh. Wrap it before you tap it, brother. I never forget that shit. I always care when it comes to possibly getting saddled with a crotch goblin who has a whore for a momma and me as a dad." I shivered visibly.

"Pregnancy isn't all you need to worry about. You know you can get shit from eating pussy, right?"

"You know the club bitches get tested regularly. Do you hear me lecturing your ass about the one and only ice queen pussy you're tapping?" I punched his shoulder to seal my point in with a little pain.

"Fine!" Kip threw his arms up in the air and then turned to leave. "Let's get this shit done. This fucker needs to pay for even thinking of messing with someone like Mary."

"Mary, huh? Maybe it's you who needs to remember your nanny's name."

"Fuck! This is why I hate you!"

I grinned as I started up my V-Rod. She was a custom ride with a silver-dip paint job that made her shine in the light like the gorgeous fucking star of the show that she was. The handlebars were trimmed low and lean like the street bikes I

raced while still having the laid-back appeal typical of Harley cruisers.

In keeping everything streamlined, there was no bitch seat on the back and not even enough fender for someone to ride it. My beauty was a solo machine and the only commitment I was willing to make. Then again, I had other bikes, too. There were the ones I raced along with a Dyna Glide that was getting on in years. I hardly used her because she could equip a passenger and that shit was not happening. The one and only woman to ride behind me had been my mother before she passed.

We rode out, and let the fucking wind take everything away like it always did. There were no fucking worries when I was on one of my bikes. Just speed, wind, and the roar of the engine. It was my peace. Un-fucking-fortunately, it didn't last near long enough. The ride to the run-down, beat-to-shit Victorian home was too short to put me in my happy place, so this fucker – whoever he was – would take the brunt of my frustrations.

“I still can't believe Virgin Mary was living here,” I said as we got off our bikes. Even I wanted to cringe at the nickname I'd inadvertently given her to hide the one I really used when I thought about her. My sweetness would never live in squaller like this again, and sure as fuck would not have to worry about Creepy Fuckin' Dave bothering her.

“Yeah, tell me about it.”

“She doesn't look like the type that grew up in this kind of squaller.”

“Remember, I said there was an issue with family and money. It's why she needed the job, to pay for her last two

semesters of college. I'm guessing she didn't always live like this."

"Hmm." I had already thought about all the possible scenarios when he'd mentioned that to me before. None of it seemed to matter anymore when the fuckwad, dickweasel who had been giving my sweetness a hard time opened the door.

The person who greeted us was not at all who I was expecting. I pictured a greasy, weaselly bastard. The asshole who stepped out of the house could have been an extra on an old school 1950s television show. He wore a checkered, button-up shirt in pastel colors, thick framed glasses, and khaki pants with brown fucking loafers. His hair was slicked back with product, and he appeared the put-together momma's boy I'm sure he was trying to portray.

I didn't miss the fucking calculating, watchful eyes though. "You renting to a girl named Nova?" I asked.

His shoulders stiffened and that was all the answer I needed to know. Not that I needed an answer to want to kick his pansy ass from now into next Tuesday.

"What's she done? She only rents a room from me. I don't have any part in her business."

"How about the part where you watched her *do* her business?" I asked, the words tight as they left my mouth. Kip hadn't thought about the fact that his nanny might have showered at the local gym, but she had to use the toilet somewhere. If this guy had cams in the shower stall, they were probably in other, more subtle places, as well.

“W-w-what?” The asshole stuttered as Kip turned to meet my gaze. It was after he took a leak in the bathroom earlier that the thought occurred to me that his dick might be in this fuckwad’s spank bank now.

“Fuck!” The word was hissed under Kip’s breath as he realized we were here for more than giving this fucker an ass whooping. We needed to find out what kind of videos he had, how many, and exactly what the fuck he’d been doing with them.

I stepped closer and the little shit at the door immediately moved backward. “Don’t give a fuck what kind of perv you are, we need to see her room, see if she has our shit in there.” No point tipping the fucker off to our actual plans. Getting into the house without forcing our way in during broad daylight was the best option.

“What kind of shit?”

“That’s not your fucking concern,” I spat at him.

“I think you should wait until Nova comes back.”

Kip shook his head and moved closer to the porch. “Nah, not gonna do that. We’re already here now.”

“She takes everything with her when she leaves,” the rat bastard told us.

“How the fuck would you know that?” I asked through gritted teeth. Unless the asshole did inventory in her room after she left, there was no way for him to know except with the cameras he’d placed. The lamp facing her bed came to mind and I started to see red.

“We’re taking anything she left behind,” Kip told the douche at the same time.

“No way. I should call the police.”

I laughed so hard that there was no doubt the asshole could feel the boom of vibration from where he stood. “That’s rich! The fucking pervert with the cameras in the shower thinks it will go well when he invites the police to come by for a check-in!”

Kip and I wasted no more time, even though the scared little prick scurried into his house and threw the door shut, he was no match for either of us. One boot to the door and the frame splintered then buckled beneath the pressure. I had my fingers wrapped around his scrawny neck before he could mutter another fucking word. Kip immediately began a search for the asshole’s video equipment.

“So, you like spying on innocent little girls, huh?” My sweetness might have been innocent, but she was far from a little girl. I knew that, but it didn’t mean this asshole really knew fuck-all about her. “You know she’s underage? That’s child porn you’re peddling.” Yeah, I wasn’t above lying to assholes or needling them. What I didn’t expect was to see his eyes flare with interest.

“Oh, I see, that’s your kink. She fit the bill because she’s short, mousy, and innocent looking, huh?”

The asshole grinned, unable to hold it in, even as I had my hand wrapped around his neck. His eyes shifted to the room that Kip tore apart.

“You don’t have to wreck things. I will share what I have,” the fucker rasped.

“You’ll share? That a regular thing for you? You share your footage?”

He attempted to shake his head but couldn’t because of the hold I still had on his pencil neck. “No way, that’s how you get caught. Since you’re here though, there’s no digital footprint for anyone to trace.” He reached up, with what must have been balls of fucking steel, and tapped a finger to my 1% patch.

I nodded twice before increasing the pressure on his neck with my fingers. Then, I let my other fist fly directly into the motherfucker’s dick. That had been a mistake because the asshole had a hard-on.

“You got a thing for kids? Young girls? Innocent women? You think because I wear that patch, it means we do, too?”

His eyes rounded in surprise even as his face contorted with the pain of being punched in the dick. “S-s-s-sorry,” he whimpered as his knees hit the floor when I released my hold on him.

My boot met his face next, and I watched with satisfaction as a tooth flew from his mouth as his head snapped back. “What was that? You’re sorry? Fuck you! You little fucking scavenger. Who owns this house?”

The whimpering little maggot couldn’t answer because he was too busy spitting up blood. No matter, we had people in the club who could tell me everything I needed to know. The club was about to take ownership of another house. The only

problem with this one was all the skeletons we would eventually find buried there.

“Call for a prospect to come in a cage to pick up the trash. We’re going to need to hang onto him for a bit,” Kip called out.

“Why is that?”

“Snuff.”

“Snuff?” My head shot back as I questioned his assessment. “You serious?”

Kip made his way back out to the living room where Creepy Fucking Dave was rolling on the floor in pain. He kicked him as he drew closer. “I found this shit,” Kip growled as he passed some photos to me.

“Fucking hell! You were serious?” I flipped through more photos until I got to the end of the rapid-click collection that formed a sort of moving picture when they were shuffled through quickly. It was a young girl, had to be early teens – if that. By the final picture, the life had drained from her eyes. They wore that vacant sheen that only death left in its wake.

“Are you calling Prez?” Kip nodded at my question before turning away from the maggot on the floor. “I called a prospect to come collect our fucking prisoner so he could be taken in for questioning.”

I didn’t get my ride. Didn’t get a fight either because the pathetic mass of goo at my feet didn’t even bother to duck, much less fight back. It was beginning to look like fucking was off the table, too. Not only because my time would be consumed with sorting through the mess Virgin Mary had

inadvertently dropped us in, but because I was too disgusted by what we found to even think about getting my dick hard, let alone sticking it anywhere. All three of my outlets for blowing off steam were taken from me, but I'd have to deal with the frustration because it meant my sweetness was safe and wouldn't be another one of this asshole's victims.

“Your girl is lucky as fuck you needed a live-in nanny.”

“Tell me about it,” Kip huffed before he turned his attention back toward the call he was on with his father, our chapter president. When he finished up, he turned to stare at the house, as if it would give him all the answers he needed.

“I need to get back to my house before Ash shows up and starts shit with the nanny. Prez has someone there watching over her and Knox for now. Considering what we just found, she'll either need to be put on lockdown or kept under guard until we can make this bastard talk.”

“Fuck man, don't care what's going on. I promised that girl a date tonight, and I'm still going to take her out before her world is fucked all to hell.”

“You're the fucking knuckle dragger for the club, man. She'll be safe with you, so I don't think anyone will argue that.”

“Fucking knuckle dragger,” I grumbled as I tipped the toe of my foot down on Creepy Fucking Dave's throat.

Kip smirked at me. “Knuckle Dragger, Enforcer, it's all the same thing.” He moved closer to the door he'd been staring at. “I'm going to check something out.” The minute Kip stuck his

hand out like he was going to touch the doorknob, the fucker beneath my foot started squirming like crazy.

“Seems like this fucker doesn’t want you opening that door. Maybe that’s the closet where his skeletons are buried.”

“Funny, because that’s just what I was thinking.” Kip opened it and seemed shocked at first. “It’s a fucking basement.”

“We’re in South Georgia, man. We don’t have basements here.”

“This asshole sure does.” Kip took a few steps down, stopped and mumbled, “Holy fucking shit,” and then ran down the rest of the way. I wanted to go see what the fuck he found, but it was more important to make sure I kept the asshole whose throat was beneath my boot secured.

“What did you find?”

“Nothing fucking good, man. Remind me to tell little Mary just how lucky she was when I get back to the house.”

“Mary, huh?” I tried to fuck with him about the fact that he was calling her that now, too. Kip didn’t respond though.

“All good or do I need to knock this son of a bitch out and come down there?”

Feet clomped up the stairs and Kip hacked a couple times, gagging over whatever he’d seen down there. “We were right,” he huffed while trying to catch his breath.

“About?”

“That’s where he hides his skeletons all right, but I think he does a lot more than just hide them. The sick fucker visits

them and..." Kip gagged again. That was when I knew it was bad because the only other time I ever saw evidence that he might have even the slightest bit of a weak stomach was the shit factory explosion his son caused in the back of my truck the day we met his nanny.

"Kip, what the fuck is going on?"

"He's been killing them, keeping their corpses, and from the looks of it, fucking them long after they were dead."

"What the absolute fuck?" I growled as my toes tipped down heavier on the asshole's neck again. "Are you fucking serious?"

"Yeah, man. There's an array of tech down there that I don't understand. Wires everywhere," he quickly called out his assessment. "I'm guessing they're from cameras, but it seems like there's more than just the bathroom."

"Fucking hell!" It was bad enough to know that Nova probably hadn't been able to take a piss where she lived without being filmed, but to know that I'd been right about the bastard watching her sleep, dress, and anything else she did in her room made my blood boil.

"You're going to have to get your guy on this, I think," Kip ordered, then thought better of it. "Actually, we'll need to wait for Prez's okay on that, considering the nature of shit going down here, he might want to keep everything in house."

"We'll check with Prez, first. Might need another man sitting on the front and back of the house until we can figure out what the fuck we're doing with it and everything we found though."

“Already texted Mack and Tripp.” Kip shook his head. “That sick fuck has a lot to answer for.” He pointed at the bastard who stunk to high heaven as he pissed himself for a second time.

“Prospect is going to hate transport duty today.”

“Just make sure whoever shows up knows to take this shit seriously and get him back to the clubhouse in one fucking piece and able to speak.” Kip glanced down at where my foot had been intermittently applying pressure to the asshole’s throat. “At the very least make sure he’s still able to write his answers to our question. Might want to ease up there, Break. We need the cocksucker breathing. For now.”

~*~

I sat down at the bar, needing a drink after we got back from that freakshow house of horrors.

“You look incredibly tense, Break. What’s up?”

“Kip and I went back,” I groused to Scout.

“Back where?”

I glanced up and over my shoulder where Scout stood, and instead of leaving her there, I pulled her around to sit on the stool beside me.

“You know who his nanny is? The one I asked you to run a check on,” I clarified needlessly as Scout nodded. “Well, she was renting a room in this asshole’s house of motherfuckin’ horrors.”

“So, she wasn’t homeless then?”

“Turns out, she was showering at the gym because he’d been bugging her to shower at the house. Girl was smart enough to be suspicious and looked around the shower. She found something that seemed out of place, thought it might be a camera, and refused to shower there anymore. She thought he was watching her with just one camera.”

“The pervert had a camera in her shower?”

I shook my head. “No. The motherfucker had three in the shower alone, and more stashed through the house.”

“Were they connected to a live feed?”

“Don’t know. Why? Shit, not even sure how to tell something like that.”

“Breakneck, tell me everything now,” Scout demanded.

After explaining everything we found, Scout moved directly to her laptop and started digging for me. “I’ll do what I can from here to see if I can pinpoint anything that’s been going out from that address, but you might have to get me cleared to go into the house.”

“I’ll see what I can do. I want to know immediately if that fucker was streaming anything. We are still questioning the nasty fuck, but who knows if he’ll give up any real information.

“Is Kip interrogating the man now?”

I shook my head. “Asshole is passed out. Didn’t even put him through that much pain,” I complained. “Pussy!”

“Where is Kip?”

“He went back to check on the nanny. He’s moving her into his guestroom to be a full-time live-in.” When Scout gave me a weird look, I shook my head at her again. “It ain’t even like that. I’m supposed to go take her out to dinner later. Trust me, if I thought there was anything between them, I wouldn’t go there.”

Scout laughed. “Yes, you would. He’s married and you know he won’t step out on that cunt.”

“Then why did you look at me like that, if you know he wouldn’t go there?”

“I’m worried for the girl. If you two idiots think that Ashlynn is going to take it well that a beautiful coed, who plays mommy to her kid more than she does, is moving into her house, then you’re both stupid.”

“That’s a Kip problem to fix.”

“I’ll get a room ready here, just in case,” she said before giving all of her attention over to her laptop. Scout was a mastermind with the damn thing. She was my go-to source for information because the woman already had my trust. My brothers wouldn’t look too favorably on me using a club whore for information, though. So, we kept it strictly between the two of us. If things went sideways with this fucking Dave character and the videos he was taking, that might have to change.

“Are you ready for things, if I need to tell Tripp about your involvement?” I asked as quietly as possible.

“I’ll deal with whatever fallout comes my way, Break.”

“I don’t think it will be a matter of fallout, Scout. Pretty sure Tripp will surprise us all.”

She rolled her eyes and gestured for me to go away with the flap of her hand. After the way things went down with Kip, I couldn’t blame her for not having faith in the situation. The Savage Vipers had always been a brotherhood, even though our charter allowed women to be members, there had never been one, and that was what Scout would need to be if she got too deeply involved where club business was concerned.



Chapter 12

Nova

I stared at my go-bag. The fact that I knew what a go-bag was should have been laughable. Unfortunately, I'd learned the hard way to be prepared for any circumstances that might arise. The broken bag held all the clothes I possessed, a tiny bit of emergency cash, and any important schoolwork that was due soon.

Truthfully, I turned every assignment in as early as they would allow, so that I didn't have to hang on to any of it, potentially lose it, and have to start over again. What happened to me, the previous semester when the goons sent by the Williamson family came to repossess my life, was never going to be repeated.

To trust that I was safe and put my clothes into the drawers Kip provided or not? That was the debate waging war in my mind. Eventually, I settled on staring at my over-burdened bag and wishing that I had a safe place to call home where no one could kick me out again.

It was a dream that seemed so far removed from my reality, that it was almost impossible to comprehend, let alone fantasize about. Instead, I turned my fantasies toward the big biker who had dominated my dreams since our first meeting. What would it be like for him to surprise me with a birthday cake and him lying naked with it sitting there between us, in a

bed that we shared, in a house that was safe and could never be taken from me?

That was the ultimate fantasy, wasn't it? It would certainly be my birthday wish for next year.

Only, I knew it would never be a reality. The man of my dreams, from what I'd heard and seen, was not even close to being a one-woman man. The house and bed I dreamed of... Well, they were wishes that wouldn't be fulfilled for some time, considering I still had school to pay for.

My birthday was in a week, two days before Halloween. I would officially be an adult then. Sure, everyone says you're an adult at eighteen, but no one takes a teenager seriously. Twenty was the first true step to adulthood when you could officially say you were no longer a teenager. Twenty-one would be when I could legally drink, but I didn't really care about that milestone. Drinking, drugs, and indiscriminate sex had all been vices that my mother enjoyed and look where her issues landed me. Her problems had dropped me into a sea of uncertainty and an ocean of loneliness.

“What in the hell are you doing in here?”

I snapped my head around to see Ashlynn standing in the doorway of the bedroom Kip told me would be mine. Anger blazed from her eyes as her cheeks reddened in fury. I also didn't miss the fact that her fists were clenched into tight little balls that were ready to strike out.

“You babysit for us. You don't get cozy in one of our beds, you little whore!” She screeched at me, which must have finally caught Kip's attention. Thankfully, he'd come home a few minutes before she did. I knew my being at their house

permanently would be a problem for his wife, even if he seemed delusional about it. She barely tolerated me out of need for someone steady to watch their son while she worked, or whatever it was she did that kept her from coming home at all hours of the day and night.

“Ash!” Kip hissed at her.

“Don’t you ‘Ash’ me! What the hell is she doing on a bed in our guest bedroom?”

I stood and swooped down to scoop my two bags up. The one with all my books was heavy enough that I heard the rip of fabric. I’d forgotten that Kip told me it had not been able to handle the weight earlier. I’d just made it worse by not holding onto it properly.

I placed both bags on the bed and started shuffling things around before a strong hand landed on top of mine.

“Stop. You’re not going anywhere,” he said to me in a quiet, placating tone that would have been better served to quell his wife’s anger than my worries.

“Like hell she’s not! This is overstepping!”

“Ashlynn, you selfish fucking bitch, shut the hell up for two minutes and maybe I can explain before you insult our nanny so much that she leaves and never comes back.”

“Oh, she’s leaving all right!”

“STOP!” Kip’s voice boomed so loudly it startled both Ashlynn and me. It also woke the baby who started fussing in his crib. I moved on instinct to go to him, but Ashlynn blocked the doorway.

“If you think you’re going to put your filthy whore hands on my son, you better think again.”

“Ashlynn, one more fucking word from you, before I explain the situation, and you can go back to stay with your mother permanently.” Kip’s angry tone was so cold that it made me shiver. Then he moved her aside and tipped his head indicating silently that I should go to his son while he handled his wife.

“I’ll go to my mother’s and take Knox with me, you fucking cheating bastard.”

Kip laughed, though I didn’t think there was any humor in the sound. “First of all, I’m pretty sure our skittish little nanny is still a virgin. Second, that’s neither of our business. Third, Breakneck would probably throw down if he thought for two seconds that I tried to lay claim to the girl. Fourth, she’s here because her previous landlord was filming her in the shower and the club is about to handle that shit.

“She needs a place to stay. I have a run coming up that will take me away for a few nights. You’re never home with our son. Having a live-in nanny seems like the only option we have right now and the best option for that girl to get on her feet and not have to fear that a fucking pervert is watching her use the fucking bathroom where she lives.”

There was an audible gasp or two in the mix as Ashlynn processed what Kip was telling her. After that, I tuned everything out and focused on Knoxville and getting him back to sleep, despite his parent’s continued bickering.

“It’s probably a good thing I didn’t unpack that bag, huh? Only now, I really have nowhere to go.” I sighed so long that it

was a wonder my lungs could possibly have any breath left in them.

“I didn’t realize,” Ashlynn said from where she stood by the doorway to Knoxville’s room. I glanced up at her and she seemed almost repentant for the things she had said to me earlier, though she couldn’t bring herself to actually apologize for any of it. “At least you’ll be around for all hours now.”

I shook my head. “I still have to go to my classes, so my schedule of availability hasn’t changed all that much.”

Ashlynn huffed. “What good is a nanny who can’t even be here during the day?” She asked before turning and walking away. Kip moved into the doorway and swiveled his head from the direction his wife had just trounced off to and where I stood rocking his son back and forth.

“Don’t let anything she says get to you. She’s the mother of that baby you’re holding. She’s home, and you’re the one still taking care of him. My wife’s place in this house might not be, but don’t ever doubt that your job is secure, Nova.”

While Kip’s declaration made me feel a little better, it also made my heart hurt for him and their son. What was wrong with the woman that she couldn’t be happy with a man like him? More importantly, why couldn’t she be a good mother to her son?

It didn’t really matter in the end, but the doorbell going off made me forget all about my questions where Ashlynn was concerned because it brought about a whole other level of drama.

“What in the hell are you doing here?” I heard Ashlynn ask after the door was opened.

“I came to pick up Nova,” a man stated. I knew exactly who that voice belonged to and memory of him telling me that he’d be by to pick me up later surfaced.

“Oh, hell no! We’re not doing this. I told that girl, when she first started working for us that I wouldn’t tolerate another club slut hanging around, caring for my kid.”

“Shut up, Ashlynn!” I was shocked by the vehemence in Kip’s demand.

“Don’t you tell me to shut up!”

“You are home, and Nova’s still in there taking care of our son, it’s not like you have a leg to stand on here since you don’t want to be a mother to Knox.”

“You bastard!” She shrieked at him.

“Call Tripp, see if he can watch Knox so you two can go out. I don’t want him here for this,” Kip barked, but I didn’t think he was speaking to his wife then. I cautiously rounded the corner and my eyes immediately met with Breakneck’s as he stood in the doorway of their house. He pushed past Ashlynn without much regard for her and made his way to me.

“Are you okay?”

I shook my head. “Kip said it was okay to be here, but I don’t know. Ashlynn’s been mostly yelling at, or about, me since she got home. I don’t think I should be here, but I don’t really have anywhere else to go now.”

“Kip!” Breakneck growled.

“Nova, I promise, you are not the problem. You are more than welcome to stay in *MY* house! If anyone is going to leave, it will be Ash. She can go stay with her mom if it’s too much hassle for her to be a decent freaking wife and mother for a change.”

Ashlynn’s close-lipped scowl was the only response he got.

“And she won’t be commenting on who anyone else is dating, going to dinner with, or their school schedule that we knew about in advance. Isn’t that right?” Kip asked her.

At first, I didn’t think Ashlynn would answer him. “I told you that I don’t want club whores around my son!”

“So, just because Nova is going out to dinner with Breakneck, that makes her a club whore?” Kip asked.

She snidely tilted her head and thrust her hip out, though she didn’t offer a verbal response.

“What does that make you then?” He asked.

“Excuse me? We’re married!”

“We only got married because you got pregnant and told me you’d kill the baby, or hide it from me, if I didn’t agree to it. Before that, I remember you fucking one of my best friends and a club girl on a pool table in the middle of the clubhouse when you knew your best friend had a crush on him. Nova is only going to dinner with a man. There’s a world of difference between the two. Stop being a hypocrite, stop judging people for being associated with your husband’s club, and stop being a cunt to our nanny in general. She’s the one caring for our son every hour out of the day that she isn’t at school, unless I have him.”

“I can’t believe you just brought that up!” She whined to Kip.

“I can’t believe you keep insinuating our nanny is some kind of whore and going out of your way to make her feel uncomfortable. She’s never been anything but kind to us, and more importantly, to our son.”

Ashlynn glared at everyone in the room before flouncing out of the house. A few minutes later, headlights came on and then disappeared as she pulled out of the driveway. I don’t think it was lost on any of us that she left without her son again.

“I didn’t mean to cause any problems,” I apologized.

“You’re not doing that,” Breakneck placated as he wrapped an arm around my shoulder. “That was all on Ash, not you.”

“You didn’t do anything wrong, Nova. I hate that you’re stuck in the middle of my wife’s bullshit. I’m not sure what’s going on with her, but she’s just taking her own miserable crap out on everyone else lately. Please, don’t quit and leave because of her.”

I chuckled, though it was more a sound of anxiety bubbling out than mirth. “I can’t actually quit, so I’ll just have to deal with the abuse.”

“Fuck that!” Breakneck growled before he turned to Kip. “Do something about your wife, or Nova can take your room at the clubhouse, and watch your kid from there.”

Kip nodded and then moved to take his son from my arms. “You’ve had a hell of a night. Why don’t you go enjoy some

good food, even if the company is shit,” he teased as he smirked at Breakneck.

“Company’s just fine, asshole,” Breakneck tossed back at him.

“Can you give me a minute to grab a different shirt?” I asked while pointing at the drool mark Knoxville left behind on my shoulder.

Breakneck tipped his chin up in acknowledgment, so I took off for the bedroom and grabbed my go-bag. After pulling a shirt out and changing, I tucked the other inside and then hefted the bag onto my shoulder before joining the two men in the living room again.

“You won’t need your bag,” Breakneck informed me.

My heart started hammering in my chest immediately. “I’d prefer to have it with me.”

“Jesus,” I thought I heard Kip mumble.

“Okay, let’s go,” Breakneck added. I didn’t miss the look that passed between the two men, but that didn’t mean I was able to decipher it beyond knowing that the men weren’t happy with me insisting I had my belongings along for the ride.



Chapter 13

Breakneck

“I hope we’re not going anywhere fancy,” Nova lamented as she moved toward my truck.

“Do I look like the fancy type to you?”

Her shoulders bounced. “I try not to judge people by how they look.”

This girl was something else. “Well, we’re not going anywhere fancy.”

“Okay. Why are we taking your truck and not a motorcycle. It’s a nice night,” she stated while staring up at the darkening sky.

“It is a nice night, but I don’t let any bitches ride behind me.”

Nova stopped with her hand extended toward the truck door and turned back around. I was on the other side of the truck, about to hop in, when I realized she was moving. And it wasn’t to get into my damn truck. The infuriating woman was headed back to the house.

“Where are you going? You couldn’t have forgotten anything, since it’s all strapped to your back in that bag.” Admittedly, I regretted my comment the minute it slipped free of my idiotic fucking lips.

Nova continued walking and ignored me.

“Nova! Wait, I’m sorry. That was uncalled for.”

“Which part?”

“What the fuck do you mean?”

“Which part was uncalled for?”

“The part where I just insulted you by commenting about all your belongings being on your back.”

“That’s not an insult, since it’s true.” She turned and continued to walk back to the house.

“Then why are you walking away from me?”

“Did I call you a ‘dick’?” She asked.

“No.”

“Did I call you an ‘asshole’?”

“No,” I answered slowly, unsure where in the hell the crazy woman was going with this.

“No, I didn’t, did I?” She insisted or maybe it was a question. The distinction probably didn’t matter because I could hear the sarcasm in her tone. “Well, I don’t appreciate being called a bitch.” She stomped up the couple steps to Kip’s porch and then opened the door, shut it, and swear to fucking all that is right in the world, I even heard her throw the locks.

My phone dinged.

Kip: *The fuck did you do to my nanny?*

Breakneck: *No fucking clue.*

Kip: *You better examine whatever the fuck you said to her and get a clue then.*

Breakneck: *Why?*

Kip: *I was just about to get my dad to come get Knox when Nova came in and volunteered to take him.*

Breakneck: *Fuck me.*

I got back out of my truck in time to see Nova barreling back out the house with Knoxville tucked on one hip and a diaper bag slung over her shoulder. Her overburdened backpack was still snug against her back. Kip followed quickly at her heels.

“You really don’t have to do this,” he called after her.

“Your dad can’t get away, Ashlynn took off, and I have the car seat in my car anyway. It’s fine,” Nova argued.

“But you were about to go out on a date.”

“It got cancelled,” she told him while I was still standing right there beside my truck, stunned as fuck.

Kip chuckled as he slid his eyes my way briefly. “I’m not sure Breakneck got the memo about the cancelation, Nova.”

She shrugged her shoulders with a great deal of effort considering the weight burdening them. “That’s his problem.”

“Can I ask why you cancelled the date?” Kip finally inquired. Good because I wanted to know the answer, too.

“He called me a bitch.”

“He did what the fuck?” Kip turned narrowed eyes on me, ready to commit murder. Son of a bitch. His nanny was just as

fucking crazy as his wife. The asshole was a magnet for fucked up women.

“No, the fuck I didn’t.”

“What was your answer when I asked why we weren’t taking your motorcycle?” Her question came out in a snotty tone that didn’t match her beautiful innocence.

“I told you no bitches ride on the back of my bike,” I said, still not understanding. Kip apparently did because the bastard doubled over laughing.

“Sorry, Nova. Not laughing at you. I’m laughing at that clueless motherfucker who just talked himself out of a date.”

She didn’t bother to say a word to Kip or me, she got in the car, backed down the other side of the driveway and left without another word.

“What the fuck just happened?” I asked.

“You called her a bitch, and she didn’t like it.”

“I didn’t call her a bitch.”

“She asked why y’all weren’t taking a motorcycle, right?”

“Yeah.”

“And your answer was that no *bitches* ride on the back of your bike.”

“Something like that.”

“You called her a bitch, you dumbass.”

“I didn’t mean she was a bitch, and you know it.”

It was Kip’s turn to bob his shoulders up and down indifferently. “Doesn’t matter what I know, matters what she

thought you were saying.” Kip slugged me in the shoulder. “She’s a different kind of girl than you’re used to. If you’re going to go there with her, keep that in mind. If that’s too much trouble for you, then don’t go there. She’s good as fuck to my boy. She’s already skittish thanks to Ash’s attitude; I don’t want to lose her because you’re also an idiot.”

“This is bullshit,” I muttered. “This is why I stick to club pussy.”

“No, the fact that you stick to easy club pussy is why you don’t know how to act around a normal woman. Not knowing how to do that at your age is what is bullshit.”

“I’m not that old, fucker!”

“You’re twenty-eight. That’s old enough to know better than to insinuate she’s a bitch when you’re trying to take her out on a fucking date.”

Fuck! I seriously got stood the fuck up by my club brother’s virgin nanny because I told her bitches don’t ride on my bike. What the fuck was I thinking?

It didn’t really matter what I was thinking because for some reason, her turning me down on principle, made my traitorous fucking dick hard. Scout, being my only female friend, would probably tell me that I needed therapy if I ever admitted that shit to her.

“Gotta tell ya, I respect the fuck out of her for walking away from you. That girl knows how she wants to be treated and she won’t take any less, even if she does seem to be stuck inside her own little shell and scared of her shadow most of the time.

Makes me wonder what she was like before the world fucked her up.”

“Heading back to the club, man,” I finally told kip after staring at him for a bit. His assessment was dead on accurate, even if I didn’t like that it meant I was turned down for the first time ever. I hadn’t asked a woman out on a date since I was in high school, but still, I’d never been turned down, stood up, or told to fuck off by anyone.

When I got back to the clubhouse, I bypassed everyone and everything as quickly as possible to get to my room. There was no way I was stopping to talk to anyone and fucking any of the club women was off the fucking table for the night. It bothered me that my interest in sex wasn’t there after being turned down, but I figured my dick deserved a break. Plus, it didn’t help that fucking the club women was getting old. Kip was right. They posed no challenge at all, and where that had once been a turn on, it was slowly starting to lose its appeal.

~*~

It was nearly noon when I finally dragged my ass out of bed. It had been two fucking weeks since the blow up at Kip’s house, where his nanny ditched me. For two fucking weeks, I hadn’t touched any of the club women. Part of me was debating if my brother had been right about the bitches being too easy and keeping me from having any fucking game in the real world. I thought if I took a break from fucking easy pussy, it would help me figure out why I was so damn fixated on sweet little virgin Mary.

It still grated on my nerves that my little sweetness ditched out on our date. She probably needed the meal, and the time

away from Kip's place, but she chose to deal with a fucked-up level of chaos rather than have dinner with me. If I thought about it too hard, it made me want to kick myself in the dick. It was the same thing I'd been doing for the past two weeks. I should have gone to her and apologized, like I'd been meaning to ever since I'd accidentally insulted her.

Instead, I made my way out to the common area and ordered breakfast from the prospect who was bound to get his patch based on his cooking alone. No one even cared if he could shoot straight, fight, or fuck shit up in any way. The kid was magic behind the grill.

"How come you looked so pissed last night when you came in?" Dee asked as she took the stool next to mine while I shoveled eggs into my mouth.

"Shit night," I told her. It was true. Once again, I'd been watching the house of fucking horrors. We kept everything intact, as it was when we took Creepy fucking Dave from the house. The hope was that someone would eventually show to find out why the videos were no longer being produced. It didn't sit right that Dave was the only one behind the gruesome discoveries we'd made there.

"It was early when you got back, though. I would have helped make it better for you, if you'd asked."

"Appreciate you, Dee. Last night, I needed to get some sleep without a bunch of drama." Her shoulders stiffened, and before she ended up angry with me too, I backpedaled. "Not that you're ever drama, but you know the other club girls aren't necessarily easy to deal with."

“That’s true,” she admitted. “How about I make you feel better now?”

“Yeah?” I asked as my cock started to rise in interest. I wanted to celebrate the fact that I was finally getting a fucking hard-on again. It was good to know my sweetness hadn’t permanently broken my dick with her rejection.

“Yeah,” she whispered in her sultry voice before glancing around. “Me and Connie can treat you to double the pleasure, since we’re both available and you have a lonely night to make up for.”

I slid the empty breakfast plate across the bar to the prospect. “That sounds about right.” I stood and moved to the couch across the room. I liked to use that one, so that I could pay attention to whoever came through the clubhouse doors when I played. There was no need to head to my room.

There weren’t that many people around anyway. Since Virgin Mary was living at Kip’s place, she didn’t need to come by with the kid anymore either, so there was no reason to go hide out in a bedroom.

“Prospect, grab me a few condoms and toss them on the table. I’m going to need more than the one in my pocket,” I informed him while staring Dee down. She giggled as she allowed her skirt to drop to the floor.

“Where do you want me?” Connie asked as she came closer. I could tell by the way she spoke, and the timid way she approached me, that she wasn’t sure of her welcome after our last encounter a few weeks before.

“Right here,” I directed as I pulled her hips closer to gain access to her pussy. She was damn near at face level with the way I’d sunk down on the couch, but I quickly realized that wouldn’t work. I grabbed Dee, threw her on her knees on top of the couch, suited my cock up, and then slammed into her pussy.

“Connie, sit right here.” I patted the back of the couch. While she got situated, I lifted Dee’s tube top above her tits and used them as handles while I fucked her mercilessly for a few minutes. Once Connie was all set, I slowed my thrusts with Dee and started probing Connie’s cunt to see if she was ready. The bitch was dripping for me as I slid my fingers inside her. I pumped Dee with my cock, Connie with my fingers, and all my worries seemed to drain away as my attention was focused fully on fucking for the first time in weeks.

When Connie grabbed what little hair there was on my head, I went with it and kissed her, even though it wasn’t something I normally allowed. If my dumb ass hadn’t been on a hiatus from fucking, I would have thought better of it. Getting too close, personal, or intimate with the club girls always led to trouble. Always.



Chapter 14

Nova

“I have to go to work, so you need to stay here with Knoxville today,” Ashlynn ordered me at the butt-crack of dawn. It had been two weeks since I started living with her family. The only time she ever spoke to me was when she was heading out the door and telling me a vague answer to when she might return.

“No.”

“What do you mean, ‘No’? We pay you to be a nanny!”

Apparently, I was meant to spend the morning of my twentieth birthday arguing with my employer yet again. I sighed before responding to her. “Yes, you pay me to be a nanny and I have hours that I can’t work, that you both agreed to when you hired me. I’m up early today because I have a test in one of my classes that I need to study for before I go to school.”

She huffed. “Just take him with you.”

“I can’t take a baby to school with me, especially on an exam day.”

Ashlynn growled at me before turning and stomping off to her bedroom. Once I had a cup of juice, that I bought myself, I carried it back to my room so I could study in peace.

An hour later, Kip knocked on my door.

“I already told Ashlynn that I have class, and an important test today.”

“I know. She already lodged a complaint. I came to apologize and beg you to please stop by the clubhouse to pick up Knoxville whenever you get done.”

“I can do that.”

“Oh, and Nova, you need to start bringing me receipts for gas. If you drive Knoxville around, that cost isn’t coming out of your own pocket.”

He tapped the edge of my door and walked away, as if to stave off an argument. He wouldn’t have heard one from me anyway. Money was tight. There was no way I’d argue about not having to spend the little that was left over once I saved up for my tuition and books.

I wished that Knoxville was old enough to eat cake because part of me wanted to splurge on one of those little personal birthday cakes I always saw in the bakery section of the grocery store. Eating one by myself seemed a little too sad, though. It was probably silly of me to want to blow out a candle and wish for the man who hadn’t spoken to me in weeks to finally come to his senses. I was twenty years old now, wishes were for the era of my childhood.

~*~

My car’s irritability was getting on my nerves. It shimmied when the prospect on gate duty let me in, as if the darn thing suddenly didn’t like the gas that I was giving it.

“I can probably fix that hesitation issue for you,” a man called out to me when I stepped out of the car. I turned to see

someone closer to my age. He had what looked like black hair, though I could only see a shadow of its existence, thanks to the ballcap and close shave the man kept. His kind, dark eyes took me in with a gaze so penetrating it almost made me feel naked and caused me to squirm a bit.

“Either it will die, or it will wait, I can’t afford to get it fixed right now.” It still sucked every time I had to admit to someone that money was an obstacle, but it was also the truth and there was no getting around that.

“You work for Kip, right?” He asked.

“Yes.”

“You haul his kid around in that thing?”

I nodded my head, not liking where he was going with the questioning. “Toss me your keys. I’ll look at it while you’re here with the kid.”

“I was planning on just picking him up and heading back to the house.” My explanation didn’t seem to mean a thing to the man as he closed in on me.

“Darlin’, if I allowed you to take Knoxville out of here in that car after seeing it sputter the way it just did, Kip would have my hide. Go inside, hang out with the kid, grab some food, and do some studying or whatever you do. I’ll look at your car. It’s probably something I can fix easily enough with what we have lying around.”

I noted that his vest, what Kip informed me was called a cut, didn’t have a name on the front like most of the other men. “What is your name?”

“I’m Mikey. Chalmers,” he added his last name after a hesitation. “You might hear the guys call me ‘Charmer’ or ‘Prospect’ though.”

“Ah, okay. So, you’re not really in the club then?”

“You wound me, darlin’.” He stated as he threw his hands up over his heart, as if that was where I’d done the damage. It made me giggle, so I guess his intention didn’t miss.

“If you’re done flirting with my nanny, she has things to do, Prospect.”

I turned to see Kip standing there grinning at us. After handing Mikey Chalmers my key, I headed in Kip’s direction.

“You know Breakneck wouldn’t like to see that,” he suggested as soon as I was in range to hear without him having to raise his voice.

“Breakneck isn’t anything to me.”

“Don’t be so sure.” He hesitated a moment and then glanced back to where I’d left the man with the key to my only form of transportation. “What’s wrong with your car?”

“I don’t know. When I sit idle, like at a stop light or your gate here, it feels as though it hates gas. When I try to push on the accelerator and it shimmies, I pray hard, and we finally move forward.”

Kip laughed at my assessment.

“That man knows how to fix cars, right? He’s not going to make it worse and leave me without transportation, is he?”

“I promise, you will have a working vehicle, no matter what. Charmer knows what he’s doing.”

“Where is Knoxville?” I asked.

“Around back with my dad for now. He’ll be bringing him in shortly. Let’s get you something to eat and then I’ll get both of you settled in my room until your car is ready. It will probably be more comfortable for you.”

“Is there something wrong with the couch I used before?” I asked as he opened the door and what sounded like a nightclub hit my senses. “Oh!” I said before my eyes could adjust enough for me to take in the sights that would explain some of the sounds.

“That would be why,” Kip teased. “Fridays can get a bit wild around here.”

“I see.” Not really, because my eyes were still adjusting to the gloomy, dim interior after the bright sun that still lingered in the sky.

Once my eyes finally adjusted, I realized Kip had me standing beside the bar where he leaned over to yell out my food order to the man standing behind it. The man, another prospect from the looks of things, immediately left and ran back down the hall at the end of the bar, which I assumed led to a kitchen.

As I watched him go, movement caught my attention from the corner of my eye, and I turned to see a man thrusting wildly into a woman. She was naked, aside from the tube top that was pushed up above her breasts so that they swung freely as his thrusts forced her body into motion. She was up on all fours on the couch taking him from behind and looked like she was having a great time of it. I couldn’t see the man’s face because he was too busy kissing another woman, who was

sitting on the back of the couch, while his fingers worked inside her. He was literally pleasing two women at once, out in the open, for anyone and everyone to see.

“Shit!” I heard Kip hiss from beside me. The way he said that word was more startled than interested, which made me take a second look at the scene. I glanced back in time to see the man’s profile clearly.

He had stopped kissing the woman, who had been perched on the top of the couch where his fingers had just brought her to a quaking orgasm, so that he could grab hold of the other woman’s hips. He thrust harder, faster too if that was possible, and finally, after the woman beneath him started shrieking like a banshee, he visibly shuddered and wilted across her back momentarily. Once he caught his breath, the man smacked her ass as he pulled his condom-covered dick out of her.

After he yanked the condom off and tucked himself away, he turned toward our direction in search of a trashcan and looked up in time to notice us standing there at the bar watching the show he’d just put on for everyone. At the same moment, the bartender came back out with my food. Oddly enough, my appetite had dissipated so the smell didn’t encourage me to eat, and instead left me feeling a bit nauseated.

“Am I able to take the food to the room you were talking about?” I asked Kip.

“Yeah, um...” He seemed at a loss for words.

“Good because I don’t really like the whole dinner and a show concept, especially when it’s live porn.”

“Nova, I’m so fucking sorry about that,” he insisted.

“Kip, this is your club life. I’m not judging, it’s just...”

“Don’t.” He grabbed my plate, and then took hold of my elbow and pulled me in the direction of the hallway across the room. The same hallway I’d seen Breakneck take two women down before. I had almost forgotten about that. Two women seemed to be Breakneck’s thing, and now I knew that he could very cleverly satisfy them both without much effort on his part. It made me wonder why he had asked me out at all. That wasn’t something I would ever go for.

“What’s she doing here on a Friday?” A very familiar voice called out to Kip.

“Not your fuckin’ business, obviously,” Kip threw back at Breakneck as we passed by. Maybe I was a coward, but I kept my face down, so that my hair sheltered me from having to see the two women, who were still mostly naked, as we passed by them. I held no claim over Breakneck. We hadn’t even gone out on that one date because he’d been a jerk. He hadn’t even spoken to me in weeks. Still, it didn’t stop my traitorous mind from feeling completely jealous of the fact that they got to experience those things with him while I never would. So much for my birthday wish.

“Sorry, Nova.” Kip murmured as he led me down the hallway.

“For what?”

He turned and gave me a knowing look, so I shrugged. “Even if it had been someone else, you shouldn’t have to see that shit.”

“I’m a full-grown adult, Kip. Besides, I’m the one who refused to go out with Breakneck. It’s not like I have a claim on him.”

“Not sure he’d see it that way,” Kip countered.

“Well, considering he hasn’t spoken to me in weeks, after insulting me, added to what we just witnessed, I’m guessing he very much sees it that way.”

“Actually, I’m betting the asshole is probably kicking himself in the balls right about now.” I shrugged as he mumbled something else. “First time he hooks up in weeks, and it had to be when I needed you to come to the clubhouse.” I didn’t think I was meant to hear that, so I ignored him and snatched a French fry off the plate of food, as if I truly didn’t have a care in the world.

There was no point in saying anything else. Kip might have had a warped sense of what his club brother wanted, but if what he wanted had really ever been me, then it wouldn’t have been two weeks since I heard from him. Beyond that, we wouldn’t have been witness to the show the man just put on for the entire club to see. Even someone as clueless as Breakneck had to know that wasn’t something I would tolerate in a man who was trying to date me.



Chapter 15

Breakneck

“Fuck!”

“What’s going on, Break?” I turned to see Trench standing there with a smirk on his face.

“Not a damn thing.”

“Now that the nanny caught your show, it’s probably a safe bet that she won’t go there with you,” he explained for some stupid fucking reason.

“You think?”

Trench nodded his head. It wasn’t the nod that pissed me off, though. It was the stupid fucking grin. I glanced around the room where every motherfucker was pretending not to listen in on our conversation. They should have at least tried to be less obvious about it.

“Where’s Mitzi?” I asked.

“Why?” He grunted back at me.

“Figured since I already blew it with the nanny, I’d have Mitzi blow me.”

My head snapped back the minute Trench’s fist connected with it. I deserved the hit, and the ache that followed. More to the point, I wanted it. The pain was less than I deserved for the show Nova just had to watch. My club brother was right.

She'd probably never give me the time of day now, let alone trust me with her body.

"You fucked up with your woman. That don't mean you get to be disrespectful of others," Trench warned.

"Mitzi is a club girl, unless you're willing to step up and claim her officially?" I challenged. He didn't respond, so I continued. "Then talking about her giving blowjobs isn't disrespectful, it's her job."

"Fuck you, Breakneck."

Trench walked away as other members shook their head in disappointment. That shit was rightfully directed at me. I was the fuckup in that moment, not Trench and his unwillingness to claim the club whore he had the hots for.

Truthfully, it didn't matter what Nova had seen. Even if she agreed to go out with me, it wouldn't change things. I was a man who needed a certain kind of sex, and as a virgin, she wouldn't be up for that right away. I chuckled at my own thoughts. Who was I kidding? She probably wouldn't be up for my brand of dirty, dark, and dangerous sex anyway, even after her cherry was broken and long gone.

"Where's Kip?" I turned to see our President, who gave me a look that said he already knew what went down and he was just checking to see if I would own up to my shit.

"Took the nanny to his room with some food."

"And how much did she see before she got there?"

"Too much. Every-fucking-thing," I admitted.

“You’re a dumb fuck.” He didn’t say anything else. Tripp took his grandson and headed for Kip’s room down the hall. Couldn’t argue with that shit. Instead, I went to find Scout to see if she’d come up with anything useful yet.

Scout was out in the garage when I finally found her. The woman was as fucking perfect as a biker like Kip could get. She worked on bikes, rode them too – not that anyone else knew that, and she could work magic on a computer to get any information a person could ever need on someone else.

“Heard you fucked up,” she muttered when I leaned down beside her.

“News travels fast.”

She chuckled. “Someone’s keeping tabs on Kip’s nanny,” Scout informed me with a tip of her head toward the prospect who was working on a piece of shit Toyota.

“Is that Nova’s car?” I asked him.

“Yeah, it was hesitating when she was at the gate. I said I’d try to get it fixed for her, since she drives Knox around all the time.”

“Wasn’t that just fucking nice of you?” I acknowledged with no small amount of sarcasm.

“Wonder why she’s driving around in that ancient thing, anyway?” Scout asked.

“What do you mean?”

“She’s had it for a while, since before she was cut off by the Williamson family.” She tipped her head to the side to give me a good, long look that didn’t bode well. “Are you sure you

want to hear this shit from me? It would probably be better if you just learned everything from her.”

“Considering she just watched me fucking Dee and Connie in the common room, I don’t think she’s going to be up for divulging much personal information to me any time soon.”

“You should have known better than to do that in public when Kip’s kid was here anyway,” Scout chastised.

“Didn’t know the little shit factory was around.”

“How could you not know? He was squalling like someone murdered his bottle when Kip brought him in.”

“I was on house of horrors duty last night and slept until noon. Guess I missed his grand entrance.”

“Oh! Yeah, I guess you did. Anything pop up on the house front?”

“No, and don’t try to change the subject. What’s with Nova’s family situation?”

“That car was formerly owned by Clark Anderson. He signed it over to her when she turned sixteen. Jeremy Williamson never bought her a car. Everything she owned, that Jeremy bought for her, was confiscated by the family’s goon squad toward the end of spring semester this year. She was kicked out of her apartment with nothing but the clothes on her back, from the accounts that I heard when I went out there to ask around. All she was allowed to take with her was a book bag with a change of clothing in it. They took everything else. Clothes, shoes, her laptop that had her schoolwork on it, the apartment, her schoolbooks. Everything.”

“They took her fucking schoolbooks?”

“Yeah. I don’t think the father, or the man she thought was her father, knew about what happened. He was out of the country. The goon squad belonged to his parents.”

“I still don’t understand why she was disowned. What did she do?”

“She didn’t do anything. Her mother did.”

“What the fuck did her mother do that affected her daughter like that?”

“She had an on-going affair with Clark Anderson. Jeremy Williamson found out that he wasn’t the girl’s biological father. It’s been said that Anderson is, but I don’t think an official test was ever done to determine that legally. I couldn’t find a trace of one.”

“Damn.” No wonder the girl doesn’t trust leaving her few belongings behind anywhere.

“That’s fucked up, but I was able to find out that she worked three jobs over the summer just to get the money for this semester of college and whatever Kip is paying her, she plans to put toward the next semester. She doesn’t have far to go to graduate.”

“I guess no one thought how the news would bother the girl, finding out her family wasn’t really hers. Then, they betrayed her because of what her mom did. That’s some shit. Sounds like I should pay them all a visit.”

“I figured you would say something like that. Tripp asked that everyone stay away from her family for now and not make waves.”

“They’re influential, obviously?” I asked with a roll of my eyes.

“They might as well own the whole damn town and the three counties surrounding us, plus a chunk of Atlanta while we’re talking,” she confirmed.

“Fuck!”

“That about sums it up. So, back to the other shit, did you see anything last night?”

“No, why?”

“Because a small ping came into the computer you left running in that house. I’m trying to trace it, but I think it was just someone testing whether the douchebag would respond.”

“Let me know immediately if you see any other activity.”

“Of course.” I got ready to leave and head back to the clubhouse when Scout stopped me. “Did he leave with her yet?”

“Nope. He put her and the kid up in his room for now,” I tipped my head toward her car. “As soon as numb nuts there gets finished with the Toyota, she’ll be able to leave. Not sure if Kip will tail them or not.”

“Can you text me when they’re gone? I’d rather not head back over there until then.”

“You know I will.”

Scout and Kip’s problem was that they let other people interfere in what they could have had. I didn’t plan on going down that road and giving that kind of power to anyone. It was why I’d never thought about settling down. Why I suddenly

pictured Nova with my baby in her belly and one of ours in her arms, the way she carried Knox around was something fucking else. If I could get her to agree to be my woman, the mother of my kids, and not give a fuck when I turned to the club girls for my darker needs, I'd think about settling down.

Something in my gut told me she would never go for that. After learning about her mother's betrayal and how that landed on Nova's shoulders, I could understand her reluctance to alternative lifestyles. That was laughable because I didn't know what her stance would be on anything, since she hadn't given me a chance to find out. I was determined to change that shit. There was no way to get her off my mind until I could get her underneath me. That was all there was to it. I'd fuck her out of my system and give her something to aspire to with whatever fuckwad she managed to trick into settling down with her in a few years.

No. Fuck that. I couldn't even stand to think of her carrying some dickwad's kids in her belly. If she couldn't get on board with what I needed to do to relieve stress, then she didn't have to know about what went on when she wasn't around. It was the perfect solution, so everyone could be happy.

Connie strolled up to me and grabbed my dick as it grew hard while my thoughts were focused on putting babies in Nova's belly. She lost most of the clothing she'd been wearing before we got busy on the couch.

"Your fingers were fun, but not enough," she explained rather enticingly, considering the effort she put into groping my cock.

“Yeah? You ready to be fucked hard?” The last two weeks going without pussy had been difficult for a man like me. I wanted Nova but was pissed that I’d been missing out on fucking while trying to figure out how to handle her ass. Connie was just the woman I needed to work out those frustrations with, so that I could think with a clear head before confronting the sweet little nanny with my proposition.

Just as I was about to join Connie in my room, I saw two prospects talking by her door. The kid from the garage was there, which meant he must have passed me by as Connie was trying to entice me into another round.

I overheard them talking about the horror show Nova had unknowingly lived in, and then I realized that the door to Kip’s room was cracked open just a bit, which meant the careless fucknuts were probably cluing her into some shit we were trying to keep from her so she didn’t lose it completely.



Chapter 16

Nova

“The guy was a fucking serial killer!”

The conversation taking place outside of Kip’s room wasn’t something I was meant to overhear. Since my employers dumped me in the clubhouse to watch their son, and my car was on the fritz, it was as unavoidable as seeing Breakneck and those women together. If not for the club stuff that freaked me out a little, the place was nicer than the apartment Jeremy had rented for me, and leaps and bounds above my one-room in Creepy Dave’s house.

The bedroom Knox and I occupied looked a little like a long-term stay hotel suite with a kitchenette, bathroom, a queen-sized bed, dresser, and a small two-seater couch with a coffee table that had seen better days. On closer inspection, everything looked as though it might have been second-hand or simply that old and used well past its prime. That only added to the hotel quality of the space.

The walls were a little yellowed, no doubt from years of people smoking in the enclosed space. Someone had recently made an attempt at airing the room out, or at least masking the stale smell that lingered, but they hadn’t done a great job. It ended up an odd, and not endearing, odoriferous mix of stale smoke and lemons.

The baby napped, and I didn't have any schoolwork to do for once, which left me restless. Unlike in a hotel, there was no television, so there was literally nothing else to do besides listen in on the conversations outside the door. I planned to pop my head out to see if someone could grab me a book or something, but the voice outside stopped me in my tracks.

“So, you're telling me that Kip's new babysitter was living with a serial killer who liked to fuck the corpses of his victims that he kept in the basement?”

Those words hit me like a punch to the gut and immediately triggered my gag reflex. There was no way I heard that right. No way.

The door I had cracked open suddenly flung wide open and forced me to shuffle backward, as whoever was on the other side didn't wait for me to open it, and simply let themselves in. Dammit! I should have never unlocked the thing.

“What are you doing?” It was rather shocking that Breakneck would be the person to come check on me. Less than an hour before, I'd watched him having sex with two women in the bar area where anyone could watch. The man was as confusing as he was troublesome. “You gonna answer me today, or do I need a fuckin' appointment?”

I rolled my eyes at the crass jerk. That was where the confusion came into play. One minute, he seemed to be doing something nice and then he ruined it with his mouth.

“I was about to stick my head out and see if someone could help me.”

Breakneck surveyed the room quickly before settling his eyes back on me. “What kind of help?”

“I’m bored. The baby is sleeping, I have nothing to do, none of my books are here, there’s no TV, and now I’m really concerned about what I just overheard.”

“That wasn’t for you to hear and I’m not a fucking dancing monkey. Don’t know what kind of entertainment you were expecting,” he scoffed at me. “You’re here for your job, not to get your rocks off, honey.” He looked me up and down a little too quickly before adding to that sentiment. “Though, if you’re really in need, I could throw you my bone.”

I ducked my head, forcing my hair to hide the heat that warmed my cheeks. “Never mind,” I whispered.

“What’s that?” He asked while taking a step closer to me.

“Nothing. Sorry. I just didn’t know I’d be thrown in a room and left here all day with the baby. I didn’t bring anything in with me. Even my phone is in the car.”

My thought trailed off as a woman’s arm wrapped languidly around Breakneck’s chest from somewhere behind him. A hoarse sounding giggle followed. He glanced down and grinned at the bright red talons that scraped across his chest. The man was only wearing one of those tight, ribbed tanks underneath his open cut. Her fingers trailed down to the top of his jeans and managed to pop the button open.

“Listen, Virgin Mary, I don’t have time for this shit. I’ll let Kip know you ain’t happy with the accommodations he’s provided for you.” The gruffness of his voice told me that even that little bit of teasing had him raring to go with

whoever the woman was that interrupted our conversation. I worried that his unending stamina might kill him, considering he'd just been with two women only a little while ago.

As the man moved away from the door, I finally caught sight of the woman who sneered at me as she followed Breakneck to wherever he was leading her. She wore a bikini top, though I couldn't for the life of me figure out why, since one of her nipples was on full display. Below that, she had on a string. Okay, it was probably a G-string pair of panties or bathing suit bottoms, but it had to have been a special order because her lady parts were hugging the string on either side.

My face flushed with warmth as I wondered why she bothered with clothing at all. Her sneer turned into laughter as she watched my reaction to her state of undress.

“Who brought the judgmental prude to the clubhouse?” She asked Breakneck, and to my complete and total humiliation, he laughed along with her.

“Don't worry about it, babe. She won't be around long.”

I guessed she was his girlfriend, since he called her 'babe', and that almost made me feel bad about the fact that the man had starred in my fantasy just the night before. I didn't feel bad for her that he had just been with two women out in the open, because she had been one of them. When she spoke again, I decided she didn't deserve my guilt for my fantasies either.

“Someone needs to get her an education. Did you see the way she was staring at my pussy? I bet she needs tips on how to trim the hedges. She's probably rockin' that 1970s porn bush between her legs.”

Breakneck threw his head back in laughter as the woman cackled beside him. Neither of them missed a beat as they continued down the hall, and it was clear that they didn't care about my feelings one darn bit either.

"Don't listen to them," a man said from the other side of the door. Startled, I turned to find another biker standing there.

"Sorry, didn't mean to scare you. I was just coming to let you know that your car repair is going to take about another hour," he explained as he held up my bookbag. "I apologize because it ripped a little when I picked it up."

"Charmer, right?" I asked. His nod confirmed that I'd remembered correctly. "Don't worry about the bag. It was already ripped. Thank you."

"No worries. Kip sent me to let you know, so you wouldn't be freaking out or bored out of your mind. He also wanted me to ask if you needed anything while you wait."

"Some answers would be nice," I insisted even while ducking my head so that my hair hid the blush on my face.

"About them?" Charmer asked as he tipped his head toward the room where Breakneck had disappeared with the mostly naked, nasty woman.

"No. That was pretty self-explanatory. I heard you talking about Creepy Dave before he barged in here."

"Who?"

"Creepy Dave, my landlord before I moved in with Kip."

"Oh." Charmer backed up slightly and glanced up and down the hallway. "You should forget anything you overheard."

“There were other women in the basement, and he did things to them?” My stomach rolled as I thought about what might have been going on in that house while I lived there. “I never heard anyone else in the house,” I admitted.

“You’re lucky you got out when you did. That’s all I can really say.”

“Did he have a camera in the shower, like I thought?”

“Not just in the shower.”

“What do you mean?”

“He had cameras all over the house, several in that bathroom.”

“Oh God! I used the toilet there,” I mumbled.

The grim look on Charmer’s face told me everything I needed to know. I turned and took off for the bathroom because there was no swallowing down the sick feeling after finding out someone had watched me while I peed and did other things like change my tampon.

“Nova!”

I heard Charmer yell from behind me. The poor guy probably didn’t sign up for dealing with my hysterical freak-out. Still, he must have followed me inside because I felt his warm hands pull my hair back and slip it into a ponytail that was out of the way.

“Sorry, I thought you already knew about the cameras.” He handed me a dampened washcloth to wipe my face as I stood and flushed all my sick down the toilet. I couldn’t help the

way my eyes roamed around the space, wondering if I'd missed seeing cameras in the clubhouse, too.

“Come here,” Charmer ordered as he took me in his arms and wrapped me up in his leather and musk embrace. “Stop,” he ordered soothingly, as if his voice alone could calm me down. “It’s okay. Please, stop crying. I don’t know what all was seen and neither do you. Maybe he put them in recently, since he realized you weren’t showering there.”

While that made me feel mildly better, it was still bad enough. We both knew Charmer was feeding me a pretty little lie to make the knowledge of what was happening in that house go down a little easier. I rested my head on his chest and allowed his strong heartbeat to soothe me for a minute as the big man ran his hand up and down my back in a calming gesture.

“What the fuck are you doing, Prospect!” A voice boomed from the doorway to the room that we had left open when I ran to puke in the bathroom. I jumped and turned, though Charmer never relinquished his hold on me. Breakneck stood there, shirtless, his pants barely hanging onto his hips since they were undone, and he looked like he was either going to murder Mikey or me or maybe both of us.

“Just came to check on her, per Kip’s orders. She was upset by what her dickhead landlord has been doing.”

“And how would she know what he’s been doing? That’s club fucking business.”

Surprisingly, Charmer kept his cool and simply shook his head. “She heard what was said in the hallway before you

went in her room and Connie came to drag you out by the tips of her talons.”

I wasn't sure if it was wise for the man, who wanted to be a member of the club, to call out another member for his behavior. Then again, Connie was his girlfriend, so it shouldn't be all that upsetting for Breakneck. It did make me wonder if he had planned to take me out on that date while he left his girlfriend here, none the wiser. That thought had my stomach rolling again.

“Yeah? She already knew about the shower cam, so why would that upset her?”

“Because she didn't know there were more, or that the repugnant asshole was fucking dead girls in the basement,” the prospect spat out at him.

“Fuck, Charmer!” Breakneck yelled at him. “Go get her something to help settle her stomach before you freak the little mouse out further.”

“I know I'm a prospect, and normally I wouldn't ignore your order, but I don't think she should be left alone. She just got sick, and the poor thing is shaking like a fucking leaf in the wind.” He answered back as his hold on me tightened protectively. I wasn't sure that was smart on his part, judging by the angry look Breakneck wore.

“It's okay. I'll be okay,” I whispered to Charmer as I patted my hand reassuringly against his chest. He couldn't get in trouble for me. I didn't want that.

“I'll stay til' you get back,” Breakneck finally told him. When Charmer still hesitated to let go of me, I tried to take a

step back. It wasn't quick enough though. "That was an order, Prospect!" Breakneck growled at him. I shoved away from the man, hoping to spare him anymore trouble.

"Is there anything else you need that I can get?"

"No. You already brought me my go-bag."

Mikey's brows pulled down as he glanced at the beat up bookbag he brought to me. "Did you just call that a go-bag?"

I shrugged my shoulders, not wanting to admit that it was exactly that. "I guess so."

"Why do you need a go-bag packed?" He asked as his eyes shifted between Breakneck and me.

"I just..." I whispered, head down, not wanting either of the men to see me as I spoke. "I just never wanted to be caught unprepared again." I threw my still-shaking hands up in the air. "I guess that happened today anyway since I never knew how bad things were at my old place." I glanced back and checked on Knoxville, thankful that he was still sleeping despite the loud voices in the room.

"Go get her some food!" Breakneck snapped after a few minutes of them silently watching me. I hadn't been brave enough to look at either man after that, so I wasn't sure what passed between them. After a tense moment, Charmer moved down the hall and I was left alone with the man who had laughed moments earlier as I was humiliated by his girlfriend. I glanced over at the dresser where my cold burger sat untouched. Everyone was trying to feed me today, but at the same time they were killing my appetite. My brain tried to

process everything, and it felt like I was left spinning in circles instead.

Unfortunately for me, the way my head was down, when my eyes shifted back from the burger, I found myself staring at Breakneck's crotch area. I could literally see the base of his penis because of how low his unfastened pants were hanging down.

A deliberate groan forced me to turn, so I could no longer see. "Stay in this fucking room, with the door closed, until Kip comes to get you out."

It was an order, and one I didn't really know what to do with. I hadn't left the room. Technically, he'd been the one to open the door and check on me, even though I was about to pop my head out. When I didn't move from where Charmer left me, Breakneck stepped further into the room and placed my bicep in his gentled grip. He backed me up further until my legs touched the bed. I stumbled and plopped down on my butt before sliding toward the floor. Breakneck had to snatch back on my arm to right me before I hit the ground.

"Christ, girl, get your shit together. Stop hiding behind all that hair and fucking watch where you're going," he snapped. I wanted the floor to open and swallow me whole.

"You know you're in a fucking biker clubhouse, right?" Breakneck asked me as he shut the door behind himself trapping us both in the room alone. Knoxville was still sleeping peacefully, so he didn't count.

"Yes," I answered in my small voice, not understanding where he was going with that.

“That shit you just pulled with the prospect is not okay.”

“What? I didn’t-” I started to argue, but he cut me off.

“You shouldn’t have allowed him into this room. You stay inside until you’re instructed otherwise. Period. You don’t let men in here who you don’t know. You don’t hang on, hug, or rub all over our fucking prospects like a goddamn cat in heat.”

His eyes blazed with something I didn’t understand. Not that I could really take the time to figure things out though, because the man flat out intimidated me. I lowered my eyes back to the ground as he continued.

“You don’t fucking discuss club business with our prospects or our members either. The ones that know better won’t let you anyhow.”

“I didn’t,” I argued, though I did it too quietly to be meaningful. I hated that about myself. I didn’t used to be this person, but everything that happened with my family broke something inside of me.

It was easy for people to throw you away like you were last week’s garbage, a lesson that had been thrust on me not too long ago. I was the garbage thrown out of my family. Both sides of it – the real one and the fake. And I didn’t even know what I did to deserve any of it. Being born wasn’t my fault. My mother’s lies weren’t either. A girl’s father wasn’t supposed to abandon her, no matter what. Even if it turned out that the kid who he raised, wasn’t really his.

The harassed huffing sound that blew out of Breakneck’s mouth brought my attention back to the man who continued to

invade the efficiently used space, making me feel even smaller than I already did.

“Yeah, you fucking did and then you let him wrap his arms all around you, too.”

“He hugged me because I just got sick and was upset. What exactly was wrong with that?” I flinched at the flicker of my own defiance in those words. It had been ages since someone had wrapped their arms around me in reassurance. In fact, the last time I’d even been hugged was two weeks before I found out Jeremy wasn’t my father. He had been the one to hug me when I told him how well school was going that semester and that I only had a few more weeks before it was over and then only two semesters left to graduate.

“If you wanted to get fucked, all you had to do was ask, little Mary.”

“What? My name is Nova, and I never asked... I didn’t want...” Argh!

This guy pissed me off in the worst way. How could such a sexy man be so damn infuriating? Every time he opened his mouth, I wanted to punch him in it, but then when my eyes trailed down his overly exposed body, there were other things I wanted to do more. The idiot kept calling me Virgin Mary. I might technically be a virgin, but I knew things, too. I wasn’t a child.

“Stop fucking checking me out!” He yelled at me as my eyes inadvertently scanned back up his body again.

“Then put some clothes on!” I yelled back before thinking better of it. My own eyes widened in surprise at my outburst,

and I took a quick step to the side to distance myself from the man, fearful of his reaction.

“So, she does have some fire in there!” He growled while closing the distance I’d just created between us. The tips of his boots touched the edge of my own shoes and once again, when I glanced down, everything he had to show off was there for my eyes to feast upon.

“Go ahead, sweetness, look your fill and when you’re ready to find out what that feels like sliding inside your tight little pussy, you just let me know and I’ll be happy to teach you.”

Did I have a stamp on my head that informed people I was a virgin? Did my inexperience really come across that easily to everyone else? Why couldn’t they just assume I was quiet, but maybe still experienced and worldly about sexy time things? Wait. That wasn’t even the biggest problem with what he said.

“Wouldn’t your girlfriend get mad?”

“My girlfriend?” He asked quizzically. When my eyes came up to meet his, it was to see that he was grinning down at me with a sparkle of amusement replacing the anger that had been brewing there only a minute before.

I pointed toward the door. “The girl that was out there before.” I told him before clarifying, “Wife, girlfriend, whatever she is to you.”

“No, little Mary, she’s not my girlfriend and I don’t give a fuck what she thinks.”

“But...”

“I fuck when I feel like fucking and we have women around the clubhouse who are here to be a warm and welcoming hole

when the need arises.”

“Um,” *Oh my God!* What was I supposed to say to that? He literally just told me there were women here who were... I didn’t know what to call them. *Were they paid? Was this a whorehouse?*

“No, it ain’t no fucking whorehouse. This is a clubhouse. One of the perks of being here is free pussy on tap for the brothers.”

Oh no! I hadn’t meant to ask those questions out loud.

“They stick around because they like to get fucked as much as we like fucking them,” he continued to say, as if I really wanted to know anything more than I already did.

“We?”

“We. Any of us could have grabbed Connie and taken her to a room, or hell, taken her wherever we found her. I know you saw me when you first got here. That’s the life she signed up for. She gets a free room, food to eat, and protection if it’s needed. In exchange, she’s always available sexually to club members.”

“Oh.” I wondered if Kip used those women too, or if he stayed faithful to Ashlynn. I didn’t think she was the type who would approve of extra marital affairs, but then again, who was I to judge or to know? Maybe, they both had permission for that sort of thing. I should have been worried that they would expect the same things of me, as they did from Connie, but I was sort of secure in the fact that I’d been hired on specifically as Knoxville’s nanny.

Breakneck continually closed the distance between us whenever I retreated. Three steps later, my back was to a door, and I found myself face-to-chest with his hard brown nipples. Why did I want to lean forward and bite them? That wasn't a thing, was it? I knew men liked to do that to women, but were women supposed to return the favor?

He only had tattoos covering one side of his body, which I thought was weird, but they drew my eye since the contrast was alarming.

“Why do you only have tattoos on one side?” I asked, unable to control my curiosity.

Breakneck picked a lock of hair up off my shoulder and sifted through the strands with his fingers. “That’s a question that I don’t answer, unless you’re someone I care about.” It wasn’t said cruelly, and we were basically strangers, so I took no offense.

“Tell me, little Mary, how long do you plan to keep your innocence?”

I gathered every last bit of my inner strength and tipped my head back, so I could look him in the eye. “That’s a question I only answer for people I care about.”

I thought maybe it would make him angry, but the aggressive asshole never did what I expected. Instead, Breakneck leaned in closer and laughed. As he closed in on my neck, the movement caused my hair to wisp across the sensitive skin there and sent a shiver down my body. Was it possible to have an orgasm just from smelling a man and having him so close? I wouldn’t know, but I felt like I might find out soon if he didn’t move away from me.

He smelled like hot sex. There was a strong, male musk along with a hint of leather, sandalwood, and bourbon. Yes, I was a virgin, but I still knew what a room smelled like after people had sex in it. College students don't leave college unscathed, even if they've never been touched themselves.

My freshman year dormmate used to screw guys in our room regularly. That was why Jeremy ended up springing for my apartment, because he helped me carry some things up to my dorm room one day and we walked in on my roommate taking it from behind while sucking another guy into her mouth.

"Don't you need to get back to your girl- um the woman you were with?" I honestly didn't know what to call her without insulting him, her, or myself somehow in the process.

"I was on my way to look for a second when I saw your door open and heard you talking to the prospect while hanging all over him."

"I wasn't hanging all over him," I argued with a little stomp of my foot as I crossed my arms over my chest.

"You could be my second," he offered, as he ignored my protest and instead stared at the way my breasts were pushed up and out thanks to my new position.

"Your second what?" I dropped my arms and put my hands on my hips instead, because I was at a loss for what to do with them. That wasn't true. There were things I wanted to do, to touch, but no way was I going to let that happen.

"Pussy. You could be my second pussy, Mary. Need one riding my cock and another one riding Connie's face." He

thought about it a moment and then grinned at me. “Better yet, you could ride my face. I don’t normally do that with the club women, but I’d make an exception for you. Or, if you prefer you could eat pussy while I fuck you from behind.” He shrugged his shoulders as if it truly made no difference to him.

Oh, good lord! This man could not be serious, could he? This was not how I fantasized my birthday wish playing out. There was no way I’d agree to my first time being shared with a woman who whored herself out for the club.

Breakneck trailed the knuckles of his left hand down my arm to the tips of my fingers and then back up as I contemplated how to answer him without making him mad again. He had no clue that asking me to do something like that, even if I had more experience, was akin to telling me it was okay to be like my mother. It wasn’t. I never wanted to be anything like that woman.

It was obvious that she had been cheating on Jeremy throughout my four years in high school. I still didn’t understand why. There was a time when I thought my parents were in love. I almost laughed out loud at my screwed-up perception. There was a time when I thought my parents were both my parents, too. I was wrong about a lot of things. Staying clear of Breakneck, despite wishing I could explore him while he returned the favor, did not seem like something that I would end up being wrong about.

Breakneck’s fingers lingered on my bicep momentarily before sliding unrepentantly across my perky nipple. He flicked it and then leaned in, so his lips were right next to my

ear. “You enjoy the thought of being my second.” He took a step back and wore a smug grin as I frowned.

“I don’t.” My voice might have been a little too meek, but I meant it. I didn’t want to be just another whore men used and threw away like my mother. Sure, her husband had kept her around, but what good had that done? According to her, a truth she only spoke after Jeremey found out he wasn’t my dad, theirs had been a marriage of convenience only. That convenience ended when it was discovered that she hadn’t given him the child he thought was biologically his.

Me. I was that child, the product of a whore and a disloyal friend. The thought made me glare up at Breakneck and dismiss the sensual way he attempted to seduce me.

“When you’re ready to stop playing little miss innocent, you come find me. I’ll break you in just right.”

As quickly as the giant of a man caged me in, he stepped back, pushed me aside, and left the room before glancing back and snapping another order at me.

“Stay in your fucking room until you’re ready. Otherwise, one of my brothers might get the wrong idea and decide to take what you don’t want to give.”

The loss of his body heat so close to my own was palpable. His warning, however, sent the chill running up my spine. There was never a time when I felt unsafe in the clubhouse. Sure, I felt uncomfortable and unsure, but never like my life or my virtue might be at risk.

Breakneck killed all the assurances Kip had ever given me about my safety amongst his brothers by insinuating that

someone might rape me. I didn't have a lot of time to contemplate it as the baby chose that moment to wake and start squirming and wailing from the playpen. Nap time was over, and I had to get to work. At least I'd have something to keep me busy for a few hours while he was awake.



Chapter 17

Breakneck

“What took you so long,” Connie whined the minute that I made it back to the room without the second woman I’d left to retrieve earlier. It rankled that I forgot to go retrieve another bitch after I left little miss Virgin Mary behind. Truthfully, I forgot that Connie was waiting on me after seeing Nova in Charmer’s arms. I’d mentioned to my sweetness that I had left to look for a second, but Connie was just an afterthought I used to tease Kip’s nanny with. I thought Connie would be long gone by the time I made it back to my room.

“Club business,” I snapped in answer.

She attempted to look around me as if I could hide a woman on my back or something, since it was obvious one hadn’t come in the door with me.

“Are we waiting for someone to join us?” There was a twinkle in her eyes that I didn’t necessarily like. The whole reason I left to get someone else for a threesome was because this bitch was worrisome. She was looking for an old man to take care of her permanently, but she was shopping in the wrong fucking place for that.

“No. Get over here on your knees!”

I was prepared to throw her ass out of my room if she didn’t follow instructions to the letter. Connie had become a little too

comfortable lately, thinking she could question shit just because she had once been a regular fuck.

She slowly dragged her ass off the bed and then came to stand in front of me. Her eyes held a question that I wasn't about to answer. "ON. YOUR. KNEES."

She dropped, though I didn't miss the pout on her lips. It didn't take much effort for her to yank my jeans down my hips so she could gain access to my cock. Connie ran her tongue up my length and then swirled it around the head before popping it into her mouth. I didn't give her the option of playing timid though. I knew what she was thinking.

She knew where I'd gone when I left, and she was trying to portray the shy little house mouse she knew that I was hot for. It was too late for her to swap personalities; she'd been with the club long enough that we all knew what she felt like on the inside and even how her patch chasing little heart plotted and planned. Eventually, she'd be cut loose for it, but for now, she got used up like all the rest.

"Don't play timid with me, bitch. I know what you're capable of, now get to sucking." I grabbed her hair and yanked hard until my cock was lodged down her throat and she sputtered around the base. Panicked little breaths puffed from her nose before she started slapping at my thighs. Only then did I ease up and remove my dick.

"You gonna play nice and keep your fucking trap shut about shit that ain't your business?"

When she didn't respond quickly enough, I repeated the same move and shoved my cock down her throat until she was beating at my thighs. Then, I held there just a little bit longer

to make a point. When I removed my cock that time, a fucking puddle of saliva came dripping off with it and landed on Connie's fake tits.

"I'm sorry," she whimpered. I slid my hand over to the dresser on my left and snagged a condom that was lying there on top. I slipped it over my dick and made a motion with my hand for Connie to turn around. She did without uttering a single word.

"Hands and knees." Once she complied with the order, I reached down and decided I wanted a little something different. With my fingers wrapped around Connie's waist, I snatched her bottom half up off the floor until she was standing on her tiptoes.

"Keep those palms flat on the floor," I directed. Then I picked a hole and started fucking. The position made for a much tighter grip than I was used to with Connie. I'd have to remember that for next time.

I hammered into her pussy for a few minutes before I realized it wasn't really doing anything for me. Yeah, my cock was hard, but she wasn't what I really wanted. What I wanted was a sweet little thing who dripped innocence from her smiles. The woman was just a couple doors down and across the hall taking care of my brother's kid. She already proved she wouldn't be down for a quick and dirty fuck. Instead, I closed my eyes and imagined it was her tight, hot cunt that I thrust into.

Yeah, fuck yeah! I could picture Nova beneath me. Fucking into her as those sweet pussy walls fluttered against my cock while I showed her what it was like to take a good dicking for

the first time. The more I thought about it, the harder I pounded, allowing the fantasy to take root, and that nearly tipped me over the edge. Right up until the dumb cunt beneath me – my surrogate fuck – decided to start talking and ruined the illusion.

“Yeah, Breakneck, fuck ma, ha-a-ard, pinned me, oh gah! Cum!” Her words sounded oddly slurred. Before I could figure out why, her body fell completely slack in my arms.

“Holy shit!” I slid my cock out of Connie, laid her flat on the floor, and checked for a pulse. It was there, thank fuck.

“Jesus, Break! What the hell happened?” Kip stood in my doorway as I gripped my pants to yank them up from where they were slouched around my ankles, caught up on my boots that I never bothered to take off. I wasn’t even sure when the door opened or how long Kip had been standing there because my fucked-up head had been lost to the fantasy of me fucking Nova.

“Don’t know, I was fucking the bitch and she passed out.”

“How exactly were you two fucking?”

“The usual way with my cock in her pussy, asshole. How do you think?”

“What position, you prick?”

“She had her hands flat on the ground, ass in the air, legs fully extended, and I was pounding down into her.”

“Jesus, you fucking dumbass. How long was she like that? She probably locked her legs up and cut off circulation. Not to mention, her head being down so long.”

I shrugged my shoulders. “Wasn’t really focused on her,” I admitted. Kip gave me a knowing look, but then returned his concerned gaze to Connie who was still out cold on the floor. Truthfully, the display she made while sprawled out on my floor unconscious made me feel a little queasy about going there with her again. She wasn’t great to look at. Her makeup was smeared all down her face, her fake tits were standing at odd angles to one another, and her cunt looked like it had seen better days as her legs were left askew.

“She’s still breathing. Bitch dipped before I could cum though.” The condom that had been on my cock moments ago, as I tucked into my pants, hurdled to the trashcan after I finally tossed it. Kip stepped out of my way and eyed me curiously as I leaned the upper half of my body out into the hall.

“Yo! Prospects! Clean up on aisle three. Get this bitch out of my room.” I yelled.

“You’re a cold-ass motherfucker,” Kip informed me, like I didn’t already know.

“Did you need something?”

“Got a text from Charmer saying he was headed back with Nova’s food, but that I might want to have a chat with you about what she overheard.” His nose scrunched up as he glanced down at the food in his hands. He’d had it bagged up. “I sent him to go finish Nova’s car, so she wouldn’t have to be here later when things started getting wild.” Kip glanced at the woman who was still passed out behind us. “I guess, it might be too late for that already.”

“Asshole prospect just wants in her pussy and feels the need to get *daddy’s* approval.”

“I’m not her daddy. Hell, she’s not that much younger than my sister.”

“Whatever – I caught him with his arms all around her earlier.”

“You mean in a hug? Because she just puked and was crying?”

I narrowed my eyes at Kip and stared him down as he continued to find amusement in the situation. Fucker just begged for me to deck him.

“That all you wanted?” I glanced back at the still knocked out club whore. “I need to find a replacement to get me off. That one’s out of order.”

The two prospects who came when summoned started chuckling as they lifted Connie. “Never heard of a bitch being fucked to death,” one of them mumbled to the other.

“Bitch ain’t dead,” I called out to him as they both carried her into the hall. “And if you’ve never fucked a whore unconscious, then you’ve never truly fucked.” The last bit of that came out a little loudly, since I knew my voice had to chase the two pricks down the hall as they attempted to move the bitch to the sleeping quarters we had for the club girls.

“Great, now the best nanny we ever had is going to bolt!” I turned to see the reason Kip was complaining. Charmer had made it back with Nova’s car keys and she was standing in the doorway of Kip’s room ready to take the keys when the prospects carried Connie away. And yeah, her mouth was gaped open as she watched Connie’s nude body being dragged

away by two prospects while my dumbass yelled at them about fucking whores unconscious.

“Son of a bitch!” I turned and slammed my door in Kip’s face but didn’t miss the laughter that chased after me. The fucker knew I wanted his nanny and found it funny that I was sealing my own fate – that I’d never have her – because I was a fucking monster in her eyes. Maybe, by now, she would think Creepy Dave hadn’t been so bad after all. Then again, she hadn’t seen the desiccating corpses he’d been fucking in the basement while she slept two floors above.

After falling onto my bed, and staring at the fucking ceiling, it occurred to me that I left the fucking prospect, that everyone called “Charmer”, for good reason, there with the woman I had become infatuated with.

He was younger, closer to her own age than I was, and seemed to be able to handle her with the kind of care that I was incapable of. Still, it fucking rankled. I roared out my frustrations before getting up and going to the bar to grab a bottle to drown myself with. It didn’t escape my notice that I was reaching for a bottle instead of more pussy, despite not being able to get off earlier. Fucking Connie! That bitch had more than outlived her usefulness.



Chapter 18

Nova

“Is she okay?”

“She’ll be fine,” Charmer answered, but I honestly didn’t believe him. Two other prospects carried the woman out of Breakneck’s room. One held her under her arms with her head lolling against his midsection. The other had her legs wrapped over his arms and he was carrying her by her thighs. Oh, and she was still naked and shimmering like the sweat from whatever she’d been doing with Breakneck hadn’t quite dried yet. I continued to stare and could have sworn I saw the woman’s eyes peek open and a smirk tip her lips up at the corner, but no. That couldn’t be right. Could it?

I had never heard of someone passing out from sex before. Maybe she was dead? Maybe they just didn’t want to tell me that Breakneck had killed her during sex. It was just my subconscious playing tricks on me that made me think I saw her peek and smile. Like a coping mechanism where my brain was trying to make sense of one of those awful scenes it couldn’t quite process. I’d seen something like that on one of those police procedural shows.

Oh God! My eyes traveled back to where Breakneck was standing in the doorway of his room speaking to Kip. I didn’t hear what they were saying, but after Breakneck’s eyes met mine for a moment, he stepped back inside and slammed the

door in Kip's face. Kip laughed and then turned to head in our direction.

“Why don't we go inside and talk?” Kip formed it as a question as he approached, but I didn't think there was really a choice in the matter. Once again, I found myself wondering what I had gotten myself into.

“You have questions.” My eyes tracked Kip as he paced back and forth across the room that he had plopped me in with his son. I wasn't sure if I was supposed to start asking those questions or if he was gearing himself up for something, so I stayed silent and waited. The prospect, Mikey Chalmers, had not followed us inside the room. I kind of wished he had.

“There are things I can't tell you. Things no one here will tell you, but because this part has to do with you – I want to make sure you understand some of what went down.”

“Okay.” The word that left my mouth was hesitant as worry started to set in.

“That asshole you were renting the room from was not a good guy. I know you look at some of my club brothers like maybe they're bad men – and you're not wrong. Creepy Dave made them all look like saints, though.”

“Charmer mentioned that there might have been cameras in other places, not just the shower,” I gulped when remembering that there might have been video of me taking care of my needs.

Kip nodded and then sat down as he pulled me to join him on the edge of the bed. “There were four cameras in that bathroom and more in other places. We have someone going

through everything we found in the house to make sure that none of it was streamed online or sold to anyone else.”

“Oh my God! You think he had live feeds of me using the toilet?”

Kip winced. “We’re checking, and I’m not going to lie to you, it’s a real possibility. We won’t know for sure until our guy does a thorough sweep of the web. That was the biggest reason I haven’t told you anything yet. I don’t know enough.”

“There’s still more though, isn’t there?” I guessed by the way he gradually looked more and more discomfited.

“I want you to know that you’re safe now. We took care of the problem, and you never have to worry about it again. Okay?”

“O-kaay?” I dragged the word out as a question, wondering where this was going.

“We found some things in that house.”

Kip’s eyes remained steady on mine, so I didn’t miss the shift from him being worried about me to the disgust and anger over whatever they had found. There was nothing for me to add, so I nodded my head and hoped he would continue.

“You were right to be creeped out by that asshole, and because of more than just bathroom surveillance. The women who rented your room previously...” Kip’s voice trailed off as he scrubbed his hands down his face as if it would get rid of whatever he’d seen in that house. Even without him saying the words, I started to paint a picture in my mind of what might have happened to those women.

“I don’t think any of them ever made it out of that house.”

“W-what? I swear, there was never anyone else there. I never even heard a peep from anyone other than Dave.”

“Nova, they were there. You wouldn’t have heard anything because he kept them in the basement. Dave would go down and visit them often.”

“Are they okay? Oh my God! How could I not know? Was it soundproofed? They must all hate me for not helping them. I didn’t know. I swear, I didn’t know. Why didn’t you tell me everything sooner?” I cried to Kip who pulled me into his side and rubbed his hand up and down my arm in what was supposed to be a comforting gesture. It wasn’t though. There was something niggling at the back of my mind that made me want to be sick again. It wasn’t until he confirmed the part my brain refused to process that it really sank in.

“You wouldn’t have heard them, sweetheart. They were all dead.”

“They were all...” My stomach turned. “But you said...” No. Nope. Suddenly, I didn’t want to know anything else because the memory of what I’d overheard in the hallways earlier came back to snap at my heels. “...living with a serial killer who liked to fuck the corpses of his victims,” I remembered out loud.

“You’re lucky that you took the nanny position with us, sweetheart.” Kip said at the same time.

“How long did he let them live?”

“We don’t know, but my best guess is that since you weren’t showering at the house, it might have prolonged your stay there. You weren’t giving him what he needed, and he was

trying to push you into doing it before going further. My guess is that it was a ritual he had.”

My skin crawled with the feeling of a million tiny bugs dancing just beneath the surface. Would soap and water even be enough to take that sensation away?

“I think I need a shower,” I whispered, but then a shiver ran up and down my body setting every hair on end. “But I don’t know if I’ll ever be able to shower again without worrying and wondering. Oh God! How did I not realize? How could I have stayed there?”

“You’re going to stop being so hard on yourself, because my guess is that you didn’t have any other options.”

“I didn’t.” That’s when I lost it. Before I could even register what was happening, I was being pulled into someone’s lap as large arms wrapped completely around me, cocooning me in their warmth and safety.

“You got her?” Kip asked. There was no verbal answer to his question, but he spoke again as if there had been. “I’m taking Knox for the night. Stay here and get some rest, sweetheart.”

Sobs wracked my body as those arms held me tightly to a warm chest that smelled fresh from a shower.

“Shh,” he cooed so sweetly my brain had trouble processing who exactly it was that held me together. His actions seemed incongruous with who I thought he was. It couldn’t possibly be him.

“It’ll be okay,” Breakneck whispered softly to me as his fingers stroked gently across my back. If I was being honest

with myself, I wouldn't think he had it in him to be so kind and reassuring. Didn't I just watch two prospects remove a woman from his room after she passed out during sex? It didn't equate with him being the person to sit there and comfort me. I pulled back to look up into his eyes, though he appeared a bit blurry thanks to all the moisture in my own.

“Creepy Dave was going to kill me.” His head tipped forward in acknowledgement of that fact. “He would have kept my body.” Again, he repeated the gesture. “And done things to it.”

I couldn't bring myself to fully spell out what the man would have done to my body. My corpse. “No one would have known I was gone. My dad isn't even my father anymore. I'm too much trouble for the man who really did create me. Not that I wanted anything to do with him or my mother. Between the three of them, and my father's – Jeremy's – family, were all I had in this world. If Creepy Dave killed me, no one would have even looked for my body.” It was all one, giant horrified ramble as Breakneck held on while a soul deep tremble vibrated through me.

“You're safe,” he assured me.

It was my turn to nod because I felt safe right where I was, in his arms even though I knew that feeling couldn't be trusted.

“He will never hurt you again.”

“You made sure of that?”

“I did.”

“Okay then,” I whispered against his shoulder.

“Okay?” He asked, and again, his voice was so gentle it was like speaking to a different man than the one I’d had interactions with earlier that day.

“Thank you.” Those two words came out no higher than a whisper, but he heard. His arms tightened around me, and I placed my head back on his shoulder and rested there in his lap, enveloped in warmth, and comforted that the monster who wanted to kill me was no longer of this earth, but then a thought occurred to me.

“What about the others?”

“What others?”

“Kip said there were others, women I guess, in the basement.”

“They were all dead already, didn’t he tell you?”

“I know, but what about their bodies? Surely, some of them had families who would want to know.”

Breakneck sighed against the top of my head. “I know what you’re getting at, but we took this asshole out. If we go pointing out a truck load of bodies to law enforcement, we’ll have to answer some uncomfortable questions about where this asshole is.”

There didn’t really seem to be a good answer. I hated it that those families might never know what happened to their loved ones. Then again, did they really have loving families who would care, considering where they were living before they were killed? Hadn’t that been the reason I was in that house? No one cared about me enough to know I even lived there, let alone that I might have died there, too.

While it seemed completely out of character for him to do so, Breakneck continued to cradle me gently while my thoughts raced through horrible images of what that basement might have looked like. Eventually, the man holding me heaved a sigh and rested his chin on top of my head after tucking me back down into his body so that we were both as comfortable as possible.

“I’ll take it to the club to see what we can do about the victims. No promises. We’re still trying to work out some things about whether the videos were being streamed, distributed, or whatever else. It’s possible that me and Kip are on a tape somewhere beating the shit out of the asshole. If that’s the case, we can’t exactly tip the cops off. Whoever was working with him, or behind the operation, they’ll know that our club was involved in his disappearance and that’s enough of a concern without adding law enforcement into the mix.”

“Okay,” I agreed. I hadn’t thought about the possibility of them missing some cameras or there being evidence about whatever they had done to Dave. I didn’t want any of the Savage Vipers to get into trouble, especially since they had saved my life by getting involved.

“Nova, I need your word that you will not say anything to anyone - ever! If that’s what the club decides, you need to know they won’t tolerate you going against that decision.”

“I understand. You have it.” I thought about everything that happened, but I still worried. Those cameras made me crazy. Besides the creepy-crawly feeling under my skin, there was a concern playing at the back of my mind that Dave had shown those videos to someone else, and that I was still in danger.

“Am I safe here?”

“You’re safe,” Breakneck grunted and I could feel the vibrations from his answer thanks to how closely he held me to his body. I still stiffened at the gruff answer which made him pull back so that he could look down into my eyes.

I straightened so that we were eye level, even though I was sitting on his lap. “Am. I. Safe? Here, in this place?” I emphasized my question, letting him know that I needed the reassurance about more than the clubhouse being a safe space. I needed to know that he could be trusted. That I would be safe with him.

“Won’t ever let anything happen to you. Promise, Little Mary.”

“Stop calling me that,” I insisted, though there wasn’t a whole lot of conviction in the way I spoke.

The jerk grinned at me and then dug his fingers into my side, tickling until I started squirming and laughing before he finally pulled me back into his tight embrace.

“Usually, I say if the name fits, it sticks, but in your case there’s something we can do about it.” I groaned in frustration. “Are you saving yourself for marriage or something?” He asked.

“No.”

“Then why? You’re almost twenty, in college, and fucking gorgeous when you don’t try to absolutely downplay your own assets.” He clearly missed the memo about today being my birthday, but I wasn’t going to clue him in. Then, he would just pity me, and I didn’t want that.

“I downplay my assets so people will take me seriously,” I informed him, not bothering to mention the part where I was dirt poor and couldn’t afford to buy items that might show them off, if I’d wanted to. “The ‘why’ is because I never want to be my mother.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I needed the nanny job for a reason. I lived in Creepy Dave’s murder house for a reason. My father found out that I’m his best friend’s biological child and he left me behind with the ex-best friend and soon-to-be ex-wife. The two of them – my mother and that jackass who I’d known as my uncle my whole life – left me behind, too. I was the reminder of how they’d screwed everything up. Not that I wanted anything to do with them anyway, but it kind of left me without a whole lot of resources since the man who raised me hadn’t wanted me to work until I finished college.”

“Wait, you’re saying not a single one of those fuckers stepped up to make sure you were okay?”

“I was living in Creepy Dave’s murder house, what do you think?” I rolled my eyes and let the sarcastic tone of my voice do the work for me. “Everyone left me high and dry, and my college fund was cut off immediately by my grandfather – or I guess the man I always thought was my grandfather.”

“So, up until what? A few months ago?”

“This all happened toward the end of spring semester.”

“Up until then, you thought you were family to these people – your dad and grandfather – all your life?”

“Yeah.”

“And they just cut you out like that? You had no control over the shit your mother did. How the fuck could they do that? Blood or not, there was still a bond.”

I shrugged my shoulders. “I would never do that to another person. At least my dad had his family to lean on. My mom and my uncle had one another, even though they were the ones who created this mess. I was left with no one, no money, and desperation that led me to living with a serial killer.”

“You want me to take care of them for you?”

That made me chuckle. “Would you really do that?”

“Fuck yeah, I would. That’s some bullshit, what they did to you.”

I shook my head. “None of them are worth my time anymore. Doing anything to them would mean I was thinking of them. Even if I am, they don’t deserve to know about it. Not a single one of them was thinking of me. That’s why no one would have ever missed me. My corpse could have been in Creepy Dave’s basement for years and...” I had to look away and stop myself from saying the rest. It was too awful to think about.

“Well, shit, honey, you know it’s been a rough year when you end up being consoled by the biker known for not giving a fuck, huh?” He teased. There was truth to his words, and yet, I knew he meant them to bring a smile to my face. It worked.

I leaned in and kissed his cheek. “Thank you.”

“Don’t fucking thank me for just being human with you.”

“Why not? Isn’t being human out of character for a monster like you?” It was my turn to tease with a hint of truth.

Instead of responding, he flipped me over and spanked my ass with a very heavy hand. “Ouch! What did I do to deserve that?”

“You deserve that and so much more. I’m going to show you why. Then I’m going to teach you all the things that will make your body hum and your mind forget about the troubles everyone has caused you. Can you handle me giving you that education?”

The whole time he spoke, his hand caressed the cheeks of my ass. It was more than just a touch though. He slid his fingers across the expanse of my backside, that still stung from the slap, and then he dug them into the flesh in such a delicious way I couldn’t comprehend why it felt so good. Oh God! It did, though.

“Well, do you think you can handle it?” He asked while giving my ass another delightful squeeze. I moaned while nodding my head. “Words, sweet thing. I need the words.” Another squeeze.

“Yes,” I whimpered in pleasure. If his fingers massaging my ass felt that good, I could only imagine how the rest of the things he had to teach me would feel.

“You can’t be with anyone else,” he warned.

“I already told you I have no desire to become my mother,” I sassed back.

“Good! Because I won’t tolerate that shit. From here on out, you’re mine until we decide to part ways. No one else touches what’s mine.”

“Does that go both ways?”

“Don’t ask questions you don’t want the answers to, Little Mary.”

I growled at him. That stupid name was meant to taunt me into submission. His use of it, on top of him basically telling me I couldn’t have anyone else while he could, revved up the temper I’d been missing for months. I scooted off his lap. “No.”

“What?” He seemed stunned stupid by that one word.

“I said, ‘No’. I told you I won’t be my mother.”

“And I told you that you won’t be because you won’t have anyone else.”

“If you are with other people, then that makes me just another one of your whores. The only difference is that you don’t have to share me with your club brothers. I won’t be anyone’s whore. Not ever.”

He looked away from me and sighed again so heavily I felt the shift in the air around us. His eyes narrowed when they came back to meet mine. Breakneck pinned me in place with that cool stare of his while he decided how best to answer me.

“I’ll try. If I can’t be what you need, then I’ll let you know, and you can go your own way.”

“I don’t want to lose my job with Kip when you decide I’m not enough to satisfy your needs.” I felt strong in making demands for myself, even if the words came out a little weaker than I would have liked.

“It won’t be a problem.” He crooked a finger at me. “Now, get over here. I need to make you feel better.”

I shook my head again.

“Fuck! What now?”

“You literally just had your club girl carried out of your room unconscious not even an hour ago.”

“Two, at least,” he tried to argue.

“And not too long before that you were with her and another woman. I can’t go there with you right now. Not today. My first time won’t be with someone on the same day they’ve already had sex with multiple partners.”

He stood so abruptly, I stumbled a step back, as he retreated toward the door once more. He wasn’t coming for me though. A point he proved when he grasped my upper arms, and bodily moved me out of the way, so he could go through the door himself.

“Go to bed and get some sleep. It’s been a long-as-fuck day.” He didn’t say another word before he was through the door and shut it behind himself. Once the door clicked, he yelled through it. “Lock this fucking door and go to bed.”

I locked the door immediately and then ended up silently wondering exactly what had just happened. For the next hour, I debated on whether Breakneck and I had come to an agreement or not, before finally drifting off to sleep. Figuring out my strange life would have to wait for another day. As birthdays went, my twentieth had been the worst ever, and sleeping the rest of it away sounded like the best plan possible.



Chapter 19

Breakneck

Frustration burned off me in waves as I left Virgin Mary in Kip's room. That shit didn't sit right with me either. She was mine. The infuriating woman should have been sleeping in my bed, not my club brother's.

"You okay, Break?" Mitzi asked as I passed by her on the way to the bar.

"Fine," I groused.

"Need some company?"

"No." Fuck, yeah, I needed the company. Connie had passed out before I could cum earlier that day, Nova had just turned me down because she'd seen that I'd already been with Connie. Twice in one fucking day. My fucking blue balls were screaming at me to take Mitzi and three other women right there in the commons, but there was no way I could do that. Fucking Nova might come out for a drink or something.

"Actually, can you take some bottled water and maybe a coke and some snacks to Kip's room?"

"Nope," Mitzi was quick to say.

"What the fuck?"

"I'm not taking the chance that one of these assholes will shoot their mouth off to Ashlynn that I was near her husband's

room. She's a pain in the ass."

"His nanny is staying there for the night," I explained. "She's probably too freaked out to come out here for anything she needs. Swear to fuck, not a word will get back to Ashlynn. Kip went home with his kid."

"Fine," she huffed. I didn't miss the way Trench watched her.

Once I was seated next to him on a bar stool, I quietly asked what was probably on everyone's mind lately where those two were concerned. "You gonna claim her?"

"It's complicated," he answered before tipping the beer bottle up to his lips and taking a pull on it.

"What the fuck is so complicated that you can't claim the woman you want?"

"She belongs to our brother."

"Fuck that. Skully turned her into a club girl long before he got locked up."

"Yeah? What happens when he gets out and she wants him back? I'm just supposed to let her go, or watch him pimp her out to the other brothers for kicks?"

"No, that's when you tell the fucker that he can't have her back."

"It's not even about what he wants or what I want. It's about who she chooses."

"Then be the better fucking man for her."

Trench's glare mellowed out as he thoughtfully took another pull from his beer.

“You going to follow your own advice with Kip’s babysitter?”

“Don’t know that I’m capable of what she wants.”

Trench laughed. “You’re capable of anything you want to happen. Saying you aren’t, is a copout for doing something you know she won’t agree with.”

“Okay, I’ll rephrase. I don’t think she’s capable of giving me what I need, so that means I won’t be able to be faithful the way she wants.”

Trench shook his head. “You never know until you try but do yourself a favor and really think on it before you give that girl promises. From what I’ve seen, she’s not going to be the forgiving type when you eventually fuck up, and especially if you attempt to blame it on her not meeting your needs.”

“She’s a virgin,” I explained.

“So, what?” Trench questioned me. “Being a virgin means you get to teach her everything you like without having to worry about some asshole teaching her wrong before you.”

I laughed, but it came out sounding more like a blow-off. “Being a virgin means I’ll scare her away with what I want.”

“What do you think you want that will scare her off? I’ve never heard anything off the wall crazy about you.”

“I recently bought a butt plug with a horse tail on the end, but I had it custom designed and instead of the tail hair, it has thin leather straps for spanking a bitch while she wears it. It has a matching four-inch cock-shaped ball gag complete with tassels so the woman wearing it can spank another woman’s pussy as she thrusts about, writhing in pleasure and shit.”

Trench nearly spit out the mouthful of beer he had just slugged back. “What the fuck? Can I see it?” Curiosity beamed in his eyes, so I shrugged and stood. “Sure, it’s in my room.”

“Were you using it on Connie when the prospects had to drag her out unconscious?”

“Nah. I had her in a position that she wasn’t meant to be in for too long. She locked her knees or something.”

“Damn. Isn’t your girl staying in the clubhouse?”

“Yeah, that’s why she wouldn’t fuck me tonight. She saw that bullshit go down in the hallway and earlier in the common room.”

Trench shook his head at me as we walked down the hall. “You’re lucky she even spoke to you after that. It bodes well though,” he suggested.

“How so?”

“You had a conversation about being together, and whether she would fuck you tonight, I’m assuming.” When I nodded, he continued. “Looks like being a virgin didn’t matter. She wasn’t turned off enough by what she saw to turn your ass down flat. Your girl simply had a problem with the proximity of your request to be with her so soon after you were with another woman. That’s understandable. Women can be just as territorial as men.”

The anger I felt toward being denied by my sweetness earlier subsided as Trench’s point of view came across. He was right. She hadn’t said no. Nova had simply told me not after I was just with another woman.

“You might be smarter than you look.”

“Fuck you man!”

“Nah, I prefer bitches,” I joked as I swung my door open and reached into my closet to pull out the box with the custom-made anal plug and ball gag set.

“It’s like a cat o’ nine tails and anal plug all in one. That’s fucking cool as shit.”

“Yeah, it is. Hasn’t been broken in yet either, but I don’t think Virgin Mary will be down for this kind of thing anytime soon.”

“You never know.”

I pulled out the matching ball gag and held it up for him. “Pretty fucking sure this would be pointless if she doesn’t want any other bitches around for playtime.”

“Well, save it for a rainy day. You never know when she might develop an adventurous spirit. Plus, it might not work out and you’ll have it to use with someone else.”

Trench might have been on to something with his idea. Not the bullshit about Nova and me not working out, but the other part. The weird thing was that as excited as I’d been to use that anal plug cat o’ nine tails a few months ago, when I special ordered it, I couldn’t imagine using it with Nova. All my imagination could conjure was missionary, maybe a little doggy style, and her pregnant with my babies. It didn’t bode well that my usual kinks never came to mind while I pictured her.



Chapter 20

Nova

Despite the door being locked, I still shoved a chair under the handle so no one could surprise me by coming in. Even if the chair didn't work as an efficient barrier against anyone, I'd still hear it when it clattered out of the way since the room wasn't carpeted. With the lock engaged and chair in place, I still slept like crap and wished Kip had just taken me back to his house. It didn't even occur to me until morning that Charmer had dropped the keys to my car by the room before I lost my shit over what Creepy Dave had been doing in my old house.

A scantily clad woman stopped by my room after Breakneck left to drop some things off to me. She was nice enough, but it made me wonder who he spent his night with. Did he task her to bring me things before she ended up in bed with him? Those thoughts were the other reason I hadn't been able to sleep well. It felt like we agreed to date one another exclusively right up until the point where I refused to have sex with a man who had just been with another woman only hours prior.

I didn't understand why Breakneck had gotten angry with my decision either. To be sure, with his insistence that he be the only man I'm with, he wouldn't want to be with me

knowing I'd had sex with another man the same day. It wasn't fair for him to be mad about that.

I got up and started getting dressed in fresh clothes, though a shower was out of the question because I couldn't look at it without feeling sick to my stomach. A knock on my door startled me as I pulled my shoe on my foot.

"Nova?" Thankfully, it was Kip who called out to me through the door.

"Give me just a minute." I rushed to put my other shoe on and then stood to move the desk chair out from under the door handle. Once that was done, I unlocked the door and opened it for Kip.

"Did you have something shoved up against the door?"

"Yes," I answered honestly.

Kip nodded. "Nova, do whatever you need to, so that you feel secure when you're here alone. If you have Knox in here with you, I'd rather you didn't do that, so I can get to him in an emergency."

"Okay. I only do it when I'm sleeping."

"I understand, but you need to know that nothing bad will ever happen to you while you are here under my protection."

"Okay," I answered, though there was no truth to that statement. Kip could tell.

"I know you don't trust everyone here, and that's okay. It will take time for you to get to know them."

Panic flared. "Am I being kicked out of your house?"

“No! No, it’s nothing like that. I just figured there would be times, like last night, when you need to be here, rather than at the house. Eventually, you’ll get to know everyone. They won’t hurt you.” I saw the doubt in his eyes as he made the statement.

“Okay, if you needed to worry about anyone here, it isn’t the men. Some of the club women might give you trouble, if they think you’re moving in on one of the club brothers. If they do, you tell me right away, and I’ll take care of them.”

“Take care of them?” It sounded a lot like when Breakneck told me he took care of Creepy Dave, so I had to be sure.

Kip laughed. “This isn’t the mafia. I’m not going to sink them in the lake with cinderblock shoes. I meant, they’ll be put on notice that if they screw up again, they might be banned from the club and lose access to all the brothers. Trust me, that’s all the leverage I need.”

“Is Knox with you?” I asked even though there was no sign of the baby.

“No. Ash took him with her today. I thought you had classes.”

My head bobbed in answer. “I was just putting my shoes on to head out. Where should I go after classes are done, here or the house?”

“The house should be fine.” He turned to leave, but I reached out and grabbed his arm to stop him. “What’s up, Nova?”

“Am I safe?”

“I just told you that there isn’t a man here who would hurt you.”

“No. I mean, am I safe out there?” I threw my hands out to indicate the world, not just the clubhouse. “When I leave here, am I safe to go to school? To your home?” I asked my questions in quick succession. “I don’t ever want to put your son at risk.”

“We haven’t found evidence that Dave was working with anyone, yet.”

“You haven’t found definitive proof that there wasn’t someone else pulling the strings behind the cameras either, though have you?”

Kip shook his head. “I don’t want you to worry. We have a prospect watching you all the time. I didn’t want you to feel weird about being followed, and don’t worry, he won’t invade your privacy. He’s just there to make sure you aren’t bothered or harmed in any way.”

I sighed in relief. “That’s good to know. Thank you.”

“Don’t thank me. Breakneck is the one who organized that. I didn’t think it was necessary, since we haven’t found proof of anyone working with Dave.”

“I see.”

“Don’t think I’m not concerned about you, but I honestly didn’t think there was any reason to watch you closely. Breakneck disagreed. He wants someone on you until we know for sure, and his guy can trace all those video feeds.”

I winced at the reminder that there was video out there of me using the bathroom and maybe worse. I remembered the

night I masturbated in my room to thoughts of Breakneck and my face flamed red.

“Someone has to watch all the video?”

“No, it’s not like that. It’s more like they’re searching for matches to your face, your features, so that we can find out if any video made it to the web. Plus, there’s a bunch of crap that involves tracing signals and invisible wires, and a bunch of techno hocus pocus I do not have a hope in hell of understanding. It doesn’t involve them needing to watch the videos themselves.”

“That’s a relief,” I muttered. Kip didn’t ask any questions, but I could see the lopsided grin on his face that said he knew what I might be worried about. I was mortified at just the thought of him, or anyone else from the club, watching a video where I masturbated and called out Breakneck’s name, especially after the man’s public displays yesterday.

“Okay, well, I’m going to head to school now.” Kip moved out of the way so I could get through the hallway without bumping him. Breakneck’s door was shut, and I didn’t see him anywhere. I kind of wished he slept with his door open, so I could see if the woman from last night was in there again, but I decided it wasn’t any of my business. We talked about being exclusive and then he ran off in a huff after I refused to have sex with him. Truthfully, I didn’t know where we stood or how I felt about everything. It was all a bit much.



Chapter 21

Breakneck

“Where in the hell is Nova?”

“Oh? She’s Nova now?” Kip questioned. The bastard wore another one of his smartass grins that made me want to knock his teeth down his throat, even if he was a friend of mine.

“What-the-fuck-ever, man. Where is she? Thought she’d be here when I got up this morning.”

“That girl is an early riser. Her first class starts at nine. It’s a little over a twenty-minute drive to campus and I had her leave a little early just in case she felt like there was anything wrong with her car after Charmer worked on it yesterday. I never did get a chance to check behind his work.”

“There still a man on her?” Kip nodded his head. “It’s not Charmer, is it?” My asshole club brother threw his head back and laughed at me instead of answering.

“What’s so funny?” Trench asked as he walked up.

“This schmuck wants to know who is on nanny watch. Worried it might be Charmer,” Kip informed him.

“Oh? Did Charmer show some interest?”

“He hugged her and held her a little too close for comfort yesterday when she learned some of the shit that went down at that fucking house of horrors she was living in before.”

They both turned to look at me. I shrugged. “He puts his hands on her again, he might lose them before he loses his chance at that patch he’s been chasing.”

“Damn, dude. That’s harsh,” Trench muttered.

“That’s fucking reality.”

“Noted. What’s on tap for today?” Kip and I turned to eye the man. “You gonna get your guy out to the house of horrors to poke around?”

“Need to okay that with Prez first, but that’s the general plan. Until we can get out there to assess the damage that might have been done, and if anyone might have seen video of us taking that dickwad out of the house, we still need eyes on the place twenty-four seven.”

“Okay, keep me updated. I need to get to work, but I’ll catch up with you later,” Kip managed to get out before he was too far away. The bastard was always on the move and too busy for his own good.

Scout moved onto the barstool beside me and quickly let me know that she’d overheard our conversation. “Just let me know when Tripp gives the okay for me to get involved.”

I tipped my beer at Scout and then stared off at the wall of liquor in front of me. It was still hard to imagine that my little sweetness would have been a corpse in that asshole’s basement if she hadn’t started working for Kip.

“Did you come to an agreement with where you stand with his nanny?” I turned to eye Scout, wondering why she would ask something like that. I shrugged my shoulders in response. “If you did, then I am not available any longer.”

“Dammit, Scout. That’s a stupid fucking rule. You know the old ladies think you’re doing their men anyway, so what does it matter if you are or aren’t?”

“It matters to me.” She turned and left, and for some fucked up reason, I felt like I’d offended her. She was the last person I meant any offense to. Hell, before Nova came along, I’d thought about starting something semi-serious with Scout. The only thing that held me back was knowing that my brother was still in love with her. Then there was the part where I wasn’t. I loved the woman, thought she was amazing, talented, and a good fuck in bed. We were friends who fucked. That was it. I would have tried for her though because she deserved to have more respect than she was given as a club girl, even if she was allowed to deny brothers who had attachments to other women.

That was the thing that made Nova different. When I thought of upgrading Scout’s status from club girl to claimed woman, I never imagined a family with her, just making sure she wasn’t treated poorly by anyone. When I thought of Nova, I couldn’t get the picture of her carrying our babies in her belly out of my fucking head.

I never wanted kids until now. I could see her being the perfect fucking mom to them though. She’d never do anything to harm them. That much, I was sure of because that girl had been put through hell by her family because of what her own mother had done.

I turned to see Trench still sitting at the bar eyeing me as Scout walked away. “She’s your ‘guy’, isn’t she?”

“What if she was?”

“Wouldn’t matter to me. If she gets the job done and stays loyal to the club, I have her back and yours. Not sure how Prez will view it, though.”

I nodded and stood. “Going to kick the vermin in the shed around, you want in on it?”

“The goon who fucks corpses?” I nodded my response to Trench. “Fuck yeah, I’m down.”

Nova probably assumed that we’d killed the bastard already, and we would, but we had kept him alive for weeks in the hopes that we’d get answers out of the bastard. He was a weak little pissant who literally shit himself whenever we came at him with weapons, but I had to give the corpse-fucking-cunt props when it came to keeping his mouth shut. He hadn’t given up a single secret.

The minute we walked into the shed, Dave the Corpse Fucker started to piss himself again. “Jesus Christ, do you have no self-respect?” Trench asked him.

“Nah, he’s the biggest pussy I ever met.” The taunt slipped free as I stared the fucker right in the eyes. I could still see a hint of defiance there. He was keeping secrets, even after the abuse we hurled at him. Pissing on himself was a way to try to keep us away. It never worked, but he continued to try.

“This piece of shit couldn’t even fuck live girls because they proved too much of a challenge for him.” The snicker I let loose while explaining things to Trench was for Dave’s benefit. The bastard did not enjoy being humiliated. “I wonder what you employer thought of you fucking the corpses?”

Trench grinned at me as I asked the question and then turned my attention to him instead. “I bet that wouldn’t go over too well because corpses make for great evidence. Anyone caught with the videos, pictures, or any knowledge that he had those girls in that house would be hauled in on the same sick charges. You know what happens to assholes like that in prison?”

I nodded my head theatrically. “Yeah, they become the bitch, for everyone, then they end up dead in the worst ways.” I glanced back at Dave. “I hear the correction officers look the other way when it happens, too. No one likes child predators or corpse fuckers. You hit the bottom of the barrel on two counts there, Davey-boy.”

“I d-d-don’t know what you’re t-t-talking about.”

I took a step back and completed a full body perusal of the dirty fucker before speaking to Trench again. “You know what I think?”

“We torture the prick again?” He asked, playing along.

“Nah, that’s lost the luster it had in the beginning. I’ve grown bored. I think we should just let the prick go.” We both saw the minute hope lit Dave’s eyes. “Since he doesn’t have a boss, he won’t have to worry about them coming for him once he’s released. I’m sure if there is a boss, he won’t care that Dave might have spilled his guts to us, and that’s why we showed mercy and released him. Hell, whoever boss man is might think he works for our club now.” I turned back to Dave. “That won’t be a problem for you, will it?”

The fucker pissed himself again.

“We’re obviously giving him too much water,” I commented dryly.

“You can’t do that,” the corpse fucker whispered.

“Tell you what, Davey-boy, someone pinged your ISP the other day. You tell us how to respond, and we’ll clean you up, put you in a room, and let you live out your days as the club pet. You won’t come to any harm, you’ll be fed, and when we discard the club’s whores for doing wrong, we’ll give you the leftovers to play with.”

The gleam in his eyes was even better than the little nugget of hope we gave him previously. The sick fuck couldn’t help himself. Creepy-fucking-Dave started singing like a canary.

“The Violent Order,” he said and then sniffled as and looked around as if they might pop out of the woodwork somewhere.

“You’re saying that you work for that fucknut MC?” I couldn’t see them doing serious business with the likes of Dave, but then again, they were known to run whore houses and sell women, so it was possible they had branched out.

“Don’t work for them. They come buy some of my stuff sometimes. When they ping the ISP, it’s their way of asking if I have anything new. If I respond, it’s with small clips to show off the merchandise. If I don’t, they’ll check back in a couple weeks. If they already pinged, you shouldn’t respond until they do it again, otherwise they’ll know something is wrong.”

“So, you never miss a ping and contact them later?”

“No. If I don’t respond within an hour, they assume I don’t have anything new yet or that I’m working on it. I’m not to

respond until they check in again. The less contact we have the harder it is to trace,” he admitted.

“How often will they ping you?”

“Every two weeks if I don’t have anything new for them. Once I deliver, they’ll wait another four weeks to check and see if I have anything else. It takes a while to build up enough video footage of the girls,” he said before he remembered that one of those girls he was speaking about was under our protection.

“Did you ever send any samples of Nova to them?” I could tell by his wide, panic-filled eyes that he had even though he shook his head. “Don’t lie to us, Dave. We already know enough to know when you’re telling the truth or making shit up.”

“I sent them a preview, the week after she got there.”

“So, they knew to expect footage of Nova?”

“Yes, they’ve already pinged me twice requesting more and I had to explain that she wasn’t cooperating with the shower routine. I was told to force the issue and make it happen. You guys showed up before I could do more than just suggest she get cleaned up before attracting bugs to the house.” He wrinkled his nose in distaste.

“Don’t fucking act like she was dirty for no good reason, you sick fuck,” Trench yelled at him. “She knew you were watching her in the shower.”

The asshole glanced at my cut, where my name was, and he grinned. “She didn’t know I was watching in other places though. She thought of you when she touched herself at night,

did you know that?” The corpse fucker had the audacity to ask me. When I remained silent, he took that as his cue to keep going.

“Yeah, she worked her clit really well. Almost got off on watching, even though she never put her fingers inside herself. That would have been better. She was so into what she was doing, even if it wouldn’t usually be enough, that I couldn’t help stroking myself. Then she said your name and ruined it for me,” he snarled. “That’s when I had to go visit the others. They always let me do whatever I want to them.”

“They’re dead and can’t stop you, it’s not the same as consenting and welcoming your tiny little dick inside of them.” I reminded the fucker of his worthlessness and how only corpses could possibly tolerate his being near them. The sick fuck had mostly outlived his usefulness, but I needed to make sure Scout could verify everything he told me before I could get rid of the jerkoff permanently.

“When your info checks out, we’ll be back to clean you up,” I reminded him.

Dave nodded vigorously as Trench and I walked out. “Why the fuck didn’t I think of that sooner? We’ve had the bastard locked in the shed for weeks and never got him to talk.”

Trench shrugged his shoulders. “Sometimes, they need some time to consider the worst-case scenario.”

“The dumb fuck should have considered that I was lying.”

“You’ve left him relatively unharmed this whole time, probably lured him into a false sense of security.”

“Shit, I just knew I couldn’t take things too far with his pansy ass. The little momma’s boy is fragile as fuck, and we needed intel more than we needed him dead.”

I pulled out my phone as we left the shed and started sending texts. The first was to Scout, with the information she would need to watch for the incoming pings, and who we thought was behind them, so maybe it would help her trace something back to them, especially since he had been sending files to them regularly too, and not just the pings for communication. The second text went to Kip.

***Breakneck:** Taking Nova to dinner, make sure you’re home with the kid, so she can go out.*

***Kip:** Pretty sure Ash already dumped Knoxville with her and ran back to work.*

Fuck. If that woman worked as hard as she tried to tell Kip, she would be pulling in more fucking money than they had. I wondered how long it would take for him to finally get that. Then I remembered who I was talking about. It would take him seeing evidence above all else, so that was one more thing I had to work on getting. In the meantime, he wasn’t going to cockblock me when I finally got Nova to agree to try this thing out between us.

***Breakneck:** Then you need to be home with your own kid, asshole. When’s the last time Nova had a full day to herself?*

***Kip:** Shit! You’re right. She hasn’t had a full day free of Knox since she started working for us. I’ll be there. What time are you picking her up?*

***Breakneck:** 6.*

Kip: *I'll be home by 5.*

I didn't bother with anything else and switched gears yet again to contact Nova.

Breakneck: *Taking you to dinner tonight. Be ready by 6.*

Nova: *I might be working.*

Breakneck: *Kip will be there by 5, so you can get ready. See you later, sweetness.*

She didn't respond to that, so I pushed my cell back in my pocket and made my way to my room. I needed a shower. Despite not getting any of the asshole's bodily fluids on me, it still felt like all I could smell was the acrid scent of piss and fear.

I needed to let Tripp know what was going on but wanted to give Scout a little time to work her magic before bringing her to him. He needed to see that she was an asset, and I wasn't going to fuck that up for her.

~*~

As I got ready to go pick Nova up, I wondered just how long I could hold out doing the sweet boyfriend bullshit. There was no way that I'd find contentment with vanilla love making. There was also no way that she'd be okay with me fucking around on her to have my appetites satisfied. I'd have to talk to Kip about keeping her away from the clubhouse and making sure I had a head's up about when she needed to stop by for his kid. What she didn't know wouldn't hurt her and it would help to keep me satisfied.

Two hours later, Nova gave my truck the side-eye when she walked out of Kip's house after hearing me pull up. I threw my

hands in the air in surrender.

“I only have one motorcycle with a pillion seat.” Thankfully, I caught that one before I said bitch seat and offended her again. “It’s in the shop.” It wasn’t in the shop. I just didn’t want her, or anyone else, on it.

She shrugged her shoulders. “It’s okay if you don’t want me riding with you. That’s all you have to say. Some people are weird about it and can’t ride with a passenger, I get it.”

Kip stood behind her, at his front door, listening in and the bastard laughed as his nanny called me out for being such a shit rider that I couldn’t function with someone behind me. Fuck that.

“Trust me, that is not the issue, sweetness.”

“Whatever you say,” she mumbled before finally moving toward me.

I pointed to Kip and issued the only threat he was going to get. “Not a fucking word.”

“Wouldn’t dream of it,” he responded, though the sentiment was lost to his laughter. That fucker was going to tell everyone that his nanny thought I was a bitch rider. Fuck me. I was about to reassess if she was really worth it, but then her ass was in my face as she stepped up on the foot rails to get into my truck. My mouth watering over the sight was all the message my brain needed to receive that she just might be worth all the headaches I’d endure by claiming her.



Chapter 22

Nova

I made it into Breakneck's truck without incident. I guess we were moving in a better direction than last time, even if I was a little miffed that he texted me a demand to accompany him to dinner instead of asking me on a date.

Sometimes, it was the little gestures that would have meant so much more. Breakneck didn't seem to be the type to bother with them, though. That had been his appeal for me all along. I'd never get the false platitudes that other men might throw my way.

"Never thought about this before, is there anything you won't eat?"

"Seafood." No explanation was needed for that. Most of it was just downright gross.

"Seafood? You allergic, or just mad at all the ocean's creatures?"

I laughed at his inane question. "I'm not allergic, just think it's disgusting."

"Noted. Anything else?" He glanced over with a skeptical look on his face, obviously waiting for a lengthy list from me. He had the slightest smile on his face and for a moment, it completely mesmerized me.

“Nope. I’m fine with literally any other food.”

“Do you have a preference?”

My head immediately swiveled back and forth. There wasn’t anything that came to mind as being favored over another. The household I grew up in made certain that I ate whatever was put in front of me, and that we had a wide variety of foods to create a more sophisticated palate. My father’s side of the family were truly pretentious people. I sighed out loud while reminding myself again that he was not my father and they had never been family.

“So, I could take you for hot dogs and Mac-n-cheese and you’d be cool with that?”

My shoulders bounced up and down. “Not sure. I’ve never had macaroni and cheese. My mother always said that was food for poor children and we weren’t poor.”

“What the fuck?” Breakneck turned to look at me momentarily as he drove. Then he shook off whatever thought he had and proceeded to change directions like his life depended on it.

“Where are we going?”

“Sweetness, your mom was a cunt for a lot of reasons, but that one there, she fucking deprived you of a childhood memory. I’m going to rectify that for you.”

Fifteen minutes later, we pulled up to what looked like a dive of a diner. I noticed the MC’s logo in the window and glanced back at Breakneck, as if to ask the question on the tip of my tongue.

“One of the old ladies in the club owns the place. She makes the best fucking mac-n-cheese I’ve ever put in my mouth. We’re going to get some good, downhome cooking. It’s guaranteed to put those luscious curves back on your body and leave you feeling completely satisfied.”

“Whatever you say, big guy.”

“Stay right here,” he insisted as he threw the truck in park and got out to walk around to my door. He opened it and then reached in, unfastened my seatbelt, and lifted me out of the cab of the truck as if I were helpless to do any of that myself. While a part of me wanted to cry out for feminism’s sake, the other ninety percent secretly swooned at a man taking charge and caring for me.

I’d always thought my parents were in love, at least when I was younger, but it was only now settling in that they never touched like this. My father would open doors and be politely chivalrous with my mother but there was never an overt display of affection as he did those things. My mother could have been anyone else in the world, and he would have behaved in the same way because that was what his manners dictated.

Instead of doing the thing I watched girls at school do, I didn’t argue over his behavior. I soaked it in before he allowed my body to slide gently down his own until my feet touched the ground. I simply whispered, “Thank you,” and placed a sweet kiss on his cheek.

“Next time you want to thank me with your lips, make sure your aim is a little better,” he teased. Breakneck gripped my hand in his, so he could lead me into the diner. My heart was

beating faster with each step we took toward our first date. I wondered briefly if he would freak out to know that it was my first official date ever. I'd gone out with people in a friend group situation before, but even before my mom blew up our lives, I was never a social butterfly.

Since the place was just a run-of-the-mill diner, there was no need for us to wait and be seated by a hostess. Breakneck took me to a booth in the corner, away from all the other patrons, and made sure I was comfortable before he slid in beside me so that both of our backs were to the rest of the room. There was no way to politely ask why he hadn't seated himself across from me since no one else was there, so I let it go. Right up until it became incredibly obvious that he couldn't sit still with his back to the crowd.

"Do you want to move?" I asked.

"What? No. Why?"

"Because you keep shifting and watching the reflections in the window or turning to glare around the room like everyone in it personally offended you. If you need your back to the wall, you can sit on the other side."

He nodded his head in agreement and stood. Part of me was thankful that I'd have the side of the booth to spread out a little more once the food arrived. That thought was quickly dispelled as Breakneck reached into the booth, took hold of my arm, and pulled me out, so that he could then gently shove me into the other side.

I couldn't help my reaction any more than he could stifle his need to be where he could see the room. I laughed. The whole

scene was absolutely ridiculous and bystanders whose attention we no doubt caught had to think so as well.

“What’s so funny?”

“Nothing at all. Where is our waitress?” I asked to deflect from my reaction. Breakneck glanced around again and then smiled at a plump brunette who was only an inch or two taller than my slightly less than average self. The woman made her way over to our table with a wide, welcoming smile on her face.

“You waitin’ for anyone to join you, Break?”

“Got the only person I want sittin’ beside me,” he answered.

“Well, well, well,” the woman called out as her eyes slid to mine and she took in as much as she could see of me. Her smile slipped a bit, but she didn’t say anything disparaging to or about me. I’d give her points for not being rude, but I’d honestly prefer to know why I flipped her happy switch so quickly.

“What’ll it be then?” She asked after a moment of uncomfortable silence fell over the three of us. She and Breakneck seemed to have been having a conversation with just their eyes and body language. I had no hope of understanding them, so I tuned them out and perused the menu. Most of the food listed were things my mother never allowed me to eat, which made me giddy with anticipation to try it all. Then I thought about the fact that I didn’t have money with me... Or at all really.

“I’ll have a water and the macaroni and cheese, please.”

“Macaroni is what we say when ordering that shit in a salad. It’s just mac-n-cheese,” Breakneck corrected. “She’ll also have the fried okra, corn fritters, and we’ll split a large order of chili cheese fries. Get me a beer and the Jolly fuckin’ burger. You know which sides for mine.”

The woman nodded while staring at us curiously. “What’s goin’ on here, Break?” She asked, somewhat hesitantly.

“I’m on a fuckin’ date, Meg. What’s it look like?”

“A-A-A what, now?”

“Ha!” Breakneck chirped at her sarcastically. “I know you ain’t ever seen the likes of it before but wipe that grin off your face and go get our drinks. I’m thirsty.”

“I just bet you are,” she commented back as her eyes flitted to me. I might have been inexperienced and naïve, but I knew what she meant. Meg thought I was only there to be like those women at the club. For all I knew, this was how they tricked those women into working for them. Meg walked away to put in our order and get our drinks, leaving Breakneck and me to sit there and wait quietly.

“Aren’t you going to ask who she is?”

“No.”

“Why not?” He asked and that time turned his entire body to face mine, as if the answer demanded his full attention.

“You said one of the club’s old ladies owned the place. I assumed that was Meg from the way she spoke to you.”

“You don’t think any of the other women who work here would speak to me like they know me?”

I shrugged my shoulders. “They might, but Meg refused to give them a chance to do it, since I watched her push two other women away before she came to handle our table herself.”

“Very observant.”

“I’ve learned that I need to be far more observant than I have in the past.”

“I think you were plenty observant before, you were just in a shit situation that didn’t give you many options to act on it.”

“I never saw it coming that Jeremy wasn’t my father.”

“That’s different.”

He didn’t elaborate on why it was different, and I didn’t ask for clarification. If we got into talking about my family, the date would probably go to hell. Instead, we sat there and politely accepted the drinks Meg sat before us. I waited while she stood there, obviously wanting to ask questions, and instead shook off her curiosity and headed back toward the kitchen.

“Is she like that with everyone you bring in here? I have the feeling she wanted to grill me and find out what my intentions are for her big brother.”

Breakneck’s booming laughter in response to what I’d said sent chills down my spine – the good kind. It was a sound that I immediately fell in love with. It probably helped that the heat from his body sitting so close to mine was seeping in and warming my insides in a way they hadn’t been in ages. The other customers turned to look, many seeming startled by his response.

“Jesus, Nova.” My name was literally forced out through a chuckle. “You are somethin’ else.”

“I don’t understand why.”

“That’s part of your charm.”

Meg showed up with our chili cheese fries then. “The rest of your order will be up in a minute, figured you’d want these to start.”

“Thanks,” Breakneck huffed before taking a sip of his beer.

“What in the world had you laughing like that? I don’t think I’ve ever seen you do more than chuckle.”

Breakneck eyed the woman and then turned to me with a grin on his face. “Maybe you were right about things. Seems your observations skills are on point.”

Meg’s eyes narrowed on me as she correctly surmised she’d been the butt of a joke, even if it wasn’t meant to be one.

“She asked me if you were like this with everyone I brought in here.”

“You don’t bring women in here,” Meg argued immediately. Breakneck waved her answer away, but I was intrigued and wanted to hear more. How was it possible that he never took a woman to his favorite spot to eat?

“Then, she said it looked like you wanted to grill her about her intentions for your big brother.” That made Meg smile and warm to me.

“I see.” She bounced her shoulders up and down and then admitted to her curiosity, despite the bloom of red that tipped

her ears and cheeks. “She’s not wrong. You have everyone in here wondering about the girl.”

“Well, they can all keep wondering for now. She’s mine and this is our first date. I plan on enjoying it, not humoring every Tom, Dick, and Sally,” he added the last after looking at Meg and making sure her gender was included.

“Fair enough. I’ll go see if your food’s up yet.”

“Have you ever had any pets?” I asked after Meg walked away.

“Not the kind you’re talking about,” he shot back. At the disgusted look on my face, he seemed to feel a moment’s regret, but never openly apologized. “Never had any dogs or cats or whatever you’re referring to. My old man was always on the road and Mom worked too much to take care of much more than herself.”

I didn’t miss the hint that maybe they hadn’t taken care of him. “Are your parents still around?”

He shook his head. “No, they’re both gone now.”

“I guess mine are too, just in a different way.”

“Honest to fuck, sweetness, say the word and I’ll hand them the karma they’ve earned for fucking you over.”

I smiled at him and grabbed a messy chili cheese fry to pop in my mouth. I moaned instantly; it was that good. “Oh, ma gawd, so mmm,” I managed around the mouthful of food.

“Fuck, woman. What is it with you and fries?”

I swallowed that time before answering. “What do you mean?”

“Nothing, never mind,” he insisted as he popped some into his own mouth.

“They’re really good. I’ve never had them with all this mess on top.”

“All this mess,” he laughed as he repeated what I said. “You can tell rich people raised you. Bet you used a fork and knife to eat ribs.”

I nodded. “Is there another way to eat them?”

“Shit, are you kidding me?”

I laughed. “My dad, well Jeremy, used to make them at least once a month and we’d gorge ourselves on them. It was always when my mother was gone for the day because she couldn’t stand to see us eating them with our fingers and getting the sauce everywhere.”

“Sounds like Jeremy was the better of the two parents you grew up with.”

“He was everything.”

“Was your mom abusive?”

“Only in the neglectful way. She didn’t really have time for me unless it involved parading me around like a show pony of her excellent parenting. She didn’t deserve any credit, though. It was all Jeremy. He was my hero growing up.”

“Makes me want to beat the shit out of him even more for abandoning you when you needed him most.”

I stopped eating and took a sip of my water. “I’ve always wondered, if he had time to process everything without me standing there learning the truth at the same time, if he would

have handled things differently. Everything that happened with his family taking all my stuff and kicking me out, I don't think that was Jeremy. If I had to bet my life on it, he would have never done those things. He might have been hurt enough not to want to speak to me for a while, but he wouldn't have purposely set out to destroy me. His parents were always cruel. You would think they were the ones who raised my mother and not him."

"My dad was in the club. He wasn't a good guy though. He was gone more than he was home and when I say gone, I don't just mean at the clubhouse. He might as well have been a nomad for all the time he spent traveling the country."

"I take it your mom didn't ever go with him?"

"No, when I was younger, he insisted her place was with me. And she did her best there, but my dad also failed to send money home a lot. More than likely he blew it on poker, drugs, other women, and who knows what else. He died on the road."

"What about your mom?"

"Cancer took her a few years back. She never bothered to find someone else after my dad died out there. Think she spent so much time waiting on him that she wasn't willing to wait on anyone else."

"I can understand that." I think Breakneck got it because he nodded his head and remained thoughtful as he tucked into the rest of the chili cheese fries. I was saving room for the rest of the food I had yet to try.



Chapter 23

Breakneck

Meg came and set our meals in front of us. “Was Grips around earlier?”

“I was working on something for the club before I picked Nova up. Didn’t see him, but I wasn’t hanging around the clubhouse,” I answered wondering why Meg would be asking about her man. Those two were nearly as solid as Mack and Viv, from what I could tell.

“I tried his phone earlier. Our grill guy for the night couldn’t make it in. I’m testing out one of the prep guys who swears he knows how to cook, but I was hoping Grips could come in as backup just in case Danny can’t make it happen.”

Meg knew she was putting me in a tight spot. I could pull my phone out and message him to see if he answered me. If he did, and was ignoring his wife, not only would Meg know, but it would send the wrong kind of message to Nova about how secretive the club could be.

“Might want to contact Tripp and ask if everything is okay. You know sometimes shit goes down and we’re not able to reach out right away. Grips and I don’t really work together like that often, so no clue what he’s up to today.”

“I’ll do that. He’s not the type to make me worry for no reason.”

I knew that to be true, too. That's why I was hesitant to make a call or send a message to find out what he was up to. There was no fucking way I was about to ruin my first real date with Nova when it was possible Grips was stepping out on his woman, or just ignoring her for whatever reason.

"How is everything?" Meg asked while obviously resigned to the fact that I wouldn't help her.

I took a bite of my burger and groaned in appreciation. Once I managed to chew and swallow, I turned to Meg. "The kid who took over in the kitchen make this burger?" She nodded and worried her lip with her teeth. "Fucking hire him for full time if you have it. This shit is good. Don't know what he did different, but fuck, this is how I want my burger cooked all the time."

A huge grin spread across Meg's face. "Thank fuck," she muttered before running off to the kitchen.

"That was sweet of you."

"Nah, sweetness, this shit is amazing." I held my burger out for her to try and she dove on it without hesitation. Something about feeding her made me hard as a damn rock. There was something primal about it. I wanted her in bed, wearing nothing, waiting to be fed by me after being completely sated sexually. I could see her there as is, and with a rounded belly too. Fuck, but she had me daydreaming up all sorts of scenarios where I was the one taking care of her and appreciating everything she had to offer.

"That is really good, but then again, so is this mac-n-cheese."

“Knew you’d like it.”

“Honestly, of all the things my mom did to hurt me, I think not allowing me to try this kind of food was one of the worst.”

I laughed at that because she wasn’t wrong, but then again, her mother abandoned her at her lowest moment and simply didn’t care to ever check in with her again. That’s some shit I could relate to considering my father was not much better. He at least came back to see that we were still alive from time-to-time.

We both ate the rest of our meal in peace, if you consider the noises of appreciation Nova kept making to be peaceful. The woman was taunting the fuck out of my dick. I wanted nothing more than to take her out and find a quiet corner to bend her over and fuck the shit out of her.

That couldn’t happen because Nova wasn’t ready yet. I might have been a fucking moron when it came to women, but after what she said to me the other night, I knew that one good date wouldn’t erase the fact that she’d just seen me have sex with two other women along with all the wild bullshit drama Connie caused for the second round. It had only been a day and I was starting to realize that Nova deserved more from me.

Talking about my dad and the way he treated my mom was a good reminder. I’d always told my mom that she deserved more. I couldn’t be the bastard that didn’t offer that to the future mother of my children.

After we ate, I took my sweetness home and left her on Kip’s doorstep with a quick kiss. I didn’t want to push that either. Everything had to go right or my daydreams of

knocking her up would be gone in the wind quicker than I could blink.

~*~

“You seem a little frustrated,” Connie cooed in my ear as she slid her arm around my shoulder and drew her fingertips down my arm. “Let’s go back to your room and I’ll make you feel better. No one even has to know.”

“I’m good.”

“You don’t look good, honey. Looks to me like that prissy little babysitter is just a tease and she’s leaving you without a happy ending. You can try to play the sweet, understanding boyfriend for her, but we both know that’s not who you are.”

“We also both know that if I was going to do something about lack of sex, it wouldn’t be with you.” I turned and stood with my beer in hand and moved to go check in on the poker game Trench and a couple of the other men were involved in. Things looked a little heated and that usually meant there would be a distracting fight to take my mind off the fact that I was trying to be the man Nova deserved, even if that meant not fucking her right away like I wanted to.

I’d stared at Nova’s lips during dinner the night before and every time she put her fucking fork in her mouth all I could think about was what it would be like with my cock there instead. Her beautiful lips would feel so good sliding up and down my length as she stared at me through those innocent eyes of hers.

“What the fuck are you grinnin’ about over there?” Grady asked. The old fuck was a holdover from the days when Tripp

and Mack's fathers had been in the club. It was amazing that he was still able to hold his bike up, but then again, the club was all he had since his old lady passed away a few years ago.

That woman had been a real ride or die bitch. She was old school, hard core, and just that touch of soft when she needed to be. She kept most of the men in the clubhouse on their toes, the whores in line, and the hangers on scared to death to try to prospect for us. Marge had been the front line in weeding out the weak ass bastards who thought hanging out with an MC would make them cool. She was sorely missed around here.

It made me think of Nova all over again. She seemed too soft to be that type of old lady, but then again, there were moments where her own fire burned fast and hard and she wasn't afraid to snap back. An empty, balled up pack of smokes hit me in the middle of my face. I glared over in Grady's direction to find him laughing at me.

"Lost to that pussy already?" He asked.

"Shut the fuck up."

"Nah, he hasn't managed to get in her panties yet, that's why he's here grinning off into space daydreaming about it," Trench informed him, as if he could read my fucking mind.

"She needs to know she's worth waiting for," I mumbled.

"That's a good man. Waited for my Margie. She made me wait until the fifth date before I even got a touch of tit. After I pinched her nipples, and she damn near shot off like a rocket, her panties disappeared." Grady cackled around his beer bottle.

"Not giving her five dates."

“How many have you had?”

“Just the one. Gonna take her out tomorrow. That’ll make two.”

“Let me guess,” Trench jumped in as he threw his cards down to fold. “You’re going to give her three dates and the third one’s the charm?” I grinned and tipped my bottle toward him in a beer salute.

Scout breezed through the room, and I moved to stop her. “Told you, we can’t go there so long as you’re in a committed relationship. Besides, I like Nova and wouldn’t do that to her.”

“It’s not about that. I have something I need looking into. Meant to ask you about it the other day, and thought to get Wiz involved, but not sure he’s up to the task.”

“What is it?”

“Honestly, not sure you’re up to it either, but I have no one else to ask.” I got up and moved Scout off to the side, so we could speak without being overheard.

Scout eyed me curiously. “If it’s about Nova, I already ran her background and told you everything there was to know.”

“It’s not about her. It’s about Ash.”

“Fuck, Breakneck. You’re killing me. You know that anything I find about her won’t be believed, right?”

“That’s why we’re going to string an outside source to tail her, but I need to know who you would go to if you needed video and photographic proof of what she’s been up to.”

“You have suspicions about her?”

“Anyone paying attention should have suspicions about what she’s up to. No realtor works the hours she does. Nova might as well be Knox’s mom for all the time she spends with him. If Kip doesn’t have that kid, Nova does. Never Ash. That in itself is fucking off kilter. She might have it out for the club because she felt we ruined her life when she made that shit decision to fuck Bagger and Mitzi all those years ago, but this is something different. I remember that girl. She wouldn’t just shove her kid off on other people the way she does unless there is a good damn reason for it.”

Scout bobbed her head up and down as if she agreed with me. “I didn’t know her back then since I wasn’t around, but the whole situation never sat right with me, and not just because it cost me Kip.”

“Darlin’ you are not alone in that. Need her followed discreetly. Video, photos, audio if it’s possible without her noticing. No telling what she’s getting up to either, so we can’t have her bugged personally. It has to be someone with the time to keep an eye on her and not get spotted.”

“I’ll get it worked out and have someone on her by the end of the week.”

“That’s my girl.”

“Breakneck!” I turned to see Tripp standing at the edge of the bar and walked over to see what he needed. “We need to talk in my office.”

“What’s up?” He waited to answer until we got there.

“Have a seat,” he offered as he inclined his head to indicate the chair in front of his desk. I took the seat and waited for him

to move around the desk and turn his laptop to face me. “This came in about an hour ago. Before you start bitching, I only saw it a minute before I went out to the commons to find you. Charmers picked it up off the ground when he swapped to gate duty tonight. Someone took advantage of a gap in their shift change to toss it there, sight unseen.”

He tossed the envelope my way, but my eyes were scanning the video feed on the laptop. A dark, older model Buick slid up close to the front gate and someone opened the door as they cruised by and managed to fling the thick envelope far enough that it slid under the gate. A minute later, Charmers is seen on camera picking it up and looking around. He calls for someone on his cell and Grips comes out to snag the thing and bring it inside.

“Grips slid it on my desk earlier, but I was taking care of something else and didn’t get to it.”

I picked up the envelope and opened it. The minute I did, it became clear what this was about. There was a picture of Nova lying on her bed in the house of horrors and getting herself off. The image triggered a memory of my last chat with that corpse fucking bastard. He said she called out my name when she did this. When I flipped the photo over my name was written on the back.

“Son of a bitch,” I hissed before digging back inside the envelope. “Was this all?”

“That’s all that was inside, but I wanted you to know. We’re going to consider this a threat and bring her in for lockdown. I’d like for you to stay close to the clubhouse too unless you’re with other members on club business.”

“Fuck that. Those punks aren’t going to scare me into being a prisoner in my own home.”

“I get that, man. Humor me anyway. Your girl will be here, you’ll be here, it sounds like a good way to finally make things happen for yourself. We get the added bonus of time to look into shit if we know where you’re both hanging your hat at night.”

“She’s not going to like it. Fuck man, she was just getting comfortable at Kip’s place.”

“I know it and wouldn’t ask it if I didn’t think she was in danger. We already know the Violent Order is behind this thanks to you getting that sick fuck to talk. He’s dead, by the way. I’m guessing one of his original wounds didn’t do too well in the dirty conditions out in the shed, especially since the dick kept shitting and pissing on himself.”

“Fuck, I was hoping to get more out of him.”

“I think you were lucky to get what you did.” Tripp glanced down at the photo and back up at me. “Your name was on the back, think that means they’ve been following you?”

I shook my head. “Nope, Dave said something when I got him to talk. He mentioned watching Nova getting herself off,” I told him as I tapped the picture. “The asshole said he was almost there too until she ruined it for him by calling out my name. If they were watching video of her that had audio capability, or even had someone who could read lips, they would know the connection was there, especially since I was the one who went into the house and roughed up their little punk ass porn peddler.”

Tripp nodded. “So, they know that our club was behind ending their source, that Nova has a connection to our club, and that we had Dave.” He sat quietly behind his desk after that just thinking. “I want you to get your guy on this, Wiz too. Let’s see who can dig up the most dirt and find out who the fuck ran a drive-by drop off on our front gate. Get those fucking prospects in order too. Whoever Charmer was relieving shouldn’t have been off the gate before he got there. Find out who it was because I want him gone. If he can’t take our gate security seriously, he doesn’t need to be here.”

“On it.” I stood to leave and took the picture with me.

“Break?”

“Yeah?” I asked as my hand flexed on the doorknob.

“If this shit escalates any further, gonna need you to bring your guy in all the way. Need to vet him and either vote him in or figure shit out, so we know he’s loyal to the club.”

“Don’t think you have anything to worry about, but I’m prepared to bring my guy in to meet with you.”

“Good. We’re going to need to make that happen sooner than later.”

I nodded and took off to my room to think things through. Kip needed to be notified immediately, and I had no doubt that his father was taking care of that, but I needed to make sure it got done.

Breakneck: *Had a threat come in about Nova and me. Need her on lockdown immediately. Talk to your dad if you have questions.*

Kip: *Talking to him now. Going to get her and Knox in her car and I'll follow them to the clubhouse. Let Charmer know we're headed that way. Don't want her idling at the gate.*

Breakneck: *On it.*

I called Charmer to let him know that Nova and Kip were on their way and to roll the gate as soon as he saw them. Still, I went to wait outside for them to show up because chances were if the assholes were bold enough to drop a threat at our gate, it was also possible that they had someone nearby watching. They'd know we brought Nova in for lockdown. Since they were an MC too, they probably knew what that meant. Unless they wanted to take on the whole MC, they wouldn't be able to get near her.



Chapter 24

Nova

“We need to get you to the clubhouse.”

“What? Why?” I asked as Kip stood in my doorway with his son in his arms and a diaper bag slung over his shoulder.

“I need you to take Knox in your car since I only have the bike here.” His answer, while true, seemed off.

“If you need to go in, I can keep Knox here with me, it’s not a big deal. All I’m doing tonight is studying anyway.”

“I really need him at the clubhouse. Can you come?”

“Of course,” I relented because Kip rarely asked me for things without filling me in. I wondered briefly if he was in a rush to get his son out of the house because of his wife. Maybe she was on her way home and already itching for a new fight with him. That wouldn’t be too far out of the realm of possibility, considering how their relationship had played out since I’d been working for him.

I slipped my shoes on, grabbed my bag and debated whether to bring my books for a minute before Kip reached down and grabbed that bag for me. He had bought me a new bookbag while claiming that he and Breakneck had been the ones to rip the shit out of the other one.

That hadn't been true. I'd ripped it first, so even if they made it worse, it was ultimately my fault, but I couldn't fight him on it. Kip looked proud that he'd picked out a super durable bag that even my heavy books couldn't poke a hole through.

We got Knoxville into my car along with mine and the baby's bags and then Kip leaned down to talk to me before I closed my door. "I'm going to follow behind you. When you get to the gate, it should already be open, just pull on in and park your car close to the garage instead of near the fence, okay?"

"Is there something I should know?"

"We'll talk when we get there, sweetheart." He shut my door for me and then moved over to mount his Harley that was still sitting in the driveway from earlier.

It didn't take long to drive to the clubhouse and Kip was right, Charmer was working the gate and had it opened up the minute he saw us coming down the street. That wasn't typically how things were done, which set my nerves on edge.

Once I was parked beside the garage, so my car couldn't be seen from the road, Kip came over to help get everything out of the car. "You take Knoxville and I'll get all the bags."

"Hand me Nova's bags," Breakneck demanded causing me to jump out of my skin because I hadn't heard him walk up behind us.

"Holy crap!" I yelled. "What is going on and how in the world did you just sneak up on us like that."

“I’m the enforcer, sweetness. It’s my job to be everywhere at once.”

I rolled my eyes and to my amusement, so did Kip. “He’s been practicing that shit for years.”

“What?” Breakneck questioned. “If you’re going to do something, do it right.”

“Yeah, remember you said that,” Kip told him and I didn’t miss the way his eyes drifted to me. Knoxville’s little hand reached up and patted my face rather roughly before using his little fingers to pull my bottom lip out. He seemed to be amused with the results and both men stopped to watch as the little angel giggled and yanked until my eyes teared up.

Very carefully, I pulled his hand away from my lip and playfully scolded him. “You can’t yank on my lips like that little man, it’s not nice.”

“Why am I jealous of your kid right now?” Breakneck asked Kip who simply laughed at him. We all walked together toward the clubhouse, and I didn’t miss the fact that Kip and Breakneck formed a human wall that would make it impossible for anyone on the street to see me enter the building.

“Okay, seriously, what’s going on?”

“Let’s get to my room before we talk. There are too many people hanging around right now,” Breakneck all but whispered in my ear before he turned to Kip. “Not sure who some of these fuckers are, but we shouldn’t have hanger-on types running around the clubhouse right now.”

“You go fill Nova in,” Kip said as he took his son from my arms. “I’m going to go have a chat with my Prez. We need him to call for church.”

Breakneck nodded and took my hand to pull me along behind him. As we passed by the woman who I’d last seen being carried out of Breakneck’s room unconscious, she muttered, “Bitch,” under her breath. Part of me wanted to flip her off, but if I hesitated long enough to do that, I’d never be able to catch up to the man who seemed in a rush to get me to his room.

I swallowed my anger and followed after him instead. Whatever he needed to fill me in on sounded important. Considering the precautions that were taken in getting me here, I was starting to wonder if they had finally figured out who Creepy Dave had been working with. Part of me had still been holding out hope that it was all for his personal collection and that nothing would have been transferred out of the house. It was a long shot, but I still had hope. At least, I did until those hopes were dashed to shit by the image I saw lying on Breakneck’s bed.

There was a picture of me in a compromising position, and before I even consciously registered when it could have been taken, tears started flowing down my cheeks. They were angry tears at being violated like that. Dave definitely had cameras in my bedroom, not just the bathroom. That image was of me on the bed with my sorry excuse for a blanket underneath me. I was touching myself and thinking about the man whose room I stood in.

“Does this mean there’s a video out there?”

He nodded his head. “Someone dropped this off outside our gate when the prospects were swapping shifts. The asshole Charmer relieved left his post a few minutes before he got there, and when Charmer arrived this had been flung under the gate.”

“He saw it?” I asked, eyes wide from shock and humiliation.

Breakneck was quick to disavow me of that conclusion. “No, sweetness. It was in an envelope. He called it in, and another brother came out to take it to Prez. Tripp saw it because he was the one to open it. The only other person who has seen it is me.”

I wasn’t thrilled that Tripp had seen it, but there was nothing to be done about that. “What does this mean?” I turned the photo over so that I wouldn’t have to look at myself with my fingers circling over my clit any longer but was surprised to find Breakneck’s name on the back.

“Who wrote that?”

“Whoever dropped the picture off, I’m guessing.”

“Why would they do that?”

“I need you to not be embarrassed when I ask you this next question and it is important that you tell me the truth when I do.”

My eyes met his and I knew what he was about to ask. I nodded, but he asked anyway. “Did you call out my name when you were pleasuring yourself, sweetness?”

“Yes,” I whispered.

Breakneck pulled me into his body and wrapped his arms around me. “I know this all feels like a huge fucking violation and it is. I’m sorry that I had to ask, but Dave said something about this before we were done questioning him. I wasn’t sure whether to believe him or not, and then we got this picture with my name on the back, and I put two-and-two together. You were saying my name. That’s how we know they have a video of what you were doing. They wouldn’t have known that from still shots.”

“I hate this. That picture shouldn’t exist. The video... That means someone has watched it long enough to at least take still shots from it. There’s no telling how many people...”

“I know baby. We are working on getting those bastards, need you to believe me. We will burn their fucking house down and everyone and everything inside it once we find out where they’re hiding. Those assholes are like rats. They aren’t brave enough to have a clubhouse that’s out in the open the way ours is.”

“It’s another MC?”

“Yeah, sweetness, it looks like another MC was involved. They’re not good guys.”

“That’s what you said about the men here.”

“They make us look like fucking saints.”

“I’m scared,” I admitted.

“That’s why we brought you in tonight. You’re going to stay here for a while on lockdown. Normally, we’d lockdown all the women and children when a threat is issued, but Tripp is fairly certain the threat was targeted to only you and me.”

“Threat?”

“Delivering a picture like that to our front gate is like delivering a threat. They have video of you, this is them saying they are going to use it. This is them saying they’re watching us.”

There was no stopping the full body shake that started when I allowed that information to sink in. “What do you mean by lockdown?”

“You won’t be able to leave the clubhouse for a while, probably not until we find out where these assholes are hiding.”

“What about school?”

“We’re working on getting you excused on account of you receiving a threatening message from a stalker. Kip is going to talk to them tomorrow about you taking online courses for the rest of the semester.”

“The rest of the semester?”

“Hopefully, it won’t take us that long, but we want to cover all the bases just in case. Don’t panic, we’re just being extra cautious because you mean so much to everyone here. Whether you realize it or not, you’re a part of our family now.”

“Just because we went on one date?”

Breakneck laughed. “It doesn’t work that way, sweetness. You’re family because of your position with Kip and Knoxville. If things progress the way I hope they do with us, then you’ll be family for a different reason, but I’d need to claim you as my old lady first for that to happen.”

“What all does that mean?”

“It’s like an MC version of a marriage. Some people get married by law, too. Claiming an old lady means just as much, often times more, than signing a piece of paper telling everyone you’re married.”

“Okay, well I’m definitely not ready for that,” I admitted.

“Neither of us are.” He moved to put that picture away in a drawer and I hoped he didn’t leave it there. In fact, I kind of wanted to burn it. He must have seen the look in my eyes. “We have to hang onto it for now, just in case we need it later.”

“Why would you need it later?”

“It’s evidence. Just in case we need to pull the law in on this. And trust me when I say, that’s the last thing we want to do, but we hand on to evidence as a backup.”

“I understand.” That was a lie. I didn’t understand it at all. He and Kip had both told me that whatever happened to Dave at his house of corpses was on camera. They couldn’t go to law enforcement about it without incriminating themselves in Dave’s disappearance. I didn’t see how that could have possibly changed. They also now knew that there was video out there of me, and maybe of them. I didn’t know if it was something streamed or that Dave had to send them manually. If it was the latter, then the men behind the videos might not have access to the evidence that put Breakneck and Kip in the house. Endless possibilities spun in my head as I sat on the edge of Breakneck’s bed.

“Kip is going to set his room up for you, so you can watch Knoxville in there if things in the common room get too

obnoxious. We want you to have a quiet place to study and keep the baby when Kip is at work.”

“What about Ashlynn?”

Breakneck laughed and it sounded all kinds of wrong, as if it was more a noise of disbelief than humor. “That bitch doesn’t give a shit what happens to that kid as long as he continues to breathe and be an anchor keeping Kip in line.”

I didn’t know what to say about that. I’d already thought as much but hated myself for the jaded outlook. There was still this part of my brain that refused to acknowledge a mother could just discount their own child or use them to further some agenda and not care about them otherwise. Even knowing that my own mother was just like that, it was still hard to fathom.

“Eventually, when you’re comfortable, I’m hoping you’ll want to stay in here with me at night instead, but I won’t rush you.”

“Are we still exclusive with one another?”

“Have been since we talked about it, sweetness.”

“Okay, I wasn’t sure if...”

“I told you, if things change for me, I will let you know before I go there.”

“Okay,” I whispered, wanting to believe him even while a tiny part of my brain rebelled against the idea that the man could ever take that vow seriously.



Chapter 25

Breakneck

“Where are you taking me?” Nova asked in that timidly sweet voice of hers that told me she was nervous, but in a good way.

“On our second date. You didn’t think I’d forget just because we’re on lockdown, did you?”

She eyed me suspiciously, and I couldn’t really blame her. She’d only seem a small part of the clubhouse so far, but what she’d seen probably left her with a bad taste in her mouth when she thought about having ‘date night’ here with me. Still, she allowed me to take her hand and guide her through the common area and out the backdoor. A couple of my club brothers and Scout knew what was up because they helped me get everything ready. At first, I felt like a sappy dick putting the date together, but my girl deserved a little normal.

I had ulterior motives beyond making Nova smile. There was no way she was putting out until we had another official date or two and I couldn’t wait much longer to get her sweet body underneath mine.

“We’re going outside?” She questioned.

“Stop asking things and just wait and be surprised.”

“It’s fair to say anything you do at this point will be a surprise,” she teased.

“Women,” I huffed.

“Will there be mac-n-cheese?” She asked in a playful tone that made me want to throw her in the grass and show her why her new favorite food didn’t even compare to what I had to give her.

“If you have the same thing on every date it wouldn’t be any fun,” I explained.

“Maybe not, but it would taste good.”

I chuckled and she laughed along, knowing she was being ridiculous. I was sure she did it on purpose to cover for how nervous our impromptu date made her. We walked around the giant fire pit in the middle of the backyard area and the gazebo came into view. It was something that had been built when Tripp married his wife, Kim. He and Mack had taken their time to build the thing to make her happy.

Some shit went down back then, and Kim nearly ran from the club, Tripp, and even her brother Mack while she was still pregnant with Kip. The gazebo was part apology for whatever went down and part wedding gift. Tonight, it was the setting for my second date with Nova.

I reached into my pocket and hit the button Scout told me to press. The sun had set only moments ago and the minute I pressed the button, the gazebo lit up with what looked like a million fucking twinkle lights.

“Oh my God,” Nova cried out in surprise as she took in the sight. “It looks like it was covered in stars.”

“Then it’s a fitting setting for a woman named Nova,” I teased. She turned to me with a huge grin on her face before

she finally ran ahead of me to go investigate the place we'd spent all day rigging up for this moment.

"There's a picnic basket in here and..." She choked out a shocked laugh. "Is that champagne in the ice bucket?"

"It is."

"I've never had champagne before. My dad – Jeremy let me try some wine before, but it was gross."

I laughed at that. It was also a good reminder that Nova was still young. I puzzled over the fact that I didn't know exactly how old she was. "How old are you?" I finally asked.

"Twenty. Why? How old are you?"

"Twenty-eight."

"Oh,"

"What does, 'Oh' mean?"

"I knew you were older than me, but it's just weird to think that you're eight years older."

"I thought you were nineteen still. When did you turn twenty?"

Nova ducked her head, and I didn't miss the blush on her face as she did so. Something happened on her birthday that she was embarrassed about. "It was not that long ago."

"When?" I demanded to know.

She sighed and I watched as her shoulders slumped. Her answer wasn't going to be good, and I felt like an asshole for pushing, considering it looked as though the answer might ruin the night I'd spent so long working on putting together.

“October 29th.”

Her answer was the date and nothing of the reason behind her reaction. I started counting back and realized that two days before Halloween was the day that... Fuck. It was the day that she'd seen me with Dee and Connie in the common room and then again with Connie being carried out of my room naked later that same day.

“Fuck!” the word came out on a growl while Nova refused to meet my eyes. “I wish you would have said something sooner.”

“Why? When would have been a good time to say, ‘By the way, it’s my birthday!’?”

“Maybe before your actual birthday,” I suggested so that we could avoid talking about what happened that day.

“I didn’t think anyone would care.”

I shook my head and moved over to wrap my arms around her. “Even when I was stuck in my head and being a jerk because you rejected the first date I was supposed to take you on, it never meant I didn’t care. Sure as fuck didn’t mean Kip wouldn’t want to know.”

“It’s the first year that I didn’t have my family around,” she admitted. I squeezed her a little tighter in response. I still wanted to kill her family. They’d laid all their baggage at her feet and made her carry that shit even though she hadn’t done a damn thing to deserve it.

“I’m sorry. We’ll make your birthday something special next year. It’s a big one, since you’ll be legal to drink then.” I

winked at her as I looked down to see how she was handling everything.

“Well, considering I don’t really drink, twenty meant more than twenty-one.”

“How so?”

“I’m an actual adult and not a teenager anymore.” I cringed at the thought that she had been a teenager only a short time ago and I’d been imagining all the ways I wanted to see her naked and all the dirty things I wanted to do once I got her that way. Fuck me, there was something wrong with that picture, even if she had been legal.

“Are there usually lights up out here?”

“No, we put them up earlier.”

She smiled at me again. “You had help?”

“Yeah, smarter people than me had to rig up my ideas so I didn’t run the risk of burning the place down. Originally, I wanted to put a bunch of candles out here, but it was suggested that I use these lights instead.” I pulled the remote out of my pocket and showed it to her.

“They change color!” She clapped excitedly and stole the remote from me and immediately changed the lights to a purple color that dimmed the light around us and made us less visible than we’d been under the bright white lights.

“Is this your favorite color?”

“I suppose it is.”

“Good to know.” I pulled her over to the center of the gazebo where I had a nest of cushions and blankets laid out for

us to sit down on. Nova took it a step further and laid down on her side facing me, so I followed suit and mimicked her pose.

“Thank you for doing all this, it really is gorgeous out here and listen...” She paused for effect so I could tune into whatever she wanted me to hear. “The crickets are still out. I’ve always loved that about living in southern Georgia. We mostly get to skip winter and keep some of the ambiance that people further north don’t get.”

“Well, you just reminded me,” I pulled my phone out and hit play on the list of music I had queued up earlier. It was a bunch of slowed down, acoustic rock songs to help set the mood without losing what I liked about music.

“I love this playlist.” Nova sighed a thoroughly contented sound and then started harmonizing her soft voice to that of Chris Cornell’s. Before I knew what was happening, Nova slid closer to me and put her head down on my chest while dragging one of my arms across her body to hold her. Fuck me, but it was unexpected yet felt so fucking right. We stayed there like that for a good while just enjoying the music and the night before we got to know one another a little better.

“I don’t even know your name.”

“Yeah, you do.”

“No, I mean your real name. Most of the guys just use a version of their real name like Tripp and Kip, I’m assuming Mack is part of his name too, and Charmer isn’t far off either. Breakneck doesn’t sound like it would be even remotely close to what your actual name is though.”

“You’re right. It’s Troy Babbit, and honestly I haven’t been called that in a really long time, so it doesn’t even sound like it belongs to me anymore.”

“Troy Babbit,” she mimicked. “I would have never in a million years guessed that one.” Something inside my chest fluttered as I listened to her laughter. “How did you end up with Breakneck?”

It was my turn to laugh. “I used to race dirt bikes, still do sometimes, but not as often as I did when I was younger. Never had any fear of getting hurt. My bikes were always like an extension of my body, and I had this crazy confidence that was fucking unshakable. The older guys out there and even my own sponsors used to always say, *‘That kid’s gonna break his neck if he keeps that up.’* Some of the guys from the club heard it one too many times while I was prospecting, and it stuck.”

To my surprise, Nova laughed again, and I could feel the way her body moved against mine as she did. “What’s all that for?”

“Well, I honestly thought you were going to pull some, ‘I could tell you but then I’d have to kill you’ crap on me where your name was concerned.”

“What did you think my name meant?” I asked, curious to know where her mind had gone.

“Honestly?” She asked.

“Yeah, sweetness, always want your honesty, even for the little things.”

She hummed her agreement, probably meaning for me to do the same, and I would where I could. “I thought it meant that you break necks for a living. You told me your job for the club is as an enforcer, so it made sense.”

“That’s what our rival clubs think too. We try not to correct them on it, so keep the whole racing dirt bikes under wraps, yeah?”

She giggled out her response and I leaned in and took her lips with my own. The plan was not to seduce her just yet. A kiss at the end of the night, like last time, only a little deeper was what I was supposed to stick with, but I couldn’t help myself. Her laughter and the way she seemed to shed her troubles the minute she saw the twinkle lights on the gazebo drew me in and kept demanding that I get closer.

“I could spend forever just kissing these lips,” I announced the minute our mouths parted.

“Yeah,” she agreed dreamily.

“Tomorrow, I have to leave on some club business and won’t get back until late, but I wanted to go ahead and ask if you’ll go on a third date with me the next night.” She grinned up at me and nodded her head.

“I would love to, but does that mean this one is over?”

“Nah, we have all night out here if that’s what you want.”

“Just a little while longer,” she hummed.

“We still have food and champagne out here, too.”

“Yeah, we’ll get to that. Right now, I don’t want to move, just want to enjoy being here with you.”

“That’s good, sweetness because I want the same.”



Chapter 26

Nova

Breakneck was gone the next day while I watched Knoxville in the common area. There was no way I could stand to be cooped up in Kip's bedroom all day, every day. Once I got the baby fed, changed, and down for his nap in the playpen, I pulled my schoolwork out. Kip had delivered a laptop for me to work on, so that I could keep up with my classes online. Thankfully, the school determined that there was a need for me to swap to online classes for the rest of the semester because it wasn't something they usually allowed to happen.

"What the hell are you doing out here?" The woman with the giant fake boobs and fried blond hair asked me.

"That's both really obvious and not your concern," I replied.

She laughed at me. "You think your something with your little date night out in the gazebo. It wasn't special, Breakneck has taken me back there to fuck a few times."

"Quit lying to her, Connie." Another woman, Scout, I think her name was, said as she stopped near us. Her eyes were trained on the baby at my side as she spoke. I could see the pain there as she looked at him, and knowing part of her story made my heart ache for her.

"You're just jealous that you lost your man, and that Kip doesn't take you out there to make you feel special," Connie

taunted her.

“Seriously, stop lying or I’ll go let Tripp know what a cunt your being to his grandson’s nanny.” Scout turned to me then. “Breakneck never takes anyone out there and it is off limits to club girls anyway. That’s a rule set by both the Prez and his VP, since they built it.”

“For Tripp’s late wife,” I added the part of the story that Breakneck had told me the night before.

“Yeah, for Kim,” Scout smiled at me as she realized he must have clued me in to the fact that the place held a deeper meaning than just a building on the back lawn.

Connie got fed up with us ignoring her and she walked off. Scout started to follow until I called her back. “It’s okay if you sit here. I’m not really that busy, since I was already ahead with my work.”

She glanced at the baby again and shook her head. “Believe it or not, just me talking to you will cause a shitstorm with Ash if she finds out, let alone the fact that I was this close to her precious son.”

I scrunched my nose up at that. “Knoxville is precious to Kip. To me, too. His mother doesn’t treat him that way, though. As long as you don’t have any ill will toward my little buddy, then I don’t really care what she thinks. That baby deserves to be loved and admired by everyone, especially since his mother isn’t one of those people showing him that same courtesy.”

“Girl, if you ever try to leave your job or this club, I’ll have something to say about it,” Tripp called out. I blushed

profusely knowing that he had just overheard me talking shit about his daughter-in-law.

Scout laughed at my wide-eyed, ‘oops’ stare. “He meant every word. Everyone here sees that you care for the kid and that his mother is never around. These guys might come off as gruff and too busy to notice the little things, but they do. Trust me, you’ve earned their respect a few times over already.” Scout winked at me. “Mine too.”

“Thanks, I guess?” It came off as more of a question than a statement. Scout grinned and walked away without saying anything else.

“Don’t take it personally,” Tripp said as he came over to check on his grandson. “It’s hard for her to be around him. She’d never hurt him, but that baby is the only reason she and my son aren’t married right now. They were just getting their shit together when Ashlynn came back into the picture to tell Kip she was pregnant. Worst fucking day of both their lives. Well, maybe not hers. I’m guessing the day my son was forced to marry that bitch was worse for Scout and probably the day his son was born to another woman.” He shook his head. “Sometimes, we men get things wrong and screw it up. Once in a while, it works out that way, but my son isn’t one of those cases. He’s meant to be with that girl.”

“Maybe one day, everything will work out the way it’s supposed to,” I offered optimistically.

“Let’s hope so. You good, have everything you need?”

“Doin’ just fine right here. If we’re in the way, we can move.”

“You stay right where you are and if Connie or any of the other club girls gives you any shit, come see me and I’ll deal with them.”

“Thanks, Tripp.”

“Any time, sweetheart.”

~*~

I never did see Breakneck that day, but that was probably because I’d taken Knoxville back to Kip’s room by seven. Once evening rolled around, more of the club girls started hanging around in less clothing. I took that as my cue to get back to the solitude of the private suite.

The next day, I didn’t see him either until around six in the evening when Kip came to collect his son from me. He told me to get ready because my man was waiting for me in the common room. Once I was ready, I headed out there to find Breakneck waiting for me with a purple rose that he held out for me to take.

“It’s beautiful.” He handed the long-stemmed rose to me and took my other hand in his. “Come on, we have a date to get to.” We did not go out the back door that time. Instead, we moved to go up the stairs that ran up to what I always thought was a loft area. I had never gone up there, but that was where Breakneck headed with me in tow.

When we got to the top of the stairs, I looked around and realized that there was an open loft seating area up there, but there was also a hallway directly above where the one downstairs was situated. On either side of the hall were doors, that I assumed went to more bedrooms. I wondered who lived

up there considering I never really saw anyone go up the stairs in all the times I'd been at the clubhouse.

We didn't go inside any of those rooms and continued on down the hall until it opened up into another, cozier looking bar area. It was similar to the downstairs space except everything in the room appeared to be newer and it all matched. The bar was obviously much smaller, since the space was about a quarter of the size of the main common area.

No one else was using the space, but when Breakneck took his phone out and clicked on some things the same playlist that he used on our date two days ago started. The lights were low, and there was a table sitting off to the side that had a couple covered dishes on it.

"I already know that you missed dinner since the club girls started rolling into the common room early. I wanted to make up for that and well, take you on our third date. It should have been something special where I picked you up and you had a vase to put your rosebud in. It should have brightened up your room at Kip's place for a few days at least."

"Are you kidding me?" I asked as I took in the scene he had created. "This is amazing. You managed to make two completely different romantic settings inside a motorcycle club compound." I laughed at the thought because it seemed impossible and yet my gruff, self-proclaimed lifelong bachelor and hard-living motorcycle man managed to do just that.

"This is amazing, and I didn't even know this place existed."

"You're not supposed to. This is generally reserved for officers and special guests of the club."

“Aren’t you an officer?”

“I am, and you’re my special guest tonight.”

“So, this is the room you take women who you really want to impress?”

“No, not at all. I’ve never brought a woman up here before or even spent much time up here. When I said it’s usually meant for special guests, I meant like another club president who happens to be visiting, especially if he brings his family along. It helps to keep separation from families and the club girls downstairs. They’re not allowed up here at all.”

“Or in the gazebo apparently.”

“No, they’re not allowed there either. Who told you that?” I explained how I came to know that and the conversation that ensued with Scout and Tripp the day before. Breakneck seemed pleased that Scout had stepped in when Connie was running her mouth.

“Scout’s a good person.”

“I gathered that.”

Breakneck led me over to the table and pulled my chair out for me. Once we were both seated, he uncovered the dishes and laughter bubbled immediately.

“You said we couldn’t have mac-n-cheese for every date.”

He chuckled along with me. “Technically, we didn’t have any on date number two, so we were in the clear for a repeat performance. The change of location makes it all okay.”

“Oh, well, as long as you’re keeping track,” I teased.

“You better believe I’m keeping track. Every smile, every laugh you give me, every fucking time you look at me and your eyes drop to half-mast and fill with lust... I’m watching and keeping score. Those are little promises of better things to come soon, and I plan to collect.”

The room suddenly felt far too hot and the light t-shirt I had on felt like far too much as well. Breakneck didn’t stop staring as I no doubt looked at him with those same lust-filled eyes he’d just been talking about. He hadn’t been wrong either. There were far too many times, starting on the first day I met the man, where I wondered what it would be like to see him naked and to be with him intimately.

It wasn’t like he didn’t know that, considering he had a picture that proved what I’d been doing when I was alone and thinking of him. Breakneck smoothed his fingers down my face in a gentle stroke that shouldn’t have been possible from the man. There was something about the way he treated me when we were alone that made me nervous. With the club he was the enforcer, rough and wild. The opposite was true when we went on our dates, and it was just the two of us. He became this sweet, gentle version of himself that I don’t think even his club brothers had ever seen before.

“Let’s eat before it gets cold,” he suggested.

After we finished our meal, Breakneck stood and held his hand out for me. We moved away from the table into an area that had been cleared of furniture and he pulled me into his body and held me close as he started swaying us back and forth.

“What are we doing?” I asked, though I couldn’t hide the smile on my face.

“You know.”

My smile grew wider as he upped his game and moved his feet to shuffle back and forth along with the sway. His arms tightened around me in warning as I started to giggle.

“Why is dancing with me so funny?”

“Only because you refused to admit that was what we were doing.” Breakneck huffed. Despite him telling me his name was Troy, I couldn’t make myself use it when I thought of him. Troy was someone else, a man that possibly didn’t exist anymore. Breakneck was the one present with me, dancing on our third date that he set up for us because I couldn’t leave the clubhouse. The funny thing was that any date he planned on the outside couldn’t have possibly matched the last two. They showed me how much he truly cared with the effort he put in to making everything so special for me.

We must have only been allowed the upstairs lounge all to ourselves for a short time because by about the fourth song, someone cleared their throat. I turned to see Tripp and Mack standing there grinning at us like fools.

“Hate to break up the party, but we just got word that Zealot and Minch are headed this way. They both have their old ladies with them and should be here in about twenty minutes. Don’t worry about the mess. I’ll have someone come in and clean it up. No need to ruin the rest of your night, you just need to take it somewhere else.

Breakneck nodded and pulled back from me before grasping my hand in his and leading the way back downstairs. “Sorry about that,” he tried to say, but the music downstairs was obnoxiously loud considering it was Friday night. We were halfway to the hallway that led toward Breakneck’s room and the one I’d been staying in, when someone stepped in his way.

“Aren’t you going to party with the rest of us tonight?” The woman asked. I recognized her as one of the two women who had been waiting on Breakneck that first time I showed up to care for Knoxville at the clubhouse.

“You know better, Liz.”

“I’ve missed you,” she pouted at him. While I hated that she had the audacity to approach him when he was clearly with another woman, the fact that she had to say she missed him meant that she hadn’t been with him in a while at least.

“Do you see me with my woman?” Breakneck asked her, and he did not sound happy to have to do it. The woman flinched but then shored herself up for a fight.

“You haven’t claimed anyone, that makes you free game.”

“You are on your last warning with me, next time you speak to me without invitation, I’ll be bringing your future stay at the club up in church.”

Liz didn’t put up any more of a fight and instead turned on her heel and nearly ran to the other side of the commons. Grady, the older member who was always around and making jokes spoke up. I hadn’t realized he’d been sitting right behind us until he did.

“I’ll make sure that gets addressed with Prez when he’s available again. Go enjoy your night.”

Breakneck tipped his chin down at the man and then tugged on my hand to get me moving along behind him. We didn’t head back to my room, which surprised me. Instead, he took me to his room. Another surprise was that everything looked clean and there were a bunch of those battery-operated votive candles placed all around. A few taper candles were in the mix as well, and since there was no melted wax mess anywhere, I assumed they were also running on battery power.

“Did you already have them all lit when we were upstairs?”

“Yeah.” He blushed as he said it.

“So, you assumed you were going to get lucky?” I wagged my brows at him playfully and it worked to make him laugh and break the tension that had crept into his shoulders from the confrontation with Liz. She was one of the club girls, and he was probably waiting for me to make a big deal over the little confrontation, but there was no need. This was my way of breaking the ice and telling him that scene wasn’t important. Tonight was about us and I was tired of waiting.

“You think I’m getting lucky tonight? I thought we had to round the bases first.”

“And you don’t think we can do that in one inning?” I asked curiously.

“Fuck, sweetness, you’re killing me here.” I moved closer and ran my fingers down his jawline. Unlike many of the other bikers in his club, Breakneck kept his face cleanly shaven. The slight dimple in his chin always fascinated me and even more

so as I ran my finger into the little dip and watched as he licked his lips in anticipation of whatever I did next.

I moved both my hands behind his neck and held on with one as I used the other to tug on the short strands of hair there to pull him toward me. I didn't go for his lips immediately. Instead, I kissed that little dimple in his chin that intrigued me so much.

He groaned before tipping my chin up and planting his mouth on mine and taking the kiss that he really wanted. Then it was my turn to moan as his tongue stroked across mine while his hands pulled me closer and massaged my ass all at once. There was no denying that he wanted this to move through all the bases quickly, since I could feel how hard he was for me.

His hands roamed upward and before I knew what happened, my shirt was lying on the floor at our feet. Our mouths had only separated for the briefest moment, and then they were back where they belonged, pressed together as our heated kisses pulled us deeper into one another. I could probably survive on Breakneck's kisses alone. They both energized me and threatened to bring me to my knees.

My nipples scraping against the leather of his cut were my only indication that my bra was somewhere on the floor instead of my body. It was like his kisses drugged me into a passion-fueled bubble where nothing else could penetrate.

“Need you to kick those shoes off, sweetness.”

I stepped back and did as he asked before my brain had a chance to engage and make me doubt myself or what we were doing.

Breakneck picked me up and moved me once my shoes were off, so that I was standing in front of him mostly naked. All that was left were the shorts he was working down my legs and my panties. My very simple, cotton briefs I'd purchased from the local chain store because they were the cheapest pack, not because they would ever turn a man on.

I blushed profusely when I thought about the difference in my granny-style undies and what Connie had been wearing the first night I saw her. She basically had dental floss strung between her feminine flaps and there I was with giant bloomers covering everything and then some.

“Stop,” Breakneck fussed as he finished peeling my clothes off me.

“Stop what?”

“Being embarrassed about your body, me seeing it, or whatever else has that red flush spreading across your chest and cheeks. Not that I don't mind seeing that beautiful color bloom across your skin, but I'd much rather it be in the heat of passion that your skin is stained that way and not because you're ashamed of yourself.”

“I'm not ashamed of myself. I'm ashamed of the underwear I had to buy because I didn't have money for anything else.”

“Does it look like I give a shit what underwear you have on?”

He stood and pointed to the evidence of his arousal that tented his pants. I couldn't answer him even if I wanted to. Instead, I shook my head and continued to stare as Breakneck

pulled his leather cut off and set it aside on top of his dresser before he quickly shucked out of everything else he had on.

The rest of his clothes were thrown willy-nilly around the room, as if he had no care for them. That was the difference I realized. The club, the things and people attached to it, those were what mattered to the man before me. Not that I didn't already know that, but seeing the way he cared for his cut was another layer of how deep his ties went with the Savage Vipers.

I tucked the nagging worry away that I wasn't really attached to the club. Not in the way the other women were. Still, knowing that we might be on borrowed time, because I still wasn't sure if just being with me would be enough for the man, I put the thought out of my mind. Worrying about where I really stood in the big scheme of things, especially how disposable I was, needed to be off the table while we were naked together. There would be plenty of time to freak out about everything and worry later.

"Turn it off," Breakneck warned me before he drew me closer to his now nude body. The heat rolling off him felt unreal. My hands, as if of their own accord, landed on his chest and I scraped my nails lightly down from his collarbone to circle around his nipples. I followed the trail of hair that grew across the expanse of his chest and then down the center of his body to the penis that stood proudly erect in front of him.

I chastised myself for even thinking to call his manhood a penis, because it seemed too watered-down a word to be an apt description. Breakneck had a cock and a magnificent one at

that. Not that I was a connoisseur, but I had been watching porn since my early teen years. If he wanted to, the man could make some serious cash in the adult film industry.

I continued to rake my nails lightly down that trail of hair until I reached the base of his cock and some of his precum leaked out the tip onto my arm. Then I changed course and ran my nails back up his front with my fingers splayed out, as I looked on in fascination when gooseflesh broke out in the wake of my touch.

“I like the way you worship me, sweetness, but this isn’t about me.”

“Why not? I thought sex was supposed to be about both people.”

He chuckled lightly in response, making me feel stupid. “I rarely even have sex when it’s just two people.” His shoulders shook as if there was some private joke in there that had gone over my head.

I backed up a step, or attempted to, before he caught me around the waist and yanked me back even closer to his body than I’d been before. The moisture from his tip smeared across my belly as he brought his lips down to mine for a quick kiss before explaining.

“I’m not laughing at you,” he insisted. “I’m laughing at myself, because I keep forgetting that there’s so much you are unfamiliar with when it comes to all this. It’s your first time. That needs to be about making you comfortable, me cherishing you, being sweet.” It was as though he was reminding himself of those things, rather than explaining them to me. I think if he could have choked on the words he would

have, but his fingers caressed over my skin so gently that it almost felt believable.

“Can you just be yourself and treat me the way you would anyone else?” I asked because what I really craved from this man, was for him to show me who he was. The genuine article and not some fake show he was putting on for the inexperienced girl.

He smirked. “Sure, sweetness.” Breakneck picked me up and ran his cock against my body, between my legs, where he split my labia and rubbed the head of his prick right up against my clit. That felt heavenly and finally, I thought I might be able to let go of my own nerves and get into doing this with him.

“You like that?” He asked as he thrust himself forward again. I nodded my head in response before rolling my hips forward to increase the pressure. It was his turn to break as he groaned against my neck and then nipped there with his teeth before soothing away the slight sting with the flat of his warm tongue.

“Yeah, you like this,” he agreed with himself as he used his hands on my hips to encourage me to slide my sensitive slick center up and down his hard length. There was still no penetration, but if that was supposed to hurt me, I could be content doing this all night until we both reached a climax.

Breakneck obviously didn't agree with that as he took me over to the bed, threw the covers off and laid me down on the clean, crisp sheets. The coolness against my back was in direct contrast to the heat rolling off the man who took up so much space as he slid above me.

“I’m going to make your first time so sweet, Nova.”

I barely had time to process his words before his mouth was on my right nipple, suckling there while his giant hands molded themselves around my breasts, squeezing and teasing. He shifted to the other breast before long and the chill left behind in his absence pulled that nipple even tighter, almost painfully so.

One of his hands dropped down to my sex where Breakneck rubbed my clit in gentle circles with his fingers before dipping one into the opening of my pussy to gather up the wetness that accumulated there. When his fingers went back to work on my clit, it was with a slickness that aided in his quest to get me off. No one else had ever touched me there, and the sensation was nothing like doing it myself. My nerve endings seemed amplified and somehow far more receptive to his touch than my own.

The moan I unleashed was heavier, a lower register noise than had ever come from me before. The man was somehow changing me from just plain Nova into something else. At least, I thought that was happening until he eased back on his ministrations and suddenly the blunt head of his thick cock was there at my entrance.

Breakneck’s lips met mine in a torturously languid kiss. He pulled back just enough to nip at my lower lip as he surged forward, breaking through any evidence that was left of my virginity with a pinch of pain and a burning fullness that was difficult to adjust to.

“It was better that way,” he rasped into my ear. “Taking you by surprise,” he added the last bit on a harsh breath while

remaining still inside me.

“I already knew it would hurt,” I explained, not wanting him to treat me like some fragile thing as we explored one another. I moved my hips, trying to accommodate his large girth inside my narrow channel. There was no escaping the way he filled and stretched me though. No relief from the way it felt too much and all at once not enough as I wiggled my hips once more.

“I’ll work that out for you in just a minute,” he assured before dipping his face back down to mine so he could steal another kiss. Then he slid down and kissed my jaw and up to the tip of my ear and in such a way that my face was basically forced to slip into the crook of his neck for moment. When he moaned as he pulled all the way out, so that the tip of his cock was all that was left inside me, I could feel the vibrations of the sound he made on my cheek and nose.

I wish I could say it was a pleasant experience, but slight claustrophobia set in as I feared I wouldn’t be able to breathe. When Breakneck slid slowly back inside me to the hilt, he lifted his body from mine, so that he was propped up on his elbows while his arms cradle my own to the side of my body.

I laid there, knowing that I should be doing something, but feeling too trapped by the man to do so. While his ministrations didn’t hurt, the sexiness from earlier, when he’d been manipulating my clit had fled. I was left in awkward wonder that this was the sex everyone went on-and-on about as if the world would end if they stopped getting it.

I wanted to feel whatever the women in porn did, that made them moan and groan, and call out directions to their lovers so

loudly it almost felt as though they were compelled by some sex-mad spirit to do so. Eventually, he slid his arms far enough away that I could move my own, so I wrapped them up around his sides and scored my nails gently down his body. He seemed to like when I'd done that to his chest and abdomen earlier.

He groaned and increased his thrusts as I did so. When I pulled my legs up to wrap around his waist, it changed the angle of his thrusts just enough that I could feel him diving deeper into my core somehow. That probably would have been wonderful if the same wetness still existed there as when he'd been playing with my clit. Unfortunately, I had dried up after the initial pain and being lost to my thoughts, rather than feeling some exquisite pleasure that I thought was supposed to happen.

Maybe foreplay was the only time that women really experienced sexual gratification. If that was the case, I could understand why women would just seek out other women for sex rather than men. Truthfully, I wanted to cry. Not because of the pain, because there really wasn't any left beyond a bit of discomfort with him pumping in and out of my drying canal. I wanted to cry for the loss of something I thought would be the experience of a lifetime. Apparently, the blissful sex I'd seen so often on the screen was just a big lie told to women to get them to have sex with men.

Sex was not good. Then again, I'd seen Breakneck having sex with other women and it had been far different from this. Those women weren't faking their enjoyment and neither had he. It must have been me and my inexperience making

everything so awful, which made me more nervous about what he might be thinking.

I allowed my fingernails to travel further down and dug them in a little harder when I reached the globes of Breakneck's ass, in the hopes that he would hurry and finish. He seemed to like that, so I did it again while also nipping my teeth against his chest. His nipples, I realized, were not that far from my mouth so I dipped my head and caught one between my lips.

I sucked at first and then bit down as I raked my nails roughly across his ass once more and that was apparently a trigger for the big man, because he roared out his satisfaction as a warm wetness started to coat my insides.

It was only then that I realized we hadn't been using protection. "Oh God!" I cried out, but the idiot who was still wildly thrusting into me took it to mean something vastly different.

"Yeah baby," he responded in a gruff tone, not realizing my words were spoken in horror, not sexual gratification. After a minute, he rolled off me and threw his arm over his face to keep the light out of his eyes, or maybe to keep from having to look at me. Who knew? I certainly didn't. None of what just happened between us had even come close to what I thought my first time would be like.

I was lost in thought, wishing we could go back to our date where I at least felt cherished and seen. Retreating to memories of our wonderful dates seemed far better than having to wonder what to do about the fact that he had just released inside me considering I wasn't protected. Those

thoughts were put on hold as Breakneck reached over with his free hand, awkwardly slapped my hip, and then stood up and started getting dressed.

“What are you doing?”

“Forgot to bring some drinks in with me. Gonna go grab some shit. Why don’t you catch a nap or something until I get back?”

“Catch a nap?” I questioned, not believing that the man would take my virginity and within minutes be up and out the door – his door. God, was this his way of giving me a dignified exit from the room? Was I supposed to leave and do the walk of shame back to Kip’s room while he went in search of actual sexual gratification? Sure, he finished inside me, but it couldn’t have been a great experience for him either. I’d seen what a great experience looked like for him. What just happened between us had not even compared.

Breakneck walked out without a backward glance my way, leaving me behind with far too many questions and a feeling of inadequacy and utter failure. As if to taunt me further, the candles he’d placed all around the room for added romantic ambiance had dimmed, as if even they knew that performance wasn’t worthy of their light.

Would Breakneck be so heartless as to go find someone else to hook up with after leaving me here like this? No, even Breakneck wouldn’t be so callous. Would he? I hated that he left me feeling so damn insecure about everything. Not to mention how completely unfulfilled I felt. I had at least been working toward an orgasm just before he removed his fingers and thrust himself inside me.

I growled into his pillow and attempted to sit up, only when I moved, it hurt down there. My insides felt as though someone had taken sandpaper to them for a good long while. My vagina wasn't the only dry spot on my body. I was parched and found myself hoping the bastard at least brought me a bottle of water before he expected me to just pack up and go. He had mentioned going to get some drinks.

I waited until I couldn't wait any longer. While I wanted nothing more than to shower and get out of there with at least a little of my dignity still intact, the need for a drink and some painkillers won above everything else.

I dressed and wished that I had something more than my shorts to put on my lower half. The uncomfortable feeling of his deposit leaking back out of my body and into my underwear nearly made me give up on my quest to go take care of my other needs. Unfortunately, the pain I felt down there meant that I couldn't do that.

"Gross," I huffed while pulling my shoes onto my feet. While I had watched enough porn to see a cream pie or two in my day, I thought that only happened when they pushed and forced the fluid back out. I don't know why I thought semen would just hang out inside my body and be absorbed in there or something, but obviously, I'd been very wrong on that count. Gravity was a bitch, and nothing made that more evident than the mess I was making in my granny panties.

That feeling lit a fire under my butt and I quickly made my way to the bar area of the clubhouse to go get a drink and some pain relievers from someone, since Breakneck seemed to be in no hurry to tend to my needs.

What I saw when I got to the end of the hall devastated me. Breakneck stood there, still shirtless, bent over the back of a chair that a familiar blonde woman sat in. His arms were locked around her front in a possessive hug as he leaned in and placed a kiss on her neck. Scout, the woman who I thought had formed a sort of friendship with me, cocked her head to the side and smiled up at him brightly before he took her hand, helped her out of her chair, and walked her hand-in-hand down the opposite hall the same way he had guided me to his room just a little while ago.

“What did you expect,” a shrew-like voice called to me from somewhere nearby. “He was fucking her and one of the other women all night, the other night after your little date in the gazebo, and apparently you’re sweet little Virgin Mary ass isn’t enough to satisfy a man like Breakneck.”

Twenty minutes ago, I wouldn’t have believed a word Connie threw at me. Now, after seeing him with Scout, I wondered if it wasn’t true. Unfortunately, Connie wasn’t done spouting her bullshit at me, and worse, her dramatics were drawing the attention of other people, too.

“Maybe it’s time you go crawling home to mommy and daddy now. This isn’t your scene, little princess. These are real men with needs you can’t meet.”

I turned, unwilling to just take her abuse, even if everything she said was the truth. “Funny, I heard he tried to have you thrown out of here because you weren’t worth keeping around,” I shot back. I didn’t know if that was true or not, but he’d threatened Liz earlier with that, and it sure was satisfying

to see Connie so pissed off that she lost control in front of everyone.

Connie ran for me, and before anyone in the room – including me – could react, her fist made contact with my face. She followed that up with her other hand, open palmed that time, but with her store-bought talons used to form claws that raked down my left cheek, stinging as they ripped the skin away. About the same time her claws retracted, my flight or fight response finally kicked in, and I punched her in the vagina.

It was muscle memory kicking in from what my dad – the man who used to be my dad – taught me to do long ago. Granted, he meant for me to punch my attacker in the dick rather than being raped, but thankfully, it worked on female attackers, too. Connie dropped to her knees holding her lady bits and howling in pain.

“Holy shit! Kip’s nanny just cunt-punched Connie!” One of the men yelled while the others hooted in laughter. Grady, the older gentleman who had told Breakneck he’d have a talk with Tripp about Liz’s behavior earlier, came up to my side and pulled me away from the scene. He took me to a corner of the bar and pulled the first aid kit out from behind it before sitting me on a stool.

When I winced at the impact against my shredded lady bits, a look of pure pity crossed his face. He slipped out a packet of Ibuprofen and handed me a bottle of water from behind the bar. “Sorry, darlin’. We’ll get your face cleaned up and then you can head back to your room and rest up.” Despite the loud

music and raucous laughter in the room, Grady kept his voice low enough for only me to hear.

“Don’t think what you saw was what you think it was, either. Don’t listen to that bitch. I can tell you for sure that your man wasn’t with no one else the other night. Connie’s a lying, jealous whore who had hopes of getting Breakneck to make her his old lady until you came along. Not that he ever would have done it, but that didn’t stop her from planning and thinking she could make it happen.

I rolled my eyes at the thought, considering how carelessly he had prospects come clean her up off his floor when she passed out during sex. Now, I wondered if maybe she was just bored to near death by sex with him.

Someone had escorted Connie out of the room after she tried to come at me again. “Don’t worry about her, gonna have a talk with Prez about that bitch, too. She’s overstepped one too many times in this clubhouse. Everyone knows you’re under protection, even if Breakneck hasn’t claimed you yet.”

That made me laugh, but not in the funny way. “He’s not going to claim me.”

“Darlin’, that man ain’t ever had a girlfriend in all the years I’ve known him, and he’s been around since he was just a twinkle of interest in his dad’s eye.” He winked at me as he dispersed that odd sentiment. It took a minute for it to register what “a twinkle of interest” was and then I got it. Gross.

“Not gonna speak for the man, but if he has a lick of brains in that brick of a head of his, he’ll make you his whole world and treat you far better than he did tonight. Best believe, I’ll be putting a foot up his ass about leaving you in this state to begin

with, not to mention running off without a word.

He tipped his head toward the hallway where Scout and Breakneck disappeared and still hadn't returned from.

"No bedrooms back there," he insisted. Not like that mattered. I'd seen Breakneck with women in the common room. "Just Tripp and Mack's offices, Church, and the kitchens that way."

That explained why I had never been down there. Since the prospect – whose name I still didn't know – cooked, I'd always eaten at the bar, over on the couch, or in Kip's room while taking care of Knoxville. There had never been a need for me to seek out the kitchen, not that I would have anyway. Despite Kip encouraging me to make myself at home here in the clubhouse, I hadn't attempted it. Every time I made myself at home somewhere, it was snatched out from under me. Kind of like tonight.

My dates with Breakneck had started to feel too comfortable. Maybe, I should have held out for a few more before giving myself to him. Maybe, he would have cared more about me than to leave me without so much as a glance backward only to wrap his arms around another woman less than twenty minutes later and offer her the comfort he should have given me after taking my virginity.

Once Grady had the claw marks on my face patched up, I made my way back to Kip's room. He had taken Knoxville home for the night, so I locked the door and pushed the chair under the handle, then crawled into bed and cried myself to sleep.



Chapter 27

Breakneck

I lay there with an arm over my face for a few minutes, cooling off after taking my girl's cherry. She was so hot and ready to go in the beginning, but somewhere in the middle, I could tell she wasn't really as into things as she had been when we started.

Then, she ran her nails down my back and dug into my ass like she wanted me to go harder. It took everything in me not to do just that. The little glimpse of the wildcat she might one day become had almost tipped me over the edge and then, the minx bit down on my nipple as she dug those nails into my ass again, and I lost all control. It was her first time, so I understood her initial unease, especially since I probably hurt her, whether she wanted to admit it or not.

The way she'd raked her nails into me and bit down on my nipple, that shit felt good in the moment, but it didn't mesh with the horror I'd seen painted across her face. She had been a virgin, and it had been damn near fourteen or fifteen years since I popped a girl's cherry. Maybe, I missed something and didn't realize I hurt her worse than I thought.

It worried me that I wouldn't be able to keep the woman as mine at all. I was fucking falling all over myself for Nova. The amount of energy I put into our dates was proof of that. After having her, seeing and feeling her reaction to sex with me,

there was no doubt that I'd have to slake my thirst elsewhere for a while. At least until she was used to fucking and how things really worked between two people. Otherwise, I'd end up losing control and tearing into her in ways she couldn't handle yet.

Fuck if that thought didn't make me feel guilty though, knowing that it would hurt her worse if she ever found out I was with other women, especially after having the talk about being exclusive. There was also the problem with her being on lockdown. I wouldn't have the option of fucking any of the club girls while she was there because some of those bitches would go out of their way to let her know, or she might see for herself.

I had to get away from her for a few minutes to clear my fucking head before I made plans that ruined what we'd started. There was no room for thoughts of sex with other women while I was lying beside Nova as our naked bodies were still damp with sweat and cooling from our earlier endeavors.

I moved to get up and dressed. Not thinking, I slapped her hip like I would have done with one of the club girls when I was ready to dismiss them. Fuck. I was screwing this all to hell. She wasn't a quick lay I could send on her way when we were done.

"What are you doing?" Nova asked and there was no mistaken the worried, hurt tone she used.

"Forgot to bring some drinks in with me. Gonna go grab some shit. Why don't you catch a nap or something until I get back?" I was already headed toward the door when the words

were out of my mouth. I had one foot out into the hallway when she questioned me.

“Catch a nap?”

I didn't respond, and like a fucking coward, I shut the door on her question and hauled ass for the common room without even looking back at her. There was no way I could take seeing the disappointment or hurt on her face, especially since I wasn't sure what I'd done to put it there.

It wasn't as though she'd been able to read my mind and know I was thinking about fucking other women minutes after pulling out of her cunt. I deserved her hurt and disappointment for walking out the door without a backward glance though. That made me a dick, and I wasn't stupid enough to think it didn't.

I stood at the bar, grabbing a couple bottles of water when my cell rang. “Yeah?”

“My office, now. And Breakneck, no more hiding your source. Whoever the fuck your man is, that gets us all our info, you need to bring him in and pronto. This can't wait.”

“Fuck.” I glanced around the clubhouse until I spotted Scout sitting at a table playing poker with some of my club brothers. “Be right there,” I told Tripp before hanging up.

My thoughts turned to Nova briefly as the cool water bottles spilled their condensation down my hands. She would be all right for a few minutes while I filled Tripp in on Scout being ‘my guy’ for information. I set the bottles of water down on the bar and remembered that Nova hadn't really exerted

herself that much, so she would probably end up asleep without even needing the water.

Then, I chuckled at the way I'd originally thought we needed water. As if that vanilla-as-fuck sex was a workout. It was a little bit of one for me, but Nova had just laid there, unsure of what to do, for most of our session. Things would change.

'It was her first time,' I reminded myself again as I abandoned the water bottles on the bar and went to go get Scout. It was now or never time for her. That meant I needed to put thoughts of Nova aside and take care of the woman who had been secretly watching out for the club for well over a year.

When I neared Scout, she greeted me with a glare so chilly I damn near felt the icy shift in the atmosphere. I pretended to pass her by and instead, pounced from behind. She was seated in a chair at our poker table, so it was nothing to creep in really close and wrap her upper body in my arms. I knew what the look had been about. She'd seen me go back to my room with Nova, and she was no doubt wondering why I was seeking her out now.

My beautiful friend had made it painfully clear that we would never hook up again as long as I was in a relationship with Nova, and I respected that. It was a damn shame though, because of all the club girls, Scout was the only one who knew how to keep her trap shut.

"Calm down, wild girl," I said out loud before leaning in and whispering in her ear. "It's time to go see if you can

become one of my club brothers,” I teased before placing a placating kiss on the side of her neck.

She tipped her head back and the smile that greeted me was like she was a kid about to see Santa Claus and she’d been a good girl all year.

“Seriously?” She whispered. I let go of her long enough to spin around and offer my hand. She took it without hesitation.

“Seriously.”

“I’m so excited,” she squealed as quietly as possible while I pulled her along with me down the hall toward Tripp’s office.

When we entered, Tripp looked up and frowned at us. “No offense to Scout, but we don’t have time for pussy right now, Break. The fucking club is being threatened right along with Nova. This shit is serious.” He turned his gaze to Scout. “You need to head back out to the party, honey.” Then he darted his eyes back to me. “You need to bring your guy in.”

“I fucking did!” I shouted at my president as he looked around again, not seeing anyone but Scout standing beside me. It was almost comical when understanding finally settled in. Tripp slumped into his chair with wide eyes and a ‘what the fuck’ look on his face.

“You’re telling me that Scout has been ‘your guy’ all along?” I nodded. “What the absolute fuck, Breakneck?”

“She’s fucking phenomenal with a computer and gaining information. She has some pretty fucking interesting contacts, too. A couple months after that shit went down with Kip and Ash,” I mentioned and winced as I heard the sharp intake of breath Scout let out. We didn’t have time for her hurt feelings

though, so I barreled on. “She heard me trying to track down info on one of the prospects when Wiz wasn’t around. She took over and showed me how to do the background check properly. Scout did a far better job, in way less time, than Wiz ever did. Ever since then, she’s been my go-to ‘guy’ when I need assistance with techie shit.”

“Do we even need to have a talk about fucking security?”

“She’s as loyal as they come. Fuck’s sake, Tripp. I’d trust her over most of my club brothers.”

Worry slipped from Scout’s face as she beamed in my direction, which only made Tripp bristle even more. “What the fuck is going on between you two? I thought you were chasing after Nova?”

“Scout is my friend.”

“Who you fuck regularly. Not everything skips past me just because I have a lot on my plate, asshole.”

Scout winced. “Sleeping with the members was the only way you would allow me to stick around,” she admitted to him. “If I didn’t have to do that, I wouldn’t.”

“Then why are you here?”

“Because I had this crazy idea that you’d all one day become my family, and that was taken from me when...” She sniffed back that response and squared her shoulders. “I had another dream after that one. I wanted to become a member but didn’t think you’d take me seriously, since I started here as nothing more than a whore.” The derision she cast at him couldn’t be missed. I knew that Scout hated the fact that no

one took her seriously unless she was working on her knees or back.

“You want to be a member?” Tripp asked incredulously, purposely ignoring the rest of her statement since it had to do with his son being a dumbass and choosing the wrong woman.

“Yes. I would like to be a member. That’s part of the reason I’ve helped Breakneck out so much. I hoped that eventually you would see that I was an asset to the club.”

“Do you even ride?”

“I have a Hayabusa, and she rides smooth as fuck.” That was a surprise to me. I knew she was capable of riding because she had said as much, but it never dawned on me that she already had her own two wheels, which in hindsight seemed pretty fucking stupid.

Tripp looked almost perplexed for a moment and then he threw his head back and laughed. “A fucking crotch rocket?” He asked. Scout nodded her head and didn’t do a great job of hiding her frustration with the man. “That fucking fits you perfectly. I bet you run that thing full throttle when you get away from here.”

“I do,” she agreed, temper evened out a bit at his assessment, especially when she realized he wasn’t laughing at her, but the situation.

“Fuck, I don’t care that you run a rocket rather than a cruiser. Most of the men won’t either. That asshole there,” he said while pointing at me, “has a collection that runs the gamut between cruiser, rocket, and fucking dirt bikes. Nothing in the bylaws that state your ride has to be anything specific other

than running on two wheels, having a motor, and not being a fucking scooter.” He laughed again. “Shit, Grady rode around on a fucking scooter years ago when the asshole got pinched for a DUI. So, I guess we don’t care about that either.”

He grinned at Scout almost conspiratorially. “But you need to know that it will all come down to a vote. I can’t guarantee that the men of the club will go along with promoting a former club girl to the rank of brethren. Most have been with you at some point or other, that makes shit difficult.”

“Why?”

“Because you’re a woman, and I don’t give a fuck how sexist it sounds, if they’ve slept with you, they’ll feel some kind of protective around you. It will make having you on a run with them a liability.”

“So, I won’t go on runs with them,” she offered with a shrug as if that was a no-brainer.

“You have to pull your weight, honey.”

“I do. I have been pulling more weight than most of your men for this club for years, especially this past year.”

“That’s true enough,” I interjected.

Tripp nodded. “You’re not wrong. I’ll be sure to present those facts alongside Breakneck when we vote tomorrow in church. In the meantime, we have a bigger problem, and it can’t wait for a vote on membership.”

“What’s going on?” I glanced down at my phone and noted the time. Fuck, I’d been away for just shy of an hour already. Hopefully, Nova was sleeping and wouldn’t notice how long I’d been gone. Women could be sensitive about waking up

alone after sex, especially virgins. At least, that's what I'd seen in movies. Wouldn't know in any real capacity because I never bothered to pay attention to the women I'd been with previously, or their reactions. Normally, they weren't left in my space long enough for that to become a concern anyway.

“I received a disturbing as fuck message, someone claiming to have video evidence of the MC killing David Langston, aka Creepy Dave.”

Two things occurred to me immediately. “He was killed on sight here, not at the house of horrors. So, there's no way they have a video of that shit. More importantly, what the fuck do they want in return for that supposed footage?” I asked, knowing immediately that they wouldn't just tell us they had a video of me killing the fucker without wanting something in return for the evidence. That was how blackmail worked.

“They want Nova. We have forty-eight hours, well about forty-four now. The original timer started when the flash drive was sent.”

“What is the timer for exactly?” I asked again, growing impatient because I thought I already knew.

“We have that long to turn Nova over to whoever is pulling the strings with the fucking Violent Order. If we don't, they release the footage. They said we'd get a call with instructions about where to meet and transfer the woman for a flash drive with the video of you killing Dave.”

Scout laughed and I wanted to throttle her, considering this was my woman's life on the line, not to mention my own, since I was the one to kill Creepy Dave. Technically, I hadn't killed him in the house, or at all since he'd succumbed to

infection, but if there was a video, it would show me choking the fucker, kicking him, Kip kicking him, and then us leaving the place with his limp fucking body. That was good enough to appear as though we'd killed him in his own house.

“They want you to just accept that the flash drive is the only copy?” Scout asked, lessening my anger once I understood her earlier outburst.

“Seems illogical at best,” Tripp agreed. “That doesn't mean this shit isn't going to be problematic. We've always been concerned that there was a live video feed rolling out of that house to parts unknown. Now, we need to step up our efforts to figure out where, how, and who the fuck is pulling the strings over there. My bet is on Mal, their president, but we still don't know where the fuck their club is hiding out these days.”

“Break and I went by to check the house. I didn't see any signs that he had anything streaming. There was no evidence of massive data transfers, no signs of a server in use that would make it easier for him to hold and transmit data. For all intents and purposes, it looked like a one-man show and a private stash. The computer he stored the video footage on was not connected to the internet.”

“So, it's safe to say that either they were bluffing, someone got separate video of Dave being taken from the house, or someone sneaked in there once we were gone, and knew exactly where to look for what they needed?”

“It's also possible that they had an inside man on the job,” I added.

“What the hell is that supposed to mean?” Tripp asked.

“When that first picture was dropped off, it was because the prospect left the gate to early.”

“We tossed his ass after that,” Tripp stated, but he was thinking things through the same as I was.

“I’ll start tracking the little shit,” Scout mumbled. “Never did get good vibes off Scotty fucking Bingham.”

We both turned to stare at Scout, bewildered. “That was his name?” I asked.

“Yeah, you didn’t know?”

I shook my head, and I could see Tripp doing the same thing. “Didn’t care about his name. Never made an impression on me until he slipped off gate duty earlier than he was supposed to. Kid was always just ‘prospect’ to me.”

Tripp nodded in agreement. “We’ve had prospects guarding that fucking house, haven’t we?”

“Yeah, we’re too short handed with the garage and the runs we’ve been doing to waste full-patch brothers on house sitting duty. I’ve rotated the prospects over there whenever me, Kip, and Bagger couldn’t be there. Trench sat watch a couple times, too. Other than that, it was always a rotation of prospects.”

“We need to get eyes on that kid, and I need you to comb through the video from that house going back to the day when Kip and Break showed up to yank that sick fuck out of there. I want to see who entered that house afterward. I also want to know if there are any breaks in the video feed or missing times, so we can pinpoint when someone might have slipped in. No telling if that little shit knew how to erase evidence that he’d been there.”

“I’ll get right on it,” Scout agreed and took off out of the office to do just that.

Tripp turned to me once Scout was gone. “Make sure she and Kip both understand that Nova is staying on lockdown.”

“That won’t be a problem considering I left her in my bed when you called me in,” I reassured him.

Tripp smirked. “Well then, I’m sure you can figure out some way to keep her entertained, so she won’t want to leave.”

“If you get anything else...” I started to say but Tripp cut me off, knowing where I was going with it.

“You’ll be the first to know.” Tripp stopped in his tracks before we left his office. “You claiming that woman?”

“Most likely, why?”

“She’s the kind of good woman you put down roots with. The type that will raise your kids up right and keep you happy, if you let her.”

“I know all that.”

“Do you understand it though?”

“Not sure what you’re getting at, Prez.”

“She’s also the type of woman – much like my late wife – who wouldn’t put up with me sticking my dick in places it didn’t belong. She had her reasons for demanding my fidelity, and I knew that she was too good to throw away, so I conceded to her request. That gazebo you had your date in the other night was part of my promise to her that she’d never see me with my arms around another woman, unless it was our future daughter.”

I sighed at the shit he was laying down for me. He knew, as well as I did, that Nova wouldn't put up with me fucking other women. I also knew it would eat at her if she ever found out I'd been fucking others. She would think it was all down to something she'd done or hadn't done. And while it was sort of true – in the way that I didn't think she could handle everything I wanted – it wasn't because I didn't think Nova could give it to me one day. It was just that she wasn't ready yet.

“We literally just fucked for the first time tonight. She's a virgin.” The words tumbled out of my mouth like some sort of excuse for the behavior Tripp was warning me against.

“Was a virgin,” he corrected.

“Yeah, well, same as. There's no experience there, and truthfully, I didn't even think I'd be able to get off because it was that bad at first.”

“Jesus, Break! What the fuck did you expect for a young woman's first time, you nitwit? From everything Kip has told me, she was sheltered before her poor excuse for a family cast her out.”

“I knew it would be like that, but I'm saying I have a different kind of appetite and I don't think she'll be capable of sating it for a long while, if ever.”

“Then maybe she's not the right one for you.”

“I can't stop thinking about her and seeing the woman with Knox...” I shook my head, feeling like a fucking fool for admitting this much to a man I respected. I had to cut myself off though because I couldn't admit that thinking of her with

my kid – one we'd made together – made me want to get started on planting one inside of her.

“Then I suggest you get right with shit, train her up, and hope she likes your particular kinks. Otherwise, let her go in peace. You tear a woman's heart out too many times and it can never be put back in place again.”

“Yeah, I hear ya.” We walked toward the main bar area of the clubhouse when Tripp held me back with his hand on my bicep.

“About Scout and the vote-” he started to say.

“What about it?”

“I don't think Kip should be present for that meeting or the vote.”

“You don't think he would want her as a member?”

“I can't speak to that, but some things are bound to be said by the men who have had her. My boy is a strong motherfucker, but I don't think he'll be able to handle hearing what may be said and keep his sanity intact.”

I chuckled. “In other words, you don't need bloodshed in church.”

“That about sums it up.”

“I'll find a way to keep him busy tomorrow so that he won't be there,” I assured Tripp. “How do you feel about bringing her in as a full member?”

“I got no problem with it. Wish I had felt the same back when Star was coming of age. Maybe then, I could have set

my daughter to prospecting instead of losing her after a failed marriage bargain.”

I laughed at him again. “You are the fucking cautionary tale for what not to do with a club princess when she reaches age.”

“Shut the fuck up. Pretty sure you have work to do, keeping your woman here on lockdown, keeping my son away from church, and figuring out a contingency plan just in case video of you roughing up that corpse fucking clown makes the light of day.”

“When you put it like that,” I huffed as we both strode into the bar and immediately took in the unnatural quiet that greeted us there.

Tripp and I both glanced around at the subdued crowd of men and women and were both on edge as we tried to figure out what the mood was about.

“What the fuck is going on?” Tripp asked about the same time I noticed there was an open first aid kit on the bar.

Trench moved forward and came to speak to us quietly. “Your girl,” he said as his eyes met mine. “Kip’s nanny,” he clarified, obviously unsure if she was my girl or not.

“What about my girl?” I growled, ready to tear off to my room to go make sure she was still safe, sound, and asleep where I’d left her.

“She came out here looking for a drink or something,” Trench informed me, and my insides twisted.

“When?”

Trench shook his head at me, as if he couldn't believe he had to inform me of how stupid I was. He wasn't the one who spoke up though. Instead, one of our club girls, Mitzi, was the one to tell me what went down.

“She came out in time to see you all loved up with Scout and then watched as you walked hand-in-hand out of the bar and down the dark hallway to Tripp's office. Not sure if she knows what's down that hallway, but if she's never been, it stands to reason she assumed it's a lot like that one.” She pointed back to where all of our bedrooms were located.

“Son of a...” I grinded out through clenched teeth, but Trench cut me off.

“That ain't the end of it,” Trench warned. “Connie said some shit to her about being too virginal for you and that you had to get off somewhere else. I missed what Nova said in response, but Connie attacked after that.”

“What the fuck?” I yelled. “Where is she? Was Nova hurt? Why the fuck didn't anyone come get me?”

“Connie raked her claws right down your girl's face. Grady cleaned and patched her up after your girl cunt-punched Connie and doubled her over where she stood.”

Trench laughed at the memory, but I needed to know my woman was okay and to reassure her that what she saw with Scout wasn't at all what it looked like.

“Where is she?” I asked again before taking off for my room, since he and Mitzi both pointed down the hallway.

My door was closed when I got there, but that wasn't what halted my progress. That was the fact that Grady fucking

Beckworth was sitting in a chair that had been pulled up just outside of Kip's room and the old fucker had a gun in his hand aimed right at me.

“What the fuck?”

“Should be asking you exactly that,” the old man said in a quiet voice, as if trying to keep whoever was on the other side of that door from hearing our conversation. Tripp moved up beside me right around the same time.

“Mind telling me why you have a gun aimed at our enforcer, Grady?”

Grady chuckled and pointed the gun at the floor before he drew his eyes back up to mine and what I saw there chilled me to the bone. I'd known him all my life, but never once had that icy stare been directed at me.

“You wined and dined that girl for days and we all thought you were serious, then you fucked her and left the poor thing by herself with no fucking aftercare. Don't take a genius to realize that poor thing was a virgin, and we've all seen you fuck, so I know you're not a small man.” His eyes dropped down to where my dick was, and I got his drift. I'd hurt Nova more than just the sting of losing her virginity.

“That girl came out looking for a drink and some pain killers only to find you hugging and kissing on another woman,” Grady informed me.

“Hugging and kissing?” Tripp asked as he turned toward me. “Mitzi said you were loved up on Scout, but I assumed she meant when you took her hand and dragged her to my office.”

I shook my head. “She thought I was coming to get in her pants and was angry because Scout had already told me that would never happen while I was with Nova.” Tripp nodded his head and waited for me to continue. “I pounced on her from behind. She was sitting at the poker table, and I wrapped my arms around her, so she wouldn’t run and then I whispered into her ear that it was time to go see you and asked if she was ready for that.” I growled in frustration, because I knew exactly what I did next and how it would have looked to Nova. “I kissed her neck and stood up and offered her my hand.”

“Well, imagine how that looked through the eyes of the woman whose virginity you just took. You left her alone, in pain, and probably a little confused only to have to walk in and see you and Scout like that in front of the whole club. Then, Connie started her shit.”

“Fuck, I know what happened. Trench and Mitzi filled me in. The shit with Scout was club business.”

“Your girl didn’t know that.”

“No shit, old man. That’s why I’m trying to find her to explain.”

“You ain’t goin’ in there tonight.”

“The fuck you say?”

“You heard me, boy.”

“Now, Grady,” Tripp started, but the old man shook his head and raised his pistol up once more.

“I said, you ain’t goin’ in there tonight and I mean it. She done cried herself to sleep and she don’t need to be disturbed at this point. Don’t care if I have to shoot every fucker in this

club to keep you from getting' to her either. That girl deserved more than what you gave her tonight.

“She’s bent over backwards for this club, put up with Kip’s psycho wife, worked more hours as that baby’s parent than either of his parents. No offense to Kip because I know he’s working the garage and club shit. He should have been able to count on his baby’s mother to be there for him, but instead he got Nova. She’s never let anyone in the club down. Every motherfucker who stood by and watched the shitshow that went down while you two had your meeting with Scout let that girl down though. They didn’t even step in when Connie started running her mouth. Only sat there and watched the show.”

“Yeah? What were you doing?”

“I was about to shoot the cunt,” he admitted and chuckled as he remembered something. “Then Nova punched her right in the cooch and I damn near pissed myself. Had to holster my pistol before I shot my own foot off.”

I couldn’t keep the grin from my face, despite the seriousness of the conversation. There was a part of me that wished I could have seen my girl handing Connie exactly what she deserved. Instead, I turned to Tripp. “We need to discuss the club girls who have gotten a little too comfortable with causing trouble around here. Connie isn’t the only one who thought she’d start shit tonight.”

“Yep, already informed Prez about Liz, but he was in a bit of a hurry when I did.” Grady told me.

“Church tomorrow probably won’t be the best time to discuss it, considering what else is on the docket,” Tripp

mused.

Scout was a club girl, too. He was right. If we brought up Connie and Liz's behavior, it would inadvertently paint the same light on Scout and defeat the vote to bring her in as a member.

"Soon then," I agreed. Tripp nodded, tipped his head toward Grady, and then Kip's door.

"You need to give her the night. Apologies can wait until morning, and Breakneck, if you're serious about her, you need to make that apology serious, too. You might not have done much wrong outside of being an inconsiderate shit to the woman who you deflowered, but she doesn't know that. Keep it in mind when you have that talk."

I nodded, took one more glance toward Kip's door and when I found myself staring down the barrel of Grady's pistol again, I spun and entered my room instead. It smelled like stale sex and disappointment. Nothing more than I deserved, considering how I handled the night. The candles I'd turned on earlier in the evening were dim shadows of their former selves, making the room seem less welcoming than it had been before.

"It'll be a fucking miracle if she even speaks to me again," I admitted to myself as I slipped out of my clothes and moved to the bed. The blanket was still tossed to the bottom of the mattress and the exposed sheets held the evidence of my girl's lost virginity. Her blood mixed with other fluids, most likely my cum, formed a smallish pink stain in the middle of my sheets.

I had cum inside her. It just now hit me that using a condom had never even entered my mind when it came to Nova. I

didn't know if she was on birth control, or what. As the thought ran rampant in my mind, the thing that didn't happen was panic setting in. My heart beat steady, my mind was calm. If she got pregnant, it would not even be in the realm of bad things. It would mean she was mine and all those dreams of knocking her up would be fulfilled.

I thought back to when Nova had yelled, "Oh God," as I came inside her. Suddenly those two words in combination with the horror I'd seen on her face made more sense. She hadn't been hitting her climax with me. My girl had been concerned about the fact that I'd just dumped my babymakers inside of her. I guess that answered the question about birth control.

Fuck. I don't think it was possible for me to fuck up her first time any more than I did. I tossed my blanket over our dried fluids and threw myself on the bed. When morning came, I'd have to grovel my ass off and make her understand.



Chapter 28

Nova

“Looks like you had a guard on your door all night,” Kip said when I opened up after he knocked. I glanced to the side and saw the chair sitting there in the hallway to the side of the door. “Dad said Grady was out here most of the night making sure no one bothered you. The old bastard pulled a gun on Breakneck when he tried to come find you.”

“He did what?” I asked, shocked that someone would go to those lengths for me.

Kip laughed. “The crazy old coot must really like you to put a gun on a brother like that.”

“I didn’t mean for him to-”

Kip cut me off. “Don’t worry about him, sweetheart; he’s not in trouble. Tripp happened to agree with what he was doing.”

“Why?”

“Can we sit down and talk about what happened last night?” I blushed as Kip brought Knoxville in and laid him down in the playpen that doubled as a crib when he was at the clubhouse with me.

“Tripp explained a few things about what went on here last night and I think you need to be clued in on a few of them

before you let your mind wander in directions it doesn't need to go." Then, he proceeded to explain everything I saw between Scout and Breakneck. Kip seemed a little surprised as well by Scout's true roll in what I'd seen.

"You didn't realize she was helping the club?"

"I knew she was smart and good with computers, but I didn't think that was who Breakneck was using for all the shit he had checked out. Honestly, we have a member named Wiz who used to do that shit, but he was never as good. I should have known he didn't somehow grow smarter overnight."

I laughed at Kip's assertion that his club brother wasn't exactly up to par for the task. Even though they were only club brothers, it sounded like a real sibling relationship. At least, it seemed like the ones I'd seen on television and in school when I watched brothers and sisters interacting with one another. It was either always with extreme love and protectiveness or abject torment.

My stomach grumbled before either of us could say another word. "Why don't you go grab some breakfast while I sit with my son for a bit."

I shook my head. "I can't."

"Why not?"

"I can't go out there and face everyone after what happened last night. It feels like... I don't know, it would just be really awkward for me. Everyone knows that I... That we... and he..." Yep, I was officially that girl who couldn't even talk about losing her virginity without tripping all over the words.

Kip placed his hand over where mine were folded into my lap with one wringing the crap out of the other. “How about I go get your breakfast. You can eat in here and take care of Knox for the day, out of sight, out of mind. Later, I expect to see you make an appearance out there, though. You are made of stronger stuff than this. Can’t let you hide away from what happened because no one out there is judging *you* for it. Can’t say the same for Breakneck, but he’s a big boy and can handle whatever they throw at him.”

“Okay,” I agreed. We could revisit me possibly having to go back out there later. It wasn’t something I was comfortable doing, especially since I was wearing the evidence of Connie’s attack.

By the time Kip came back with my food, Breakneck was on his heels walking into the room just behind him.

“I’ll leave you two to talk,” Kip said as soon as he handed me the plate with the cheesy omelet, bacon, and toast on it. Breakneck set a cup of steaming coffee on the dresser and a glass of orange juice.

“I wasn’t sure what you’d want this morning, so I got both while Kip grabbed your food.” He reached into his pocket and pulled out an array of coffee creamers, sugar packets, and even some jams for my toast. If I wasn’t still angry with him, it would have been a sweet gesture.

“About last night,” he started to say.

“You made a fool out of me.”

“No, it wasn’t like that.”

“Kip already explained to me exactly what it was like, that doesn’t mean you made any less of a fool of me. No one in that room knew what you said to Scout. They only saw you hug and kiss her, that beaming smile she gave you in return, and then the two of you walking off hand-in-hand.

“Just because there weren’t any bedrooms down there, didn’t mean that you two weren’t sneaking off to have some fun. That’s what they all thought. It’s what I thought, too. And they all knew we had been on a date that night and that you’d taken me back to your room. So, they could guess what happened.”

“Nova, that’s not...”

“No! You humiliated me. It doesn’t matter if it was all innocent. Your entire club saw you take me on a date, deplete me of my virginity, and then go straight to the arms of another woman. That’s what they saw. That’s what they know. The truth of what happened doesn’t matter. The fact that you left me behind without a care while giving her more sweetness than you afforded me after taking my virginity was enough for me. Nothing else had to happen to break my damn heart and make me ache in other places beyond where you broke me physically.”

Breakneck winced at the reminder of what he’d done. Good. He needed to understand that it wasn’t just about what actually happened. Then again, he needed to get a grip and realized the parts that did take place were wrong, too. So damn wrong that they pierced a part of my heart I didn’t think I’d given him access to.

“I’m sorry. You’re right. I didn’t handle any part of our night, from the time we got back to the bedroom, the right way. I want the chance to sit down and talk it out with you, apologize in a meaningful way, and really make you understand where my head was at, but...” he glanced down at his phone, checking the time.

“You have somewhere to be,” I stated.

“Yeah, I do. If I could put this off, I would. We’re all expected in church in a few minutes, though.”

I nodded. “Go ahead to church.” My eyes drifted over to the sleeping baby in the room. “I’ll be right here whenever you get done.”

Breakneck nodded, moved closer to lean in and kiss me on the top of my head, and then he turned and left. For the first time since he walked into the room, I took a deep breath and let it out again. The pressure on my chest released and I turned to the food Kip and Breakneck brought for me.

If I waited too long, Knoxville would wake and demand all my attention, then I’d have cold eggs taunting me from the dresser. I tucked into my food, despite having a queasy stomach from my emotions wreaking havoc on my body. After the awful sex, and being left without a thought, I wondered if anything Breakneck had to say would matter. There was no way of knowing, so I tried to put it out of my mind until I had to deal with it – and him – later.



Chapter 29

Breakneck

I stepped out of Kip's room and closed the door behind me wishing I could go back in and make everything right. Fuck that. My dumb ass wished that I could turn the clock back and not fuck up so badly the night before. I should have still been in bed with my sweetness last night when Tripp's text came in, then I could have shown her the text and told her I had to go. None of this would have been an issue then.

That couldn't happen though. I'd already fucked it all up, and to top off my own fuckups, my girl had been attacked by a club whore, and not just any club whore, one she'd seen me fucking multiple times. I shook my head, trying to rid myself of all the stupid decisions I'd been making.

I stopped right outside my own door because when I left and met Kip in the hallway, we were talking about last night as I shut the damn thing. There was no reason why it should be open now.

When I glanced inside, it was to find Connie spread eagle on my bed and wearing nothing but a smile. The cunt was trying to get me caught up in some shit with my woman. Hell, the evidence of me taking Nova's virginity was literally right underneath her dirty snatch.

“What the fuck are you doing in my Goddamn room?” There was no doubt she heard me because most of the fucking clubhouse probably did. I noticed Kip’s door crack open and Nova peek her head out into the hallway.

“Is everything okay?” She asked. I nodded and felt sick to my stomach about what she was about to see.

“Get the fuck out now, and you better hope and pray that being banished from the clubhouse is the only fucking punishment you get after the shit you pulled last night and now breaking into my room.”

“Breakneck!” Connie whined as she clumsily tried to jump out of my bed and ended up getting tangled in my blanket. When she did, it pulled away from the sheets and highlighted the mess Nova and I left behind the night before. The sneer on Connie’s face when she turned back around was enough to tell me that she saw the evidence of why she was no longer welcome in my room. Not that she’d ever been allowed in there alone without my permission anyway.

“GET THE FUCK OUT!” I bellowed at her again when she just stood there staring at the bloody, cum stained sheets. I wasn’t stupid, it wasn’t the blood tripping her up since everyone knew Nova was a virgin before. It was the cum and what it meant. I’d gone bare with Nova when I’d never even chance that shit with anyone else.

“What’s going on here?” Bagger asked as he came sauntering down the hall from the common room to find out what all the commotion was.

“This fucking whore broke into my room and decided to help herself to my bed knowing that I have a woman.” I

pointed to the bed. “Evidence of me taking my woman last night is still all over the sheets and that bitch was just rolling in it,” I said before I thought better of it. I turned to see Nova closing Kip’s door and shutting out the drama. She was going to hate me for this, too.

“You know the fucking rules,” Bagger growled at Connie. “Get your ass out of there and we’ll deal with you after church.” He turned and yelled down the hall toward the common area. “Yo! Prospect!”

Charmer came running. “What’s up?”

“Make sure she stays under guard while we attend church. Don’t want the bitch slipping into any other rooms she’s not invited to.”

“You want me to lock her down in her own room, or...”

“That’ll do for now.”

“I haven’t eaten today,” Connie whined.

“You weren’t worried about eating anything but dick this morning anyway, so no skin off your nose to wait for us to be done,” Bagger informed her before turning to Charmer. “Do not leave your post at her door for any reason other than life or death. That means that bitch doesn’t get room service while she waits.”

Charmer nodded in acknowledgment before he took her naked body in hand and marched toward the rooms where the club girls lived.

“Can’t catch a break, can you?” Bagger asked.

“Guess you heard about that shit last night.”

He laughed. “Man, that’s all anyone is talking about.

“Maybe Nova was right when she said she couldn’t face everyone this morning.”

“Nah, man. They all love your girl. You’re the one that’s gonna catch hell for putting her in that position, though.”

“Fair e-fucking-nough,” I grunted as we made our way to the room we used for church. Scout was sitting right outside in a chair that wasn’t normally situated there. It reminded me of the way Grady guarded Nova’s door last night.

“What’s up, Scout.” Bagger asked, though he eyed her curiously. “You know we’re about to head in for church, right?”

“Yep,” she agreed while staring at me.

“That means you can’t be hangin’ around out here,” he informed her when he didn’t think she caught his hint.

“Prez told me to wait here. That’s what I’m doing.”

Bagger shrugged it off and went inside. I reached out and offered my support as I clamped my hand down on her shoulder and gave her a quick squeeze. She was nervous and for good reason. This meeting would determine her future with the club. To be honest, I wasn’t sure how the vote would go, so she had reason to be nervous.

It worked in her favor that the President and Enforcer of the club were going into this surprise vote vouching for her. What didn’t help was the fact that Kip had caught wind of Church and the fact that no one told him about it, and he showed up anyway.

~*~

The minute I stepped out of church, and grinned at Scout, she knew what her fate was and practically tackled me as she jumped into my arms to celebrate. Scout's lips met my own before I pushed her away and set her down on her feet.

“What are you doing?” I growled at her.

“Sorry. I was so excited.” She laughed giddily. “I meant to just tag you on the cheek, but...” She shrugged her shoulders as if that explained everything.

“How do you think my woman would feel if she came down that hall and saw your lips all over me?” It wasn't fair for me to throw it at her like that because Nova had seen what went down between Scout and me the night before. That shitshow had been entirely my fault, not hers. Still, it was so fresh, that I couldn't believe Scout would chance my girl seeing her jumping into my arms, let alone kissing me on the lips. Not to mention, our club brothers, who just voted her in were seeing her behaving like a whore instead of a patched member – which was one of the worries brought to the table.

“Oh shit! Break, no. I'm sorry. I really wasn't thinking.”

“That's something you need to start doing more of. You're a member now, will be officially by next week anyway. They're waiving your prospecting period since you already put in more time than any prospect next to Bagger anyhow.” I chuckled at that, because everyone gave Bagger shit about being the only member who had to prospect twice for the club.

“Okay, well, still... I feel like I owe you the biggest thanks because you believed in me, and my skills outside of the

bedroom, from the very beginning. You are the best kind of man when you want to be, Breakneck.”

“Don’t go spreading that rumor, Scout.” I moved around her as the rest of the men started filing out of church. “I need to go see to Nova. Congratulations! I hope you know what you asked for when you wanted to become a member. Shit’s going to be different from here on out.”

Scout nodded and stepped aside, her light dimming just a little when Kip burst free from the room with bloody knuckles, a scowl on his face, and nothing more than a dismissive glance her way before he took off.

I couldn’t stay to hold her hand through the pain I knew she must be feeling because Nova wouldn’t look too kindly on that shit. Knowing that I felt that way, or rather that I’d have to think that way to protect Nova, brought up another uphill climb that Scout would face as a member.

The women, the ones attached to the men of the club, weren’t going to be very happy knowing that their men would be so chummy with her. It was a new level of growing pains that the club would have to face, and we’d have to do it with a united front, which didn’t seem possible considering the things said behind closed doors before the vote finally went through.

My plans to get straight to Nova were fucking thwarted by my club brothers. All of them wanted to talk my ear off, either about what happened the night before, or about the fact that I’d been hiding everything Scout had been doing for the club all this time. There were still things I was hiding from them, especially Kip. Despite Scout’s newly elevated status to patched member, they still couldn’t know because there was a

chance it might get back to Ash and keep her from being discovered. That couldn't happen. I'd gladly beg everyone's forgiveness for the secrecy later. What we were doing was to protect another brother from a lifetime of misery.

Still, it was past quitting time when I finally made it back to Kip's room to check on Nova. It rankled that she hadn't come out once to get food, though I could have sworn I saw Charmer head back that way with a bag and drink. Maybe that was Kip's way of getting back at me for hiding so much about Scout from him. He thought he would be funny by pushing Charmer on my girl.

Not gonna happen.

That reminded me though and I turned right back around to go see Tripp. "The fucking brothers have kept me hemmed up all day with questioning and hen-pecking my every decision," I complained the minute I walked through his office door.

Tripp laughed. "Yeah? You straighten shit out with Nova in that time?"

I shook my head. "Spoke to her this morning before church, haven't been able to shake everyone loose since."

"Typical bullshit. Would have been easier if you could have left and went to Kip's house to talk to her. Fucking lockdown is always a cesspool to wade through when you want to get shit done. Be glad it's not a full lockdown yet."

"That a possibility?"

"Still waiting to hear from the VOMC, so depending on how that shitshow goes, most likely."

"Fuck, man."

“Why are you here talking to me instead of making shit right with your woman?”

“Connie,” I stated, and he nodded his head. “Bagger already took care of that shit. She’s locked down to her room for now. We’re going to have to vote her out.”

“You think it deserves a vote at this point?”

“After the bomb we just dropped on the club, yeah. They need to feel like their voices matter. Don’t worry, if they vote to keep her ass here, I’ll veto that shit and tell them why their dicks don’t trump her being a security issue.”

I laughed at that. “Okay, I saw Charmer running errands and wanted to check, since he was the one supposed to be watching her door.”

“Bagger put a lock on the outside of the door for now. No one in or out. She gets food delivered once a day, and either makes it last or doesn’t until the men vote. We moved Liz to another room since they were in a two-bunk suite together.”

“She’s another problem.”

“Know it, brother. We’ll deal with her later. I’ve given her a warning for now. If she causes any more problems, she’ll be out on her ass, too.” He drew his hands up through his silver and blond hair, pulling it out of his face. “Gotta tell ya, when Kim was alive, she tried to get me to remove the whores from the club altogether.”

I laughed, as if the other brothers would ever agree to that. I wasn’t sure I agreed with it either. Tripp nodded his head as if agreeing with my thoughts.

“Knew it would be an uphill battle with the men. Shit, after Kim died, I buried myself inside more than one of them trying to forget. It’s getting old dealing with their drama, though.”

“Get that, too.”

“Go make nice with your woman and don’t fuck it all up again, Break. She’s not one you want to lose because you can’t figure your own shit out,” he warned.

I decided to take his advice and as I moved through the common room, it became a game of dodge my club brothers all over again. The bastards were trying to keep me from her on purpose. There was no other explanation, especially when I saw Grady sitting in the corner laughing every time one of those motherfuckers came up to me about something else.

“Fuck off,” I told Trench when he approached me just as I made it to the mouth of the hallway leading to the bedrooms.

“I can’t even pretend to have anything to say to you. Go fix shit with your woman,” he ordered. As if I hadn’t been trying to do that all fucking day.

By the time I finally got to her room, Kip was there packing his son up to take him home for the night. He’d borrowed my truck the minute Nova got put on lockdown, so he’d have a way to get his kid back and forth. Ash was barely home to do it.

I didn’t wait on Kip to vacate first. That fucker was taking his time on purpose and judging by the bag and cup sitting on the dresser, I’d been right about him sending Charmer to make sure she was taken care of. While I should have been upset by that, it didn’t escape my notice that I hadn’t been the one to

make sure she had been fed today while everything was going down.

I moved over to the chair where Nova was seated and held my hand out to her in the hopes that she would take it without any questions. To my surprise, she did. I walked us back to my room and shut and locked the door before turning my full attention on her.

“Sorry it took so long to get back to you. There was a lot going on today.”

“I heard.”

“What exactly did you hear?”

She laughed, which was another surprise thrown at me today. “Well, I was informed that Scout has become a member of the club. I’m guessing that whatever happened in Tripp’s office last night had something to do with that.” I nodded, so she continued.

“Then Kip told me that he had dinner delivered to me because he wasn’t sure when the rest of the club was going to stop punishing you for what happened last night and for keeping secrets about Scout helping the club for so long.”

I couldn’t keep from laughing at their antics. Those fuckers. “I should have caught on a lot sooner.”

“Kip told me what they were up to shortly after you got out of that meeting, when he brought me lunch and came to check on Knoxville.”

“He’s the worst one. Normally, he would have clued me in, but since it was Scout, there’s no way.”

She hummed her response, as if talking about Scout was not her favorite subject. We need to get that out of the way though, in case any of those assholes saw her kiss me earlier.

“I need to tell you about Scout today, in case someone saw something and got the wrong idea.” Nova bristled, but I carried on as if she never reacted. “When I came out of church and told her they voted in favor of her becoming a member, she jumped up and kissed me. She meant to get my cheek but got my mouth instead with all the jostling and movement.”

“Okay,” Nova looked away for a minute before she finished whatever her thought was. “Considering you helped her achieve a dream and stay with the club without having to be a club girl, I can understand her reaction. You were the one person who trusted her and knew she could do it.”

“Are you serious right now?”

“I like Scout,” Nova admitted, surprising me. “She’s always been nice to me and with the exception of last night, she’s never done anything that made me want to poke her eyes out with a sharp object.”

“That’s kind of you,” I teased. Nova shrugged in response.

“I’m not mad at her, though it doesn’t really excuse you for the way you behaved toward me or with her after you left me. No matter what the two of you had to go do, or that it was club business, your hands and mouth should have never been on her like that when you didn’t even bother to kiss me goodbye or hold me after my first-time having sex.”

“I know,” I tried to butt in, but my girl wasn’t having it.

“I don’t think you do. You slapped my ass, got dressed, and walked out like I was one of your whores. Do you know I sat here debating whether or not I was supposed to go back to Kip’s room or if you had gone to satisfy yourself with someone else instead, since it was so awful. You didn’t even give me a chance to talk to you about the fact that you didn’t use any protection.”

Fuck, if she wanted to shame me, she was doing a damn good job of it. Not that I didn’t deserve that shit, but I’d been hearing it from literally everyone in the club all day long, too.

“I know, sweetness. I apologize for that. It took me until this morning to put it together that maybe you weren’t on birth control. If you get pregnant, I’ll be right by your side and so will the whole fucking club.”

“That’s not even the whole point, although, I’d like to finish school and start a career of my own before I ever think of having children with anyone.”

“With me.” She rolled her eyes at my correction and hid her beautiful face behind the curtain of her long, blonde hair. “Stop hiding, you heard me just fine. One day, you’re going to have children with me. If it happens now, we’ll deal with it, and I’ll make sure you still get to live your dreams. If not, then we’ll be careful until after you’re ready.”

“That’s fine, but what about diseases? I know for a fact you were with at least two women only a week ago.”

“Always wear a condom. The only time I have never done that was last night. Swear to whatever you want me to swear on that it’s the truth.”

“Condoms aren’t one hundred percent, Breakneck. When was the last time you were tested?”

I had to think about it because I honestly didn’t know. “If you have to think on it, it was probably too long ago. You need to do that, so that I know you didn’t give me anything. I can’t afford the added doctor bill right now.”

“How about I get our club’s doc in here to test us both, to be sure, and you won’t have to worry about a bill.” She shrugged. “Promise, he’s a real doc, and he’s discreet.”

“Fine.”

“Fine,” I mimicked her. “Now, will you let me take care of you like I should have done last night?”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“You’re still wearing the same clothes from last night. I’ll go get your bags and bring them in here, and then we can take a shower together, so I can help you clean up.”

“Okay,” she whispered as her cheeks bloomed hot with a blush that trailed down her neck and into the collar of her t-shirt.



Chapter 30

Nova

Breakneck left to get my bags from Kip's room, so I went to the bathroom and got the shower started. It gave me time to look around in there, since I'd never used his personal bathroom before. He had the manly, Old Spice shampoo, conditioner, and soap three-in-one bottle in there, but what surprised me was the apricot scrub and cucumber mint scented shampoo and conditioner. Then, when I looked at the other shelf that held products there were two more bottles of shampoo, one strawberry scented and the other was a sugared vanilla.

I crinkled my nose at those bottles. If it had just been the one set, I might have thought Breakneck tried to be considerate and get me something nice to use while I was here, but that wasn't the case. It wasn't even believable that he had purchased a variety for me to try, not knowing what I normally used, since each bottle was at different levels, showing obvious use.

I decided not to say anything about it because he probably never thought to clean them out after he promised to be exclusive with me. I also wanted to see how long it would take him to figure out that he should. Maybe that was a petty test, but it felt important to do anyway.

I got undressed and into the shower, rather than wait for Breakneck to get back. When he finally showed, I was almost done cleaning up. It was a lot quicker than normal, since I used his three-in-one bottle rather than pick one of the others that was available. His mother was dead, and he didn't have a sister, which meant that all the feminine bottles belonged to club girls. No way was I going to walk out of his room later smelling like any of them.

“I didn't mean for you to start without me.”

I didn't respond. He undressed quickly and joined me. When he realized I'd used his product, his brows wrinkled up for a minute before he shrugged it off. Stupid man. That would have been the perfect opportunity for him to speak up and tell me he'd get rid of the other shit.

Despite wanting to test him, I didn't think there was a malicious reason for him to keep those products there. He was simply used to them and the other women using whatever they'd brought in.

“You took almost all the fun out of showering together, since you didn't let me wash your hair or even your body.”

“Sorry, I didn't realize.” It wasn't that I didn't realize what he might want, but the fact that all those other female products meant it wasn't anything special anyway. He was already used to showering with whores and I was feeling a bit self-conscious.

“Come here,” he pulled me to him without waiting for me to move on my own. “What's going on up here?” He asked as he gently tapped my head.

“A lot to wrap my head around in the past twenty-four hours.”

Breakneck must have caught on to the fact that I hadn't made eye contact with him once because he tipped my chin up and pushed the wet strands of hair away from my face before dipping down to kiss me. “If you don't tell me what's bothering you, I can't fix it.”

“You can't fix the past. We can only move forward.”

“Let's start doing that then,” he suggested as he took my hands and placed them on his chest. “Wash me.”

“You want me to wash your body?”

“Yeah,” he replied with a sexy grin. So, I took the same Old Spice bottle I'd just used and put some in the palm of my hand and started spreading it around his shoulders, chest, arms, and eventually it became less about getting the little suds all over his body and more about exploring every dip and contour his muscles made.

His groans of approval spurred me on and before I realized what I was doing, I was on my knees, face level with his dick, while spreading more body wash all over his lower half. I ignored his dick until I finished with his toes, and then I spun him around so I could get the backside.

“Think you forgot an important part,” he teased.

“Nope. Saving the best for last.” It was easier to be playful with him like that when he wasn't staring at me because I didn't feel like I was under a microscope.

Once I had his back all scrubbed up and managed to slap his ass and make him jump in surprise, he finally turned back

around, but instead of guiding me back to my knees, he pulled me close and kissed me. “You are so fucking beautiful, sweetness.”

When he looked at me like that, I believed him. His mouth took charge and kissed me until my legs turned to noodles, then he spun me around and plastered the front of my body to the wall. My face was angled away from the water as he jacked my right leg up and then bent down enough so that he could slide himself inside me.

Everything down there still hurt, and Breakneck pushing his cock in the way he did, didn't make it feel any better. I winced but it went unnoticed as Breakneck was too busy watching where he entered me. I wanted to yell at him, tell him that it didn't feel good, or something. The problem was, if I did that, he wouldn't touch me again. He'd go grab two of his whores and forget about me.

Yep, it was pathetic that I was trading painful sex for what I had with him on date nights. That was what it boiled down to for me. I wanted the man who planned those awesome dates even though we were stuck on lock down in his clubhouse. I wanted the man who held me when I cried about my family and the fact that a perverted serial killer almost made me his victim too. I wanted the man who at least pretended to give a shit.

Unfortunately, he came attached to the man who seemed to be clueless about what my body was telling him. I hadn't been ready for sex – again. Not that I wasn't mentally ready, but there was no prep work, or in last night's case, not enough after the initial pain of him breaking through my barrier.

I winced again as he slammed into me a little harder and nearly lost his footing. His chest rumbled with laughter. “Damn, forgot how slippery it gets in here,” he muttered and that felt even worse. It meant that he was thinking about doing something like this with other women, and how they’d slipped around as well. He must have seen my face then because he stopped and held on to me tightly, as if I’d disappear if he didn’t.

“Nova?” I grunted a response that wasn’t really intelligible. Breakneck pulled out of me then but didn’t let go of my arms. “How about we move things to the bedroom, so no one gets hurt?” His voice was gentle, almost like someone talking to an injured animal that they were trying to help.

“Come on, Sweetness,” he coaxed after he got out of the shower, turned the water off, and held a towel out for me. “Did I hurt you?” He finally asked, as if it was only now occurring to him.

“I’m still sore from last night. It felt like someone took sandpaper to my...” I realized I was speaking out loud and to whom and stopped talking mid-sentence.

“What in the hell? You were plenty wet last night.” He was arguing, but not in a mean way, just in that way that showed he didn’t understand at all.

“It hurt, when you...” I sighed. “Anyway, it made everything dry up, I think. The pain. So, it still doesn’t feel great.” Yep, I was a blundering idiot when trying to articulate what was going on in my downstairs region.

“Shit. Why didn’t you say something?”

“You really didn’t give me a chance,” I muttered as I used the towel to dry off as quickly as possible. If I could hide somewhere and not have this conversation, that would be great. Unfortunately for me, that didn’t seem likely to happen.

“Come here.” Breakneck once again didn’t wait for me to oblige him, and instead he picked me up and took me to his bed where the stains from last night were still staring at us from his dirty sheets.

“Fuck me, I can’t get anything right today, can I?” He groaned.

I laughed because he was right, but I honestly didn’t think any of it was on purpose. The man was used to women who got themselves ready, didn’t care about dirty sheets, and didn’t complain when things didn’t feel right. What we had was a learning curve for both of us. I might have been the virgin with no experience, but he didn’t have much in the way of how to treat someone he actually cared about either.

Breakneck put me down and grinned at me. “Wait right there for just a minute.” He ran to the closet and grabbed a set of clean sheets and had me hold them while he stripped the bedding. Then, he took the fitted sheet, and I giggled as he wrestled the thing in place while naked. His balls were swinging along with his now deflated, though still impressive, cock.

“You think this is funny?” He asked as he came to get the top sheet.

“You did look a little bit ridiculous trying to get those corners to stay on.”

He slapped my butt playfully and then went back to work putting the top sheet on, then he picked the comforter up off the floor and got ready to spread it out on the bed, but then sniffed it and thought better of doing that. Instead, he threw it in the pile with the dirty sheets and went back into the closet to grab another blanket to replace the other one.

“We didn’t have the blanket on the bed last night,” I reminded him.

“No, but when that bitch helped herself into my room earlier, she was laying on it.”

I shivered at the reminder of Connie having been here naked this morning. She was trying to start some shit, and I knew that, but it still felt a little bit like the past repeating itself. By the time Breakneck was done getting the bed ready, I don’t think either of us was even in a playful mood anymore, let alone sexy times ready.

When he took my hand and led me to the bed, I almost refused to go. “Sweetness, I promise we’re going to give your pussy a break tonight. I didn’t realize that you were that messed up down there from last night. How about we just lie here and talk for a bit.”

“About what?” I asked as we both got settled. It was weird to just climb into bed naked, let alone with a man beside me, but at the same time, it also felt right.

“Any damn thing you want.”

“Sorry about the shower. I wasn’t expecting that. I’d planned on...”

“I know what you planned on, and if I’d known why you wanted to do that, I would have let you.” He said it in a teasing voice, but it still made me a little uncomfortable.

“That wasn’t the only reason I wanted to try it. My girlfriend used to tell me the best time to give a blowjob was in the shower,” I blushed profusely when I admitted that.

“Why’s that, sweetness?” He asked and I could see the laughter glinting in his eyes even as he tried to hold himself back from letting it out.

“She said that you always knew his dick was clean then, plus if you didn’t want to swallow it was easier cleanup.”

He did laugh then. “Something your friend probably hadn’t learned yet, is that half the fun is the mess we could make together. Men like to see their cum on their woman. It’s a fucking caveman thing or something, like we’re marking you with our essence or some shit.”

“That’s ridiculous,” I insisted, but then I thought about all the porn I’d watched over the years and decided there might be something to his theory. “Okay, maybe you’re right.”

“Wait, where did you go just now that you came to that conclusion?”

I shrugged and giggled at him. “Just thought about all the porn I’ve seen where a guy shoots off on the woman, or the man, that he’s with.”

“Fuck, sweetness!” He growled as he reached under the sheets to adjust his hardening cock. “Picturing you watching scene after scene of cum shots is hot as fuck. And you watched dudes fuck, too?” I could see that he was either impressed or

just completely surprised that I might have explored so much despite being a virgin.

“I was a virgin before yesterday, that didn’t mean I was never curious.”

“Yeah, I get that.” Breakneck leaned in and kissed me quiet then. His hands started to explore my body, caressing my breast and moving down to my hip before I yawned so big that my jaw cracked, and his hands stilled.

“I’m so sorry, that was...”

He smiled but retracted his hands and slid back over to his side of the bed. “It’s fine. You’ve had a long couple of days. We should probably catch some shuteye and start fresh tomorrow anyway.”

Disappointment filled me because I knew there was more than just penetrative sex that we could do, and thanks to my stupid yawn, he was shutting down and taking everything else off the table, too.

“Breakneck,” I started to say as I reached for him, but his phone buzzed on the nightstand, and he moved away from me to be pick it up. My hand flopped back down by my side as he answered.

“Yeah?” He listened for a minute before hopping back out of bed and speeding to his dresser. “Yeah, okay, be there in a minute.”

I didn’t bother asking who it was. Whoever it was, they were more important than me. That was all I really needed to know.

“That was Tripp. Something happened, and I need to go check in with him. That’s the part about me being the enforcer that you’ll have to get used to.”

“So, if we had been having sex, would you have answered the phone?”

He grinned at me. “Probably not, but then someone would have come pounding on my door because it’s an actual emergency.”

“I see.”

“Get some sleep, Nova. I’ll be back as soon we figure out what the hell is going on now.”

“Okay. See you...” He was already out the door before I could finish. “Later.”

~*~

A couple hours later, Breakneck came back into the room and gently woke me up. He was seated beside me on the bed and the worried look in his eyes, the one that said I wasn’t going to like what he had to tell me, made my pulse spike and my stomach knot up.

“What happened?”

“A video was delivered to Tripp.”

“A video of me?” I asked, already knowing that was the only reason he would tell me about it.

“A video of you and me together.” My brows pulled down and I thought about the fact that he and I had never been together inside of Dave’s house.

“That’s impossible, unless it was video of us in the gazebo. Was that it? If so, we didn’t do anything there that’s worrisome.”

“No, sweetness. It was from our shower earlier.”

“Our shower?” I thought back. It had only been a couple hours ago, but he’d left not twenty minutes after we got out and...

“Our shower?” That time my question came out in a screechy shrieking noise that hurt my own ears.

“Yeah, don’t know how those bastards got access to plant cameras in there, but we’ll fucking find out and destroy anyone involved.”

I felt sick. The bathroom was only steps away but going in there again wasn’t an option. I noticed the trashcan by the dresser and headed there to empty out the contents of my stomach. When I finished I glared at him and over to the door where Tripp and his son stood watching. That explained why Breakneck followed behind me with the blanket.

“Give us a minute, so Nova can get dressed, yeah?” Breakneck called out to them. They both moved back out of the room and shut the door, but I had zero doubt they hadn’t gone far. I stood on shaky legs as Breakneck pulled a shirt from his drawer and threw it over my head. Then he grabbed my still-packed backpack and started digging through it until he found panties and a pair of jogging pants for me to throw on.

Once I was completely covered, Breakneck left me alone long enough to go open the door again and then he was right

back by my side. He leaned in and whispered into my ear. “We’re going to the room where we hold church, so that we can talk without fear of having any cameras picking it up.”

I got ready to ask how he was sure there were none in there, but he put his finger over my lips and shook his head as we followed Tripp and Kip out of the room and down the hall. I didn’t bother looking around as we passed through the common area. It was far too quiet, which just made me nervous. My skin crawled with the thought that someone had watched that humiliating scene in the shower earlier. Then they sent a video of it to Tripp. I wanted to curl up in a ball and cry.

“I thought you said I was safe here,” I blurted out the minute we were behind the closed door of the room they used for church. The room itself was fairly ordinary, if overlarge, with what amounted to a giant dining table in the middle and chairs all the way around it.

“You are safe here. We’re going to get to the bottom of this and find out who the hell could have planted cameras,” Kip explained.

Tripp was the first to offer up a theory that was quickly dismissed. “The prospect we got rid of when the first image showed up had access when he was here.”

Breakneck shook his head, but it was Kip who spoke up again. “There’s no way he planted cameras before he left and they’re only just now using the footage. I’m not buying that. Besides, Nova had been staying at my house then and using my room when she was in the clubhouse with Knox.”

“If they were going to do that, pretty sure they would have used something from last night,” Breakneck agreed.

“That’s assuming that there are cameras in your room, too,” Tripp said. Shit. That would be awful because it would mean that the bastards who were paying Creepy Dave to get video of me and all those other girls in the shower, had just seen me throw up in a trashcan, while I was naked and Breakneck was trying to cover me up with a blanket. I groaned and laid my head down on the desk to hide my face and the complete mortification that must have shown there.

“We had guests in last night,” Breakneck suggested.

“No. Minch and Zealot were both here with their old ladies and never left the top floor,” Tripp explained.

“You’re forgetting the most obvious person,” I suggested.

“We know it wasn’t you, sweetness,” Breakneck rebutted before I could tell him who I was thinking of. I rolled my eyes and looked at Tripp instead.

“While appreciate the fact that he,” I tossed a thumb back in Breakneck’s general direction, “doesn’t think I’d videotape us having shower sex and send it to you, I was thinking about someone else.”

“Who, honey?” Tripp asked.

“Connie was in his room earlier. Who knows how long she was in there or what she was up to. The door was cracked open. She could have been watching Kip’s door to see when someone was coming, so she could dive on the bed and try to look like she was there to seduce him. No one was paying

attention to her because there was too much going on with the members all showing up for church.

All three men stared at me like I had five heads before Tripp muttered, “Son of a bitch,” then hopped on his phone.

“Maybe we should add more female members,” Kip mulled over as Breakneck came to sit beside me. When that didn’t seem to appease him, he gently pulled me out of my seat and put me on his lap so that he could wrap his arms around me.

“I’m so fucking sorry, sweetness,” he whispered into my ear. “So, fucking sorry. This wasn’t supposed to happen on my watch. I fucking missed it.”

“Stop. You couldn’t have known one of your people would betray you and the club.”

“Should have been our first thought,” he argued.

There was a knock on the door and Scout came in as soon as Tripp called out for her to enter. “I checked the whole bar, the back hallway, and upstairs. There aren’t any other cameras.”

“What about the rest of Breakneck’s bedroom?” I asked.

“I can go check there. It’s where I was headed next, but I wanted you to know that the rest of the clubhouse was cleared. All that’s left to check is your office,” she said to Tripp, “and the other member’s bedrooms.”

“I would like to go with you,” I told Scout and tried to stand, but Breakneck kept a tight enough hold on me that it was impossible.

“Why do you want to go with her?” He asked me.

“I need to see where they are and...” I choked up for a minute before taking a breath and looking back up at Tripp because I felt he was the one who would make this decision. “I need to know that they’re all gone and the only way I’m going to believe that is if I watch Scout pull them all out.”

Tripp nodded his head. “Can’t blame you for wanting to see that with your own eyes. We’ll all go.”

“Can it just be me and Scout?” Tripp narrowed his eyes on me, wondering what I was up to, but eventually he agreed to it.

“We’ll be at the bar.” To Scout he said, “Text me when you’re done. I’ll want to double-check for myself. Nothing against the work you do, but I think Nova will feel better with a second set of eyes going over the place.”

“I’d never argue that.” Scout conceded.

“I think we have somewhere else to be,” Breakneck finally said when he spoke and helped me to my feet. “We’ll be out back in the shed with our suspect.” He was talking to Scout not me, but I didn’t take offense because she was now his ‘club brother’ for all intents and purposes. “Keep an eye on my woman, just in case it wasn’t Connie.”

“I will protect her with my life,” she confirmed, and I didn’t miss the way Kip growled, so I figured I’d give him a little something, too.

“Don’t worry, I’ll protect her with my life as well.”

He managed to grin at me, as did Tripp. To my surprise, Breakneck didn’t growl in protest the Kip had. Instead, he spun me around and kissed me senseless.

“You’re too close to perfect,” he whispered before he let me go. “Be careful,” he called out so that we could both hear him and then I followed Scout back to Breakneck’s room.



Chapter 31

Nova

“We know there’s one in the shower, but I’m going to start checking the bedroom first and work my way back, that way we can kill their feed before they see and hear much else.”

“Won’t they be tipped off immediately when the first camera goes down, or I guess the only camera?”

“Sure, but that doesn’t matter. They’ll probably contact whoever planted them, but that just helps the guys figure out who the traitor is.”

“That makes sense.”

I stood by the door and watched as Scout did her thing and used a couple different devices to track down signals that shouldn’t be in the room. She ended up finding a camera hidden in some junk on Breakneck’s dresser. That meant they watched the whole scene where I stood by naked while he made the bed in the buff earlier. I shivered at the thought of some creeper having access to so much of my intimate life.

The only saving grace was that it seemed like Connie had just put the cameras in place today. If I was right that it was her, then at least the loss of my virginity still belonged solely to me. Well, to me and Breakneck. I needed the peace of mind of knowing that was true, so I hoped that Connie confessed, no matter what that meant the club would do to her.

There was only one more camera and it was in the shower stall. I'd been so bowled over by the women's products in there that I hadn't even looked for a camera. When Scout came out of the bathroom I didn't miss the pitying glance she threw my way.

"Are any of them yours?" I asked.

She shook her head. "No, they aren't because this is Breakneck's space, and I would never presume to move anything in. I won't lie to you, Nova. I've been intimate with him in the past. We were never more than friends who used one another sometimes though. My heart has always belonged to someone else. I can tell you honestly that no one ever had Breakneck's heart until you came along."

"Have you been together since I've been in the picture?"

"No, we haven't. Unlike the other club girls, I had a deal in place with Tripp. It was a one-of-kind situation. I had the right to refuse any man who was in a serious relationship, married, engaged, had an old lady, whatever."

"So, you've never slept with one of the taken men?"

She shook her head again. "I refuse to do it, even if the old ladies don't want to believe me."

"I believe you," I said, and meant it.

"I appreciate that and know how difficult last night must have been for you. I promise, what you saw was nothing more than him trying to keep me from yelling about how he had a girlfriend and couldn't come to me," she chuckled when she said that. "That'll teach both of us to make assumptions. Then,

it was pure excitement because I was getting my chance to finally get Tripp on board with me becoming a member.”

“You don’t have to explain. I’ve already heard all about it from Kip and Breakneck.”

She smiled at me. “I need to apologize, too. When he came out of church this morning...”

“You kissed him. I already know.”

She breathed a sigh of relief. “I wasn’t sure if he’d be upfront with you about that, but I’m glad to hear that he was. That means a lot, whether you realize it yet or not.”

“I know it does, and I thank you for wanting to be honest with me. I’m not your priority, so I appreciate you being upfront even if it might have gotten Breakneck in trouble.”

She chuckled and tucked all her equipment in the bag she carried in with her. The cameras had been disabled and put into lead-lined jars as soon as she discovered each one. “I better let them know we’re finished up here.”

“Thanks again, for everything, but especially for your honesty.”

“You won’t ever get anything but honesty from me, Nova. If you ever have a doubt, just ask.” After that we both stood quietly while waiting for a reply from one of the men. It never came, but Breakneck made his way back to the room.

“You’re needed in the shed,” he told Scout. She left without hesitating and he came inside, shut the door, and wrapped his arms around me. “Do you still need a second pair of eyes to check the room?”

I shook my head. “I watched everything Scout did, and I’d bet good money that no one would find anything after she was so thorough.”

“Good. How about we head to bed then, it’s me who is beat now,” he managed to get out around a yawn.

“That sounds perfect,” I told him before inadvertently replicating my own yawn from earlier.



Chapter 32

Breakneck

“How are you feeling this morning,” I asked Nova as she finally started to wake up. I’d been lying there staring at her for what seemed like hours, even though it had only been a few minutes. If we could get on the same page physically, she would be the perfect woman for me. Until then, there was this fear that lived in the back of my mind that I’d end up hurting her and driving her away because I wanted things that she couldn’t or wouldn’t do.

“Morning.” Her response came out in a thicker, raspier morning voice that made my dick instantly hard. It sounded an awful lot like what I thought she’d be like in the middle of a climax.

“How are you feeling?” I asked again.

“Mmm,” she moaned. So much better than yesterday.

“Is that so?” I trailed my fingers down across her jawline, neck, and then over her peaked nipple. “You look good enough to eat,” I told her.

Another moan was all the answer she was good for, so I decided to give her that, since I owed her far more thanks to me being an unintentional selfish ass the other night. I slipped down her body, planting kisses along the way. She was still half asleep as I finally made my way to her pussy and pushed

her lips apart. I could have punched myself in the dick because she was still red and slightly inflamed from where I tried to get in there last night when she was already too sore for me.

“Sweetness,” I mumbled into her pussy before licking up the center of her. She damn near came off the bed in response.

“Holy shit, what was that?”

“Only the beginning,” I told her before diving in and eating her pussy like it was the last meal I would ever get. She tasted like fucking heaven. Never had a woman consume me while I was purely focused on consuming her in this way. There was no other way to describe how it felt to have Nova reach down, grab hold of what little bit of hair I kept on my head and guide my mouth right where she needed it.

I let her do it, too. When she moved me one way, I focused there with my tongue and nibbled a little with my teeth until she shoved my head in another direction and then I gave her more in that spot as well. Before long, she was moaning and writhing her hips until she was fucking my mouth with her pussy. I was eating it up, figuratively and literally.

I’d never enjoyed eating pussy so much before in my life, but it was suddenly my new favorite thing because Nova was lost to the feeling and let herself go with the flow. That was what I wanted from her in bed. Fuck! If she could give me this level of response all the time, I might not have to disappoint us both by going to look elsewhere to sate my needs.

By the time Nova came for a second time, my face was soaked, as were the sheets I’d just put on the bed the night before. I climbed back up her body and slid inside her slick pussy before finding her lips and fucking her mouth with my

tongue the same way I was fucking her cunt with my cock. Fucking languidly. Slow, deep thrust that were damn near torturous when all I wanted to do was rip into the woman beneath me and ride her hard.

The muscles in my arms and back bunched tight with the effort to hold myself back and control my thrusts.

“Breakneck,” Nova whimpered beneath me.

“Yeah, sweetness?”

“More,” she cried out as I slid home again, making the extra effort to run my pubic bone across her clit as I did so. She moaned and raked her hands down my back like she’d done the first night, only this time it didn’t seem like a calculated effort. Instead, it felt like she was trying to hold tight or draw me in further.

Either way, it fucking worked me into a bit of a frenzy, and I almost lost control and started hammering into her. It killed me to keep holding back, but I knew her body couldn’t take the beating I would dish out if I let myself go. Her poor pussy was battered enough, and fuck... Her nails dug into my ass as those beautiful legs of hers locked around my upper thighs. It was almost too much, too restrictive, but then she used them to tug me into her body harder and that was all the restraint I had left. Three hard thrusts later, I emptied myself into her body again.

It was only then that I realized we hadn’t used a condom that time either, and that was entirely my own fucking fault. I hadn’t meant for me eating her pussy to lead to us fucking, but her body was irresistible. The image of her belly round with my baby inside damn near had me hard in an instant.

She couldn't handle anything else though, so instead I got up and went to go get a washcloth for her to clean up with. "Here, sweetness. You're going to need this."

"What for?" She asked and then when it dawned on her she groaned. "Not again, we talked about this."

I couldn't help my response any more than I could intercept the pillow she threw at my head. "Sorry, I honestly only wanted to eat your pussy and make you feel good, but you were so damn wet."

"I'm really wet now," she groused while wiping my cum from between her legs.

"Yeah, you are." Fuck was that a beautiful sight. If she wasn't so damn afraid of cameras thanks to Corpse-fucking-Dave and his VOMC employers, I would have taken a picture to keep for lonely nights on the road. Nova in silly graphic t-shirts was spank bank material, but naked with my cum dripping out of her abused pussy was something fucking spectacular.

Several texts pinged through on my phone, saving her from being pounced on again. When I picked it up and started reading through the messages I glanced back up at her. She was waiting to see if I'd have to leave right away.

"Sorry sweetness." I wiggled my phone in the air. "Duty calls, and that's too damn bad because I want nothing more than to crawl back in between your legs and fucking live there."

Her eyes brightened as she smiled at me. Then, she ducked her head to hide behind her damn hair again. "Stop, you are

gorgeous. Don't know why you want to hide all that beautiful away from me."

She shrugged but raised her eyes to meet mine. Those glacial orbs pierced through to a place so fucking deep inside, I didn't think I'd ever get her back out again. Didn't even want to try if I was being honest with myself. Then again, if I had to keep holding back the beast when we fucked, that might be reason enough to try.

I shook that thought off as I cleaned up and got ready. "Scout thinks she has a lead on where those Violent Order fuckers are hanging out," I told her. Then I thought about the fact that Nova was getting club business out of me without even trying and I knew I needed to set her straight before she thought it would be an all the time thing.

"Only reason I'm telling you is because this shit has to do with you, too. Normally, if shit was going down with the club, you wouldn't know, and I couldn't tell you even if I wanted to."

"Why?"

"We do it to protect our families. If you don't know, you always have plausible deniability, if shit pops off."

"Okay," she muttered. When I turned to look at her she tilted her head to the side, as if thinking too hard and then sighed. "I already knew the club was secretive. Kip hired me to be a nanny, and he explained those things to me. Besides, I've heard him tell Ashlynn that 'it's club business' so many times I probably couldn't even count them."

I laughed with her about that. “He probably tells her it’s club business if she’s asking what he had for lunch. There’s no love between those two.”

“I think that’s sad. I wish that whatever hold she had on Kip, he could break it, so that he could be happy with Scout.”

“We all wish that, and believe me when I say, I’m working on making that happen.”

“Good. Then, you better hurry up and get to work. Tell Scout I said, hi.” She glanced at her phone and jumped out of bed, too. “Shoot, I need to get ready to go watch Knoxville. I don’t know what I was thinking.”

“You weren’t thinking baby. You were drunk on orgasms.” I took the second pillow of the day to my face while I pulled my boots on. The woman was infuriating in the best way, and I think she felt the same about me. I hoped she did, anyway.

~*~

Two hours later, Scout and I were driving toward Augusta. The information she managed to pull, thanks to the email that was sent to Tripp, put the address somewhere in a small town just this side of Augusta. It would make for a long day, but I’d do anything to put this shit behind us and start a real fucking life with Nova, especially if it meant she wouldn’t be underfoot in the clubhouse day in and day out.

I had fallen hard for the girl, but that didn’t mean a man didn’t need his space. I was used to being alone before her. Never been in a relationship before and going from zero to a hundred so quickly made me itchy on the inside.

“You gonna make an honest girl out of Nova?”

“What the hell does that even mean?” I asked. Scout shook her head, like I should know. It sucked that we were stuck in a fucking cage together, because that meant she could get all her talking out.

“You know what it means. You gonna make her your old lady? Put a ring on it? Plant babies in her belly?” The last one made me look up from where I’d been studying the dirt under my nail. Scout laughed. “Should have known that one would get your goat. What the hell is it with you neanderthal men and wanting to knock up your women before you’re ready to claim them officially?”

“Primal instinct,” I answered.

“Fuck you. Sounds more like one of your kinks.”

I knew Scout was just fucking with me, but it hit me in the middle of my chest that Nova might think just that if she found out the type of shit I was really into. My kinks weren’t even that bad. Tame compared to most, but I needed them. Needed to feel the rush of fucking hard, dirty, and sometimes with a little pain mixed in for the women I was pleasuring. If not pain, then domination. I didn’t fancy myself in some master slave scenario, but I got off on ordering women around, withholding orgasms, and shit like the cat-o-nine tails butt plug and ball gag that was hidden away in the back of my closet at the clubhouse.

The damn thing felt like it was just going to waste and collecting dust in there. At the rate Nova and I were proceeding, it would be years before we managed to crack that thing open.

“Is there an expiration date on sex toys?” I wondered out loud.

“I don’t even want to know where your mind wandered off to, but for the record, as long as they’re unused, I think the answer is no. Used ones, who knows. I guess depends on how well you care for them.” We were both quiet for a minute before Scout piped up again. “For fuck’s sake, Break, do not bring Nova any toys you’ve already used on the whores at the clubhouse – me included. She would never forgive you if she found out.”

“I wouldn’t do that,” I told her as I wondered why the fuck it mattered, so long as they were cleaned properly. Fucking women. “Hey! Slow down,” I damn near yelled the order at Scout. “Pull in the parking lot over there, all the way in the back and stay clear of the front row of cars.”

She followed orders beautifully and carefully maneuvered us into a parking spot out of the way, but where I could still see the minivan that I would recognize anywhere.

“What are we doing...”? Scout realized exactly what we were doing before she finished getting the question out. Ashlynn Martin got out of the minivan I’d recognized and was standing beside the driver’s side door waiting for someone to meet her. The man looked to be in his early forties, maybe older, and a bit paunchy in the middle.

“You’ve got to be kidding me,” Scout growled.

“Is your PI still tailing her?” A knock on my window answered that question. “This your guy?”

Scout grinned. “Obviously. Breakneck meet Grant Peters.”

“Already know the asshole.”

“How’s it hanging?” Grant asked.

“It’s never hanging, fucker. Always hard when your pretty face is around.”

“I honestly never know if I should wear a fucking chastity belt to protect myself around you or what,” he told me, but his laughter told a different story. The way his eyes locked onto Scout’s, I had to wonder if Kip knew she was close to Grant-Pretty Boy-Peters. Not my business, though. His wife fucking some dude in a shady hotel the next county over when she was supposed to be selling houses, that I made my business.

“We have somewhere else to be. Please, tell me you have pictures of that.”

“I have pictures, video, and in a few instances audio, too. How much do you need?”

“Anything where she has a kid with her?”

“The baby?” Grant asked, and damn if that didn’t say it all.

“Yeah.”

“Just once, but I didn’t get a shot with the kid in it. He was tucked away in the corner of the room.”

“If she ever has the kid again, I need photos, video, and fucking audio too if you can get it. It’s important that the kid is in those shots, and we can identify him.”

“Whose kid?”

“Kip’s,” Scout answered.

“Aw, fuck. I’ll be sure to make him a priority, if I see it. Do you need me to call in, so someone can come pick him up, if that’s the case?”

“Not unless he’s being hurt, and then, we’ll pay you for the pleasure of making sure he stays out of harm’s way until we can get to him.”

“Will do and no extra payment necessary for shit like that.”

“Let me know when you have something with the baby, too. I hate to put the little guy in that position, but we need every bit of evidence we can get. Not only so Kip believes us, but so the courts will believe him if he wants to take things the legal way.”

“I have it handled,” Grant told me before leaning in and addressing Scout. “Give me a call later, babe. We need to catch up.”

She nodded her head and threw the car in gear and got us the hell out of there. “You got something going with him?”

“He wishes,” she said right before she flicked the stereo on and turned it up. I took the hint and shut my fucking mouth the rest of the way to the little coffee shop another county over.

“This place doesn’t scream VOMC to you, does it?”

“Nope. The fuckers were obviously careful about where they sent the email from, but let’s check in with the owners before we go. Could be they have video we can take a look at and maybe see who the fuck we’re dealing with. We only think it’s Mal pulling the strings, but I want a list of the other fuckers involved.”

“When we find their clubhouse, we should probably take them out like those bastards did to the Alabama club a few years ago.”

“Fuck, that was a bad time.”

“I only heard about it after I came back. Kip was telling me the long story about why his sister didn’t have anything to do with him and how worried he was that Star had been out on her own so long. I guess, her leaving all started around the time the Alabama Chapter took that hit.”

“It did. That was a fucked-up time. Bagger’s lucky she forgave him for being terminally stupid.”

Scout laughed her ass off before finally pulling it together and getting out of the car. Our trip turned out to be for nothing. The owner said she allowed all the local teens to use the computer if they told her they were filling out job applications. The bleeding heart didn’t realize they were using her shit for criminal stuff that could get her hemmed up with the law, too. We weren’t going to be the ones who enlightened her. Since there wasn’t any video, we headed back home.



Chapter 33

Nova

After nearly a full month of everyone being stuck together at the clubhouse, Tripp finally called all the adults to gather in the common room. There were things I knew the club kept from me, despite me being the target of whoever Creepy Dave had been working with. Still, I was hopeful that maybe the club finally took care of the problem, like they did Creepy Dave. I was okay with it going down like that. There wasn't some great desire to know every detail of the outcome. I just wanted to know that I was safe again.

"I know everyone is sick of living like a bunch of sardines in a can," Tripp started.

"Starting to smell like a bunch of sardines in some rooms, too," one of the wives called out. I wasn't familiar with her because she only spoke to other old ladies or the men. She didn't converse with the club girls, and she didn't feel my nanny position, or the fact that I was Breakneck's girlfriend, deserved any better treatment. Fair enough. She didn't know me, and I didn't want to know her.

"Enough," Tripp scolded her. "You are all here to listen right now, so that's what you're going to do. No comments, snide remarks, complaints, or protests. Sit down, shut up, and when we're done here, you will do as you're told."

I was holding Knoxville, and trying to keep him entertained, but my eyes tracked the room to see where Breakneck was. I found him at the bar with a beer in his hand. Frustration, tension, or something else pulled at his features and made me worry for whatever this announcement would reveal. Most of the club girls were seated around the bar as well and I didn't think that boded well for my future as his girlfriend. We were still basically living together, and we had sex regularly, but truth be told, it was boring and stale. We had only ever done it in one position other than missionary, and that was the horrible shower incident that ended up on video.

It upset me that Breakneck was across the room, sitting with the club's whores while I was on this side, taking care of his club brother's kid. Kip was not at the meeting, and it made me wonder if something being discussed was about him. I hoped he was okay.

"We've all been on edge and most of you are ready to get back home and to your lives. The threat isn't gone yet, but we're confident that we have it under control. We're going to release everyone from lockdown, but there are rules you will need to follow to help keep everyone safe," Tripp explained.

"What rules?" One of the wives called out.

I could see Tripp was close to losing his patience. "I know you all were here and heard me when I said to sit down, shut up, and do as you're told. Don't interrupt me again, and maybe I'll have a chance to answer your questions before you even think of how to phrase them."

The woman's face bloomed with a bright red tint that showed she was either embarrassed or angry at being

reprimanded. From the looks of her face, it was a bit of both.

“You are going to go back to your homes, jobs, schools, or whatever else it is you do. You will not leave those places without an escort. Everyone, from our support members to the club girls, wives, children, and even the club members will use the buddy system until we tell you otherwise. If you absolutely have to go do something and don’t have someone to go with you, you will call the clubhouse and ask for an escort. There will be zero exceptions to that rule or we will all be on lockdown again, and no one fucking wants that.”

Tripp’s eyes met mine then. “Some of you will be assigned a shadow until we are sure the threat no longer exists.” I guess that meant I would have a prospect tailing me if I needed to go anywhere. My classes were already swapped to online only, and I was sure Breakneck would still want me to stay with him at the clubhouse, so it wouldn’t really matter.

We’d spent the last few weeks basically living together. I didn’t foresee him wanting to change that dynamic, which meant I’d probably still be keeping Knoxville at the clubhouse every day. Besides, Christmas was around the corner, just three weeks away, and I figured that Kip and Ashlynn would want to celebrate with their son on his first Christmas by themselves.

“I need all of you to be vigilant. If anyone approaches you, asks questions, trips your trigger in any way and makes you feel off - you will alert a club member immediately. If you feel as though you are being followed or someone is watching you, I want to know about it. This is not the time to second guess your gut instincts. If you have a weird feeling, speak up. If you

get strange phone calls, unexpected packages, mail that wasn't processed through the postal service, or a stranger sliding into your DMs on social media, let us know. If you're not willing to stay vigilant, then we will find ourselves on indefinite lockdown again."

There were a round of groans about that and Tripp didn't bother reprimanding them because the feeling was unanimous. Everyone was tired of living on top of one another. The only people who hadn't been subjected to lock down were Ashlynn, Star, and her aunt Vivian. That was because they refused. Star had already proven she could handle herself out on her own for five years, while Vivian had just beaten cancer recently and refused on the grounds that there would be too many germs floating around when she was trying to get her immune system back on track. No one ever expected that Ashlynn would agree, since she seemed to hate the club.

"There is a sheet of paper over on the bar near the hallway to my office. Before you leave today, I want everyone's contact information on it. Let's get moving and get everyone back home and comfortable."

I was about to stand and go over to Breakneck when Knoxville started crying. Instead, his diaper change and bottle came first. By the time I was done, half of the families were already gone. They didn't waste a bit of time getting out of the clubhouse. Not that I could blame them. Living on top of so many people in such a compact space was making everyone stir crazy.

By the time I got Knoxville situated again, Breakneck was not in the common area. After waiting for twenty more

minutes for him to come find me, Kip finally showed up and took his son instead. I walked back to the bedroom I'd been sharing with Break, and a feeling of dread bubbled up in my stomach. There wasn't anyone else in the room with him, but both of my bags were sitting on the end of his bed instead of tucked away in the closet where I'd left them.

"Breakneck?" I called out when I didn't see him at first. He came out of the bathroom carrying my shampoo that Kip had brought me from his house a few weeks ago when I finally remembered to ask him for it. Breakneck set the bottle down on top of my bags along with my toothbrush.

"Nova," he started, but I held my hand up to stop him.

"Need the bathroom first," I explained as I bolted into the utilitarian space and shut the door behind myself. He was kicking me out. Granted, the sex had never been worth gossiping about to anyone - even though it had improved some since the first couple times. I at least managed to have an orgasm most of the time. I thought we were doing okay otherwise. I guess he'd had enough of me, though. I actually peed while I was in the bathroom and then washed my hands before turning to see that there were still those other shampoos and body washes - the ones that clearly never belonged to Breakneck - taking up space in his shower.

The whole time we'd been living together, he never got rid of them. He never removed a single bottle, and yet, he'd made sure to pack mine up for me before he booted me out the door. I heard voices in the bedroom, and while it was obviously Kip speaking to Breakneck, I couldn't hear what they were saying.

Suddenly, I wondered if I'd have a job when my courage built up enough to allow me to leave the bathroom. Maybe, the club had finally reached their breaking point with my problems, and this wasn't just about Breakneck getting rid of me. It was about the club cleaning house, so their people would be safe - from me. Well, from the people who were after me, but it was all the same thing.

Finally, I opened the door and stepped out to see Kip frowning while shouldering one of my bags along with Knoxville and his diaper bag. "You ready?"

"For what?" I asked, still waiting for someone to explain exactly what was going on. Kip turned angry eyes toward Breakneck and huffed, as if telling the jerk to man up.

"Figured you'd want to head back to your room at Kip's place and get away from here for a while. Been cooped up too long," was Breakneck's explanation for packing my things up for me without the bothersome part of having a conversation about it first.

What could I say? I couldn't invite myself to say. I wouldn't. The thing about being abandoned by everyone who was supposed to love me, was that I knew the signs when I was no longer wanted, convenient, or whatever other force made that person keep me around as long as they did. This was a far shorter stay in someone's life than I had with my family, but the signs still looked the same. He was dismissing me.

Breakneck pulled me in and placed a quick kiss on my cheek, then he swatted my butt to usher me out of *his* room. He didn't even walk us outside, and instead waved from the

doorway of his bedroom before shutting it practically in my face.

I drove the baby and myself home while Kip followed on his Harley. Part of me wanted to rant and rave, yell and scream about how unfair it all was. Breakneck was the man I'd been falling in love with - despite the odds stacked against us from the beginning. Apparently, he didn't feel the same way, otherwise how could he have cut me loose so heartlessly?

When we got to the house, I waited with Knoxville in my arms for Kip to open the door. Once we were inside, he took my bags to the guest bedroom, where I'd been staying before the club went on lockdown. Actually, I'd been put on lockdown before the rest of the club. I walked into my room and looked around. It was the same, but somehow managed to feel different at the same time. If it was possible for a house to no longer feel welcoming, that's how Kip's house felt for me.

"Are you okay?" Kip asked as he took his son from my arms.

"Why wouldn't I be?"

"Nova, I don't think..."

"Are you going to need me anymore tonight? Are you going back to the clubhouse for anything?"

"No, I'll be here."

"Great, can I just be by myself then. I'd really like to get reacquainted, and I have some school stuff to work on. It's been hard to keep up with everything going on there," I explained. It was a complete lie. It was easy to keep up because I had nothing else to do all day. It wasn't that difficult

to watch Knoxville because everyone loved to play pass the baby. The only time I got him back was when his diaper needed changing and once in a while after the novelty of feeding a baby wore off for everyone else.

“Sure. I’ll be around if you need anything, and I won’t leave without telling you. There will be someone here when I’m not, so you don’t have to worry about your safety.”

“Thanks, that’s good to know.”

“All right, yell if you need me,” he said again before he turned and left me alone in my room.

If only pretending were reality. I could say that no tears fell, my heart didn’t semi-break, and I wasn’t worried about being thrown away completely – yet again. My bags remained packed because that worry in the back of my mind wouldn’t settle. It was only a matter of time before I became too much of a liability.

After I took a much-needed nap, it was time to pull myself together and put the pity party away. I wasn’t the first woman in history to have a man send her packing and I wouldn’t be the last. Getting a hot shower helped. Well, it helped after I checked the entire bathroom for possible hidden cameras and freaked myself out so much about what might be found that I damn near had a panic attack. Eventually, the heat seeped into my bones and made me feel a little better.

I dressed in a pair of worn jeans and one of my stupid t-shirts, put some socks on, and my shoes. There would come a time when I’d have to face the damage my family had done to me, and maybe start working toward being normal again. Until

then, I had to keep myself fully dressed just in case someone came around to take the rest of my things from me.

Telling myself that everything I owned was mine - even though it wasn't much - didn't seem to help. My bags were packed and still sitting on my bed where Kip left them earlier. It took a lot for me to leave them there while I went to the kitchen to see if anything of mine was still left to eat after being away for more than a month.

Kip must have taken his son somewhere while I was sleeping. For the first time, since I started working for him, I felt completely alone in the world. It was a feeling that made me sick to my stomach. There was also nothing left in the tiny cabinet Ashlynn had set aside for my food that hadn't reached its expiration date yet, so I ended up throwing it all away.

There didn't appear to be a guard around anywhere, despite Kip saying that one had been assigned to me. I resorted to my old survival tricks rather than brave going to the store. I filled a glass full of water, drank the whole thing down, and then refilled it again. Sipping on the rest would hopefully keep my stomach full of water and stave off the immediate hunger pangs.

Just as I got back to my room, a loud knock on the door startled me so much that I spilled some of the water from my glass all over my chest. I moved to the front door and quickly looked through the peephole to see that Breakneck was standing there. For a minute, I debated leaving him there.

“Hey, what took...Well, shit are we playing wet t-shirt contest? Wish I would have known, I would have stacked my wallet with some small bills.”

Something about that rubbed me the wrong way. Maybe it was that the last place I'd seen him before he sent me packing was seated with a bunch of whores. I wondered if he would stack his wallet with small bills for them or maybe they were worth more to him.

“What do you want?”

Breakneck seemed confused for a minute before he pushed past me into Kip's house. I stepped back because there was no way I could keep him out if he truly wanted in.

“Why wouldn't I be here?”

“You packed me up and shipped me off without more than a few words to me, so I didn't expect to see you again.”

He laughed awkwardly but that quickly devolved into something else as the bastard legitimately stood there and laughed at me like I was the crazy one. Then he really looked at me, where I stood fully clothed including my shoes with a now half-full glass of water in my hands.

“Were you about to go somewhere?” I shook my head in answer. “Then why are you running around the house with shoes on?”

I didn't feel up to answering him and instead turned to head to the kitchen. The glass of water needed to be dried off on the outside and I needed to refill it, too. I completed those tasks as Breakneck watched, still waiting on me to answer. He watched as my lips touched down on the brim of the glass and I took a drink. The small sip I managed did nothing to quench my hunger or alleviate my suddenly dry mouth. It felt like torture to have someone who threw me away come into what was

supposed to be my space and act as if he hadn't just pushed me aside.

"I think you might have gotten the wrong idea," he finally said. I didn't answer, just stood there staring at him while holding onto the glass of water for dear life. "Nova, fuck! You need to go change your shirt, I came to take you to dinner. Kip said there wasn't really anything here until someone goes grocery shopping."

Ah, that made sense. He was here out of obligation to his club brother. Must keep the nanny appeased.

"Not hungry," I told him as I took another sip of water.

"No? How many glasses of water have you downed?" My eyes widened in surprise and gave me away. "Yeah, I know all the tricks when you're poor and starving. My mom was a decent person. My dad had his moments, but he also prioritized his vices above his family's needs."

I nodded my head, remembering everything he'd ever told me about his family. Breakneck hardly ever spoke about them, so when he did, I paid attention. I almost felt privileged that he'd said as much to me, but then I remembered that he was a jerk who had thrown me out with everything, including my shampoo, while other women's belongings still lingered in his shower at the clubhouse. They had a permanent space there where I didn't belong. Message received.

"Okay, well I don't want to go to dinner with you."

"Everyone else is busy and you need to eat," he argued. His demeanor changed quickly from nice and playful to surly and impatient. It wasn't the change in his mood that struck me the

most, though. It was that bit about everyone else being busy. So, he was sent to babysit me because no one else could be spared.

I wanted to scream for feeling this way, at him for being so callous, at myself again for letting someone rent that space in my head and my heart, and at Kip for leaving me alone with no good options.

“Stop being stubborn. I’m taking you out to get dinner. Kip will have shit for the house when he gets back, so you’ll have something to eat for breakfast and lunch tomorrow.”

“Fine.” I set the glass down on the counter and walked to my room to get a different shirt. The one I was wearing had dried a little, but not enough. I had just pulled a shirt out of my bag when Breakneck barged into my room. His eyes scanned the space, took in my two bags located on the bed, and then back down to the shoes on my feet before he returned his eyes to mine.

I ignored him while I took off one shirt and replaced it with the next. Then, I carefully hung the damp shirt over a chair, dry side down, so that it could air dry before I packed it away again.

“Why don’t you have your bags unpacked yet?”

I didn’t bother to answer him, just grabbed my more important bag, the one that held my clothing and some extra emergency money and slung it over my shoulder.

“I thought you were comfortable here,” he said. My answer was nothing more than a quick nod. “Why aren’t you

unpacking your bags then?" I shrugged my response. "Come on. Let's go eat, we'll talk about it while I feed you.

It was a twenty minute, very quiet drive in his truck to the restaurant Breakneck took me to. In a way, I wished he'd just taken me to the diner, but instead we were at a moderately upscale place that I knew frowned upon people dressed the way we were. I'd been there with my father - Jeremy - twice. They had decent food, a relaxed atmosphere, but I remember that every one of their patrons were at least dressed to business casual standards the last time I ate there.

"I'm not dressed for this place."

"Doesn't matter. They won't make a fuss."

Breakneck helped me out of his truck and then walked beside me to the restaurant where he held the door open and allowed me to enter first.

He was right, no one made a fuss and we managed to eat our meal in peace without much conversation. When we were done, Breakneck through a wad of bills down on the table and got up. I followed suit, missing the way he used to hold his hand out for me and help me up. Not that I needed the help, but just that he'd once felt compelled to care enough to do it.

The ride back was just as quiet and by the time he walked me to the door, I wondered if he would follow me inside or find an excuse to bolt. I didn't have to wonder long. As soon as I had the door unlocked, he leaned in and kissed me on the forehead.

"See you tomorrow," he said before turning to head back to his truck.

While a part of my brain was stuck there watching him, my body at least knew what to do for self-preservation's sake. I hurried inside and then locked the door, threw the deadbolt, and ran all the way to my room where I dumped my bag on the bed again. He just left after not even talking to me much the whole time. He said, "See you tomorrow," and took off like he was afraid of catching some imaginary plague I had.

There was no keeping my eyes dry after that. I plopped down on the other side of the bed from where my bags had been tossed and curled up in a ball. He really didn't want me anymore, and it was unfortunate that I was still some kind of obligation he was forced to cater to.

I took care of Knoxville during the day, and at night, I wasn't sure where Ashlynn was, but she no longer bothered coming home that much. Kip had started taking the baby over to hang out with his Aunt Viv to help cheer her up. They always came home after I was asleep, and I only knew that because I was an earlier riser than Kip. It felt like he was avoiding me, too. Only that was hard to do because I was his nanny and he had to communicate with me.

On the third day, I flat out ambushed him before he could slip out the door to head to work. "Do we need to make different arrangements, so that someone else is here for Knoxville?" I asked.

"What? No. Why in the hell would you ask me that?"

"Well, you've been avoiding me, I thought maybe you just didn't know how to let me down easily. It's not unexpected, so if that's the case, just go ahead and tell me. I hate this. I hate feeling isolated like everyone's afraid to be around me and talk

to me. I had enough of that after my family tossed me out. Please, if that's what is happening, just tell me."

I'm ashamed to say that I was a weepy, begging mess by the end of it and Kip pulled me into his arms to hold me until I managed to get my shit together again.

"Swear to fuck, Nova, I am not firing you. Not ignoring you, either. There's shit going down at work and for the first time in a while, it has nothing to do with the assholes who have been fucking with you. We're dealing with things going on in other clubs and trying to decide who needs to go to help them out, or if we even have the bodies to do so, considering we're on the buddy system here. I'm the road captain, so it's all on me to figure it out."

He took a breath and then kept on going. "Then there's the garage. We've been inundated with cars lately because the other garage in town shut down when the owner died. I think his kids are trying to decide if they want to sell the shop or pay someone to run it for them, since they don't know what the fuck they're doing. Meanwhile, everyone with a sputtering engine, or in need of an oil change, is hitting up the MC's garage. It's great for our business, so we can't complain, but it means long-as-fuck hours and me being dog-assed tired when I come home."

"Okay, I just didn't want to be an unnecessary burden."

"You never could be." He hesitated a moment and then decided to just ask whatever was on his mind. "Is Breakneck coming to see you every night?"

I laughed in answer. "Sure. He picks me up, takes me to dinner, then drops me off, and runs like hell back to the

clubhouse as fast as he can while saying as few words as possible the whole time.”

I didn't catch whatever Kip muttered under his breath, but then again, it didn't sound like he meant for me to. “We'll catch up later on, Nova, I promise.”

“Kip, before you go, can I ask where Ashlynn is? Is she not coming home anymore because I'm living here again?”

“No, sweetheart. It has nothing to do with you. She hasn't been coming around much because I was pissed off at her for refusing to go on lockdown with everyone else. She's been running around without protection and honestly, I don't have it in me to care anymore, except I don't know how I'll explain to my son that his mother ended up dead because she was careless and hated the MC that much. It's her own fucking fault that she hates to go there.”

Kip shook his head, as if trying to get his wife out of his headspace the same way I'd been trying to keep Breakneck from settling in mine when he obviously didn't want to be there. “Don't take everyone else's problems on your shoulders, Nova. You're fine and welcome right where you are.”

“Okay,” I managed to say before he turned and left for the day. “At least that's one person who doesn't hate to be around me.” Talking to myself was a sure sign that I'd been stressing too much, but I didn't have it in me to care.

~*~

The next day, Kip gave me money, a shopping list, and a prospect to go to the grocery store with. He took Knoxville to the garage, after borrowing his father's car to get it done, so

that I could shop without having grabby hands knock things off the shelves or a crying jag keeping me from following a list. I was thankful to be without the baby for this.

It was also helpful to have an extra set of hands with me to grab things, but only if they were on the same aisle, because the newest prospect would not let me out of his sight for a second. I appreciated his effort and planned to let Kip know all about it, too. I wasn't sure how much weight my good word would hold, but I'd try anyway.

When I finally finished, and was ready to check out, I damn near had my own crying jag as I watched a couple laughing and joking in line about the silliest things. It made me wonder what life would be like if Breakneck and I had ever had a chance at a normal relationship before he decided he didn't want me anymore. It took all the willpower I possessed to keep myself from crying in front of the prospect.

Especially when I wondered what people thought about him shopping with me. Did they think he was my boyfriend? Honestly, he was a bit closer in age to me than Breakneck, but still, it didn't feel like we looked like a couple. I was glad for that.

It took another hour to get the groceries home, put away, and then I was finally ready to go pick Knoxville up. It had been four days since I'd left the clubhouse. Every night, Breakneck showed up and took me to dinner. Every night, he left with barely a goodbye between us and all I could think about was the stupid shampoo he packed up for me and the rest of the bottles that were still in his shower.

The prospect followed behind me on his motorcycle as I drove to the clubhouse. When I got there, I went to the garage first, because that's where Kip worked, and I figured he had Knoxville with him.

"Hey, Nova! He called out when I opened my door. "I'll put the car seat back in your car while you run in and get Knox, he's with my dad in the office."

"Okay, be right back," I called to him as I took off for the clubhouse. Once I got inside, it took a minute for my eyes to adjust, as per usual. Tripp was just coming into the common area when I was finally able to see more than shadows again. There were plenty of people hanging out, but I didn't think any of them were Breakneck. Part of me had worried that I'd walk in and see him screwing club girls on the couch again for everyone to see.

"Hey, Tripp," I called out.

"Good to see you again, Nova. Almost wish you'd taken a little longer with the groceries. Knox and I were having fun knocking blocks over in my office just now." He grinned at his grandson, and it was a sight to see. He might have been older, but Kip's dad was still hot and holding a baby only upped his hotness factor.

"Do you mind hanging onto him just a minute longer? I wanted to see if Breakneck's coming by again tonight before I make myself the dinner I have planned." It was a lie. A bold face lie that made my heart twist and lurch in my chest.

"Sure, guessing he's back in his room. Haven't seen him all morning, but then again I've been otherwise occupied."

I smiled at him as he cooed over Knoxville. Then, I turned on my heel and had to keep myself from running to the hallway where all the bedrooms were located. I was two doors away from Breakneck's when I heard what sounded like his voice, but that couldn't be right. The door to my left was open, not all the way, but it was cracked enough that I could see straight into the bed that sat almost in the middle of the room.

"Whip that pussy," I heard him say and that's when my sight finally caught up and transmitted what I was seeing to my brain.

Breakneck was standing at the end of the bed, with his knees bent just far enough that he could reach to thrust his cock inside some woman's pussy while he spanked her with a wad of leather straps that were... *Oh God!* They were attached to something that was stuck in her ass.

That wasn't even the worst of what I was seeing. The same woman also had one of those gag things strapped around her head, only it wasn't a normal one because it also had a bunch of those same leather strips hanging off of it, though much shorter, and she was wagging her head back and forth while using the straps to spank another woman's pussy.

While my boyfriend was fucking a woman whose identity I couldn't make out just yet, there was no doubt that Mitzi was the one having her pussy spanked. Mitzi had been nice enough to me during the time I spent in the clubhouse, but she also made sure to keep her distance, and now I understood why.

Breakneck reached out to grab hold of Mitzi's breast as I watched, and when he pinched her nipple, she turned to look up into his eyes. The other woman, who I thought might be the

club girl named Dee, continued to spank her pussy with those leather strips hanging off her ball gag. She had also added her hands to the mix and was finger fucking Mitzi while Breakneck pulled on her nipples.

“You like that don’t you?” Breakneck asked Mitzi. She moaned in response. “Yeah, you do. You want to feel a dick slamming into you instead of her fingers? Are you ready for that, honey?”

“Did you find him?” Tripp called from right beside me. It should have startled me that he seemed to appear out of nowhere, but I couldn’t take my eyes off what was going on in the room as I answered.

“Yeah, I found him,” I whispered. There was no way anyone could have heard me, but Mitzi’s eyes locked with mine just as her orgasm hit. Her eyes widened and the blush across her skin from climaxing washed away immediately as she paled. The other woman, yep, it was Dee, turned her head to see what happened and she groaned, almost as if seeing me there hurt her somehow. Her shoulders slumped forward in what looked almost like defeat.

My clueless, now ex-boyfriend swatted her ass again, harder than before, just as Tripp managed to step close enough that he could see inside the room, too.

“Fuck,” Tripp growled angrily.

“I didn’t tell you to stop spanking Mitzi’s pretty pussy just because she already came once,” Breakneck called out before he slapped Dee’s ass again.

“Stop,” Mitzi yelled. A very naked Trench stood up then and moved to the bed. He shoved his cock in Mitzi’s mouth to keep her from talking, or maybe just because he was finally ready to go there. Who knew? I hadn’t even noticed him in the room before that.

I’d seen enough and turned to walk away. Tripp followed hot on my heels. “Can you keep Knoxville for the day?” I asked him.

“I can, but we need to get you an escort before you leave. Pretty sure your prospect went to spend some quality time on the can when you came in.”

“No offense, but I really don’t care if the Goddamn boogeyman is outside those gates waiting for me. I’m leaving, and I don’t want any of you to bother me for the rest of the day.”

“Will you at least go back to Kip’s house?” He asked. “I need to know you’re safe, even if your heart doesn’t feel that way right now.”

I nodded to him and took off. The one lucky thing that happened to me that day was that Kip had been called away and hadn’t had a chance to install Knoxville’s car seat yet. It was sitting on the ground by the passenger side of my car. I felt bad for what I was about to do, but if I didn’t get somewhere else soon, I’d break down so hard that driving would be impossible.



Chapter 34

Breakneck

Trench got up and stuffed his hard dick in Mitzi's mouth the minute she tried to tell us to stop. I guess he wasn't done with the scene, and she hadn't actually used her safe word, so it was all good until I heard Tripp.

"You're a fucking idiot," Prez yelled into the room as I was reprimanding Dee.

I understood that Tripp thought me being with the club whores, when I was in a relationship with Nova, was wrong but I never thought he'd actually comment on it. Definitely didn't think he'd interrupt our foursome to do it. As the club's president, he almost never came down our end of the clubhouse, specifically because he was not inclined to see what we all got up to.

A groan underneath me pulled my focus back to what it should have been on - fucking Dee while she smacked the shit out of Mitzi's clit with the cat-o-nine-tails attached to the ball gag I made her wear.

Something coiled tightly in my stomach at the reaction the bitch had to wearing all the gear. Her eyes had brightened upon seeing it, and then when she realized I wanted to use them with her, they dimmed just a bit. The club's girls, with exception of Scout when she was one of them, weren't

supposed to openly judge the men who wanted to use their bodies. I knew what she was thinking about when her eyes dimmed. Nova.

Every time I thought of Nova, my orgasm backed off because whether I liked it or not, it bothered me too that I was in here playing these games. After a little more than a month of fucking Nova so vanilla that she wouldn't complain about it, I needed something more. It was driving me crazy.

Every time I thought about stopping and putting all this shit behind me, I looked to Trench who would offer up quiet encouragement as he stroked his cock to what we were doing. Since he stuffed Mitzi's face full of his cock while Dee continued to abuse her pussy, I had to keep up my end of things, too. I just needed to not think of *her*, and I could get there. Once I got my nut, I would be out. They could keep the toys.

I leaned in and swatted Dee a few more times with the leather straps protruding from her butt plug and then I went hard at fucking her pussy. The need to get off far outweighed my guilt for the moment. I nudded when I was with Nova, but it wasn't the same. Hell, I fucking loved that girl, but the sex was just boring. Yeah, it got me off, but only just and without all the extra thrill I usually felt.

I pumped harder, slamming into the pussy beneath me until finally, I managed to reach a climax that didn't fucking satisfy me either. Fuck, Nova managed to ruin this orgasm for me too because I couldn't stop thinking about her.

I smacked Dee's ass as I pulled out of her and then tagged in Trench who had been watching us the whole time he'd been

choking Mitzi on his cock.

“Gonna go see what Tripp wanted,” I told him as I pulled back, snatched the condom off, and threw it in the trash.

Once I had my jeans fastened up and my shirt pulled back on, I grabbed my leather and headed for the common room. It was the first time I noticed that Tripp had Knox with him.

“How come you have the kid today?” Worry coiled like a furious thing trapped in my stomach at what that might mean because Knox should have been stashed away in Kip’s house with Nova.

“Do me a favor and go look in the mirror,” Tripp tipped his head toward the mirror behind the bar. I shrugged but moved over there, so I could see myself in the damn thing. It looked like I’d been hit with a train. There were dark circles under my eyes, what little hair I had, since I kept it so short, was a mess. Sweat still beaded on my skin from the hard fuck I’d just given Dee. A result of my desperation to get off before I went soft.

A frown pulled the corners of my mouth down the longer I stared at myself. This wasn’t what I thought it would be. Sure, the fuck hadn’t been worth it either, especially since I knew Nova was angry with me for tossing her out of the clubhouse the way I did. She would never understand me telling her that I needed space, time to think, and maybe just a little time to get my rocks off the way I liked, too. Not that it had worked out to well for me when I tried.

The sex, being rough, being with someone who wasn’t Nova was not what I thought it would be. It was then that I realized she hadn’t ruined my experience. The whole thing had

been ruined because she hadn't been the star of that show. I'd had fantasies of using those new toys on Nova, and now, I wouldn't be able to stomach doing it because even if she didn't know what I'd just done... Fuck. I'd know that they were used on someone else first, and that in doing so, I'd betrayed her trust and myself, too, in a way.

"Like what you see?" Tripp asked after remaining silent for far too long. I'd almost forgotten he was there.

I shook my head, almost inadvertently. "Can't say that I do," I responded honestly. I did not like the person staring back at me. That man in the mirror was a broken fuckup who was bound to lose the only good thing that had come into his life since joining the Savage Vipers.

Tripp's anger with me registered on a different level then, and when my eyes darted to the reflection of the baby he held, the question came to me again.

"Why do you have Knox? Why the hell did I need to look at myself in the mirror before you'd answer that question?"

"I was only supposed to have him for a few minutes, until Nova could grab him," Tripp explained. Kip couldn't keep him over in the garage the hole time his nanny shopped for groceries for the house, so he brought him to me. My son wanted to give Nova some time to shop without his son making the trip three times longer."

I nodded my head in understanding of why Nova hadn't been with Knox that morning, but still, there was something I was missing.

Tripp's knowing eyes burned a fucking hole right down into my soul. I could almost feel the searing pain of something like that happening to me because my gut clenched, and anxiety spiked as what he wasn't telling me came to life. There was still a little hope that I was wrong, but judging by Tripp's unrelenting stare, I was about to have my whole world crumble at my feet, and it was no one else's fault, but mine.

"Guess the prospect helped her with the groceries because she got back here a lot sooner than we expected." He said before he hit that last nail into my own fucking coffin. "You left Trench's door open," he finally said. "You fucking idiot." Those were the same words he'd said to me earlier. "If you had just closed the door, or not gone there to begin with..."

"What happened?"

"Nova headed back to see you when she got here. She asked if I could keep Knox for a minute, so she could ask you something about dinner before she headed back out. She had something in mind to cook at home, but needed to make sure it wouldn't ruin your fucking plans." Tripp shook his head, disappointment dripping from the gesture.

"The door was open when she passed by and heard your voice. It stopped her cold in her tracks. I was all the way over by the bar, but I'd been watching her walk down the hallway and when I saw her stop and then turn to look into that room, I couldn't move fast enough while holding Knox to stop her from seeing your bullshit on display."

I'd bet money that if Tripp hadn't been holding his grandson, he would have knocked me the fuck out right then and there.

“I couldn’t get to her in time to shelter her from whatever the hell she must have seen. Don’t even think she registered that Trench was in there with you at all, since he was moving onto the bed when I leaned in and told you what a fucking idiot you were. She saw what you were doing with the two club whores on that bed and begged me to keep my grandson for a while.”

“Where the hell is she?”

“All the shit that girl has been through over the past year...” Tripp had to get his anger under control before he spoke again. “The last thing she needed was to see her new boyfriend, who had just thrown her out after living together for a month, looking fucking thrilled to death about the kinky threesome, or I guess foursome if she did notice Trench, that he was participating in.”

He shook his head and then let it hang there as Knox tugged at his beard. “I’ve seen devastation on people’s faces before. My VP when he learned his woman had cancer, my own face when I was told what happened to my wife, my kids’ faces when I had to explain that their mother was gone. I’ve seen enough of it over the years to recognize that look. She wore it plain as day. Nova wore her devastation for anyone to see and you’re the one who put it there. Not just today either. The day you sent her back to Kip’s place, she was openly distraught. We all fucking saw it, but now she knows exactly why you were so quick to pack her up and ship her off.”

“WHERE IS SHE?” Rage - at myself, at Tripp for not getting to the point sooner, colored my every word.

“No clue.”

“What do you mean? How can you not have a clue? She’s supposed to be under watch. Who is on her today?”

“She had a prospect on her until she pulled into the clubhouse. Can’t say as to whether he stayed on her after she left, considering she tore out of here like a bat out of hell. My guess is her shadow was taking a piss break and no one followed her.”

“You just let her go?” I demanded to know what the fuck he’d been thinking to watch her run out of here on her own.

“No, Breakneck. *You* let her go. You drove her away from here today. You knew the threat might have been lessened for the rest of the club, especially our outliers, but she was still very much a target and instead of keeping her here at the clubhouse where she would be safe until we could locate the VOMC, you decided to make you dick a priority. Sent her packing with nothing more than a wet-behind-the-ears prospect to guard her. It should have been you keeping your woman safe. She realized today where your priorities were. They were with fucking other women rather than seeing to her safety. I’m guessing she figured since fucking them was more important than keeping her alive, then the threat couldn’t have been much of anything. You told her it was safe to go to Kip’s house when you knew damn good and well it wasn’t.”

“You have got to be kidding me,” I shouted at my president.

“Nope. That’s the fucking score and you know there wasn’t a single lie in there.”

“I didn’t prioritize other pussy above my woman’s safety.”

“You didn’t?” He asked.

“No, I fucking didn’t!”

“Yeah, you did. You’ll see it eventually. Take another look in the mirror, it’s right there. Every swinging dick in this room knows what the fuck you did and now, so does she.”

“You shouldn’t have let her go.”

“Wasn’t my place to stop her. She’s a grown woman and can make decisions for herself.”

“She’s in danger!” I growled at him. If it weren’t for Knox being cradled in his arms, I would have attacked the man I’d looked up to for years.

“Yeah, and she was in danger when you sent her away so you could fuck other people, too. It didn’t seem to matter to you then, so I figured it wouldn’t matter to you now, and I let her go.”

“You and me are not done here,” I warned.

“Be prepared then, because I don’t take threats lightly, especially when you’re the cunt who caused this. You want me to kick your ass, since you can’t do it yourself, I’ll gladly step into that role.”

I took off and headed out without another word to him. I needed to catch up to Nova before she did something stupid. There was no way I could deal with her just being gone without a trace.

“She’s probably just gone back to Kip’s place, if nothing else to pick up her clothes and whatnot before she bolts,” Tripp called out to me.

“That’s where you’re wrong. She still hasn’t settled there and I’m betting ten-to-one odds that she had all her stuff in her car when she showed up here today. There’s not going to be anything at Kip’s to find if she decided to get lost today.”

“Fuck!” Tripp hissed as I hopped on my Harley.

“Yeah, I may have fucked up, but you should have never let her leave after seeing that,” I shouted back to him.



Chapter 35

Nova

~December~

“Breakneck really did send me away so he could fuck the club whores in ways he never even attempted with me.”

Talking to myself wasn't a good thing. I knew that, but there was literally no one else to talk to. Everyone who I thought cared about me belonged to the Savage Vipers. He was a Savage Viper. They all stuck together. They must have all known what he was up to, even Kip, and no one said a word to me because in the big scheme of things, I was the outsider. He was the one they would protect first.

My tank was empty, both figuratively and literally, so I pulled into the first gas station I came across. There was no telling where I was, since I'd jumped in my car and left as quickly as possible. The man guarding the gate at the MC almost refused to open the gate, but I managed to convince him that no one really cared what happened to me and that it was safer for his club if I was nowhere near it.

The club comes first. Honestly, I could see the beauty in it from the perspective of someone who didn't come first for anyone. It was just too bad that I hadn't stumbled across them as a man because then maybe I'd be able to be included, too. As a member, not a club girl, the disposable nanny, or the throw-away girlfriend.

I finished pumping gas and decided to run in to grab some food for the road because while there was no solid plan for where I'd end up, I knew the only answer I could come up with was far away. That would require food and water once my appetite came back. It would, eventually. Even heartbreak couldn't stave off hunger for long. I knew that from first-hand experience.

"Nova?" A very familiar voice called out to me when I was paying for my snacks. I looked up to see Jeremy standing there looking completely shell-shocked. It seemed like today was the day for revisiting old heartaches on top of the new ones.

"Nova, my God! I've looked everywhere for you."

Jeremy sounded so sincere as he pulled me in for a hug. I wanted to cherish that comfort but knew how quickly it could be yanked back out from under me, so instead, I pushed him away.

"Yeah, your family found me, in the apartment you rented for me... Then they took it away, kicked me out with nothing but a backpack full of clothing. They took my laptop, my schoolbooks..." I had to battle not to choke on the emotion.

"They left me with no home, money, barely any clothes, and they cut off my tuition, too. They tried to take back that semester's tuition, but the school wouldn't allow them to. They left me so desperate I ended up living with a serial killer who was watching me use the bathroom on live video feeds. He watched me in my bedroom, too. He had the corpses of his victims in the basement, all girls like me, many younger, who he would go visit - even while I lived there. He kept them

because he wasn't done using and defiling them even after they were dead."

"Nova?" Jeremy's voice cracked as he said my name. His horrified face didn't stop me from spilling every bit of crazy I had experienced from the moment he turned his back on me and walked out of his house.

"Then a motorcycle club took me in and kept me safe until they didn't. Now, I have nowhere to go again, but I'm glad you searched so hard. Your family knew where I was. They took that away from me. They cut off my phone, too. I had that in my pocket, and those strange men didn't think to take it from me, but it didn't do a lot of good when it didn't work.

"Nova, please, I wasn't made aware of that until I came back to town and went to find you. When I realized the apartment had been rented out to someone else, I asked what the hell happened. At first, they tried to lie to me and told me that you just ran off with your mom. I contacted the school, and they wouldn't tell me anything about you, but I knew you were still registered there. By the time I found out which classes you were taking, to try to catch you there, you were no longer showing up to class. I nearly got arrested trying to find out why you weren't coming to school anymore. They thought I was some stalker you were afraid of."

"The serial killer. No one knows about him though because he's dead now. He had partners though, and they saw video of me, so they're after me now, too."

"Nova, come with me. I can take you to my cabin. You know the one near Helen that borders Unicoi State Park. It's

about a three-and-a-half-hour drive. No one will think to look for you there.”

“And what happens when we get there? Do you take it all away from me again because of things I had no control over?”

“No, Nova. I swear to you, you will be safe there. I own the place outright and family doesn’t know anything about it. If you need me to sign it over to you, so that you know you’re safe to stay there, I will. I promise that you will never be in that position again. Please, let me get you away from here and somewhere safe.”

“Fine, my car’s out front.”

“Leave it,” he told me. When I was about to argue, he stopped me. “They probably have trackers on your car. Maybe they’ve even put them on your phone, too. We’ll leave your phone behind in the car, get you a new one to use, and whatever else you need from your car, you can toss it in mine. We should probably hurry, though. If you started running, that means someone is probably looking for you already.”

What he said made sense and it was also my only option because I didn’t want to be found. Breakneck could go to hell and he could take his club right along with him. “Okay,” I mumbled, but then Jeremy had me moving quickly. We grabbed my bags out of the car, and I took a moment to text Kip and let him know that I wouldn’t be coming back.

Nova: *I can't be there anymore. I'm so sorry to leave you without anyone to watch Knoxville. Know that I love him and wish things could be different. Please, don't hate me. I'm sorry.*

I turned my phone off and left it along with my keys, and unfortunately the laptop that Kip had given me to use had to be left behind with my car as well.

Fortunately, I started saving my schoolwork to the cloud, so that I didn't ever lose it again. We put everything else in Jeremy's car and started heading north to the mountains. We would still be in Georgia, but he was right, no one would think to look for us there.

I'm not sure how long Jeremy drove before I fell asleep. Time moves differently when your heart is in pieces. Everything goes too fast and too slow all at once and there's no real frame of reference for how long you've felt the pain, when it got worse, or better. I knew this. I knew it because I'd lived it before. Knowing it, experiencing it before, didn't prepare me for how it would feel again.

I wasn't aware of the entire four-hour trip. It took slightly longer than expected because Jeremy said everything was stop and go due to an accident on the way, but I'd slept through all of it. My brain and body just shut down and stopped processing for a while.

I took a seat out on the porch and stared at the trees after we got there. The sky was too blue, the clouds a little too puffy and white to be real. All of it seemed like something I was dreaming or imagining. There was no denying I was in the mountains though. The air felt cleaner, purer somehow. You wouldn't think that just a few hours could make a huge difference, but it did. It made a difference with the chill in the air as well. At first, it didn't even bother me because it felt like it should be there. That chill was the only thing that matched

my mood. December's mountain temperatures matched the numbness I felt inside.

"I haven't been here in a while, so I need to run into town and stock up on some groceries. I'm guessing you're not up for that right now, so is there anything you need?"

"Can you get some macaroni and cheese?"

Jeremy scrunched his brow in question. "Whatever you need," he agreed despite not knowing why I would request something I'd never eaten around him before. It was the first time either of us realized that we were strangers to one another now. The daughter he raised had been through things he would never understand, and it changed me. The father who raised me had disappointed me so spectacularly that there was no way they were the same person. It was something we would have to work through if he was serious about giving me a place to escape.

"I'll be back with everything we need and probably a few things we don't."

I continued to sit on the porch with my two backpacks at my feet. My phone had been left behind, so even if I had someone to call, I couldn't. My life had just blown up for the second time and all I felt was numb.

~*~

"Hey, sleepyhead," my dad called out to me the way he used to when I was younger and hated getting up and ready for school so early. "You need to come inside now. It's starting to get too cold for you to be outside dressed that way. The temps are supposed to go down even lower tonight."

I opened my eyes up to see that the sun had set somewhere behind a mountain. There was still a bit of ambient light left, enough to let me know the sun had only recently sunk so low. “Did you just get back?”

“I got back and put everything away. It took a little longer than expected because I had to actually go to the next town over to stock up on all the supplies we needed.” He put a phone in my hand.

“I left it in the box, so you know it hasn’t been tampered with. I can put it on my plan, or you can put it on your own, if you want.”

“You can put it in yours. I don’t really have anyone to contact except school, when I need to turn my work in.” My heart fluttered tightly in my chest at the thought of school. Being a nanny for Knoxville was my internship. With me running, there wouldn’t be an internship to speak of, which meant that I would have to find out how to pay for another semester of school and find another internship if I wanted to ever graduate.

“When I screw up my life, I really go all out,” I mumbled to myself, but Jeremy heard me.

“No, sweetheart, I’m not letting you put any of this on your own shoulders. It’s a fair assessment that everyone else in your life has been making things messy for you. None of this has been your own doing.”

“My broken heart is definitely my own doing.”

“I seriously doubt that. Sounds like some asshole didn’t deserve you.”

I laughed at that because Jeremy rarely used what he called ‘foul language’. “I opened myself up to someone who told me from the very beginning that they probably couldn’t be faithful. So, yeah, that bad decision was all me.”

Jeremy sighed. “Like father like daughter.”

“You’re not though.”

“Not what?”

“My father.”

“Not biologically, Nova, but I raised you from birth. I know that I messed up when I didn’t even think about you through my own hurt. The ball got dropped and my family was awful because I ran off to make myself feel better and didn’t even stop to think what the news would mean for you. Stupidly, since your mother claimed that Clark was your father, I thought you would just trade me out and tag him in.”

“I would have never done that.”

“I know that. It took me a while to pull my own head out of my butt, but once I did, I came back to look for you. You don’t know how scared I was when they told me you’d run, when I found out they lied, when you were nowhere to be found. Did I mention that I cut my family off after I found out?”

“What do you mean?” I asked, not understanding. If anyone was going to cut someone off, it would be Jeremy’s parents cutting him off for speaking to me again. They’d definitely do it for daring to call me his daughter when we all knew that I wasn’t.

He chuckled. “There are things I need to tell you, and some of them involve your mom, but all of it is a truth that you

should know. If it's too much today, then I'll wait."

"No, I'd rather get it all out in the open now. I'm kind of over having to deal with other people's secrets, especially since they tend to ruin my life." Other people's secrets are what sent me into the arms of the Savage Vipers MC and they're also the thing that made me run from them.

"Okay, let's go inside and get you settled first. I'll make something warm for you to drink. Coffee, tea, or hot chocolate?" Jeremy shook his head, disappointment clear on his face as he did so. "I hate that I have to ask. There was a time when I would have known what would comfort you, but I'm not so sure anymore."

"Why don't we try the hot chocolate and go from there?"

Once the hot chocolate was made and we were settled on the couch, Jeremy turned to me. "I overheard your mother talking to someone on the phone a few weeks before I confronted her about you not being my biological child."

"You knew for that long?"

"No. I suspected and prayed it wasn't true, but I took some hair from your brush and had it sent in with my DNA sample. The results had just come back about ten minutes before you walked in the door. What you saw that day was my initial, very raw reaction to those prayers going unanswered. You know what happened after that already, but what you don't know was that I also had Clark's DNA tested against yours. Please, don't ask how I managed to get his sample because that isn't something I want to share with my daughter. It was his and it wasn't a match for you either."

“What are you saying?” The mug of hot chocolate in my hands shook to the point where some of it started spilling over the sides before I finally managed to put it on the coffee table. “Who in the hell is my father, then?”

“I’m not a hundred percent positive yet, and I’d hate to tell you it’s someone and have that not be the truth either. I have a private investigator searching for the man I believe to be responsible for helping to create you, and if that test eventually comes back positive, we’ll deal with it then. For now, I am not your father in the biological sense, and that kills me. I will always be your father in every other sense of the word, Nova, if you’ll have me after the way things were handled.”

There was no good way to answer him, at least not yet. “Let’s get through everything before we get into that, please. You said there were things about my mother, and I’m assuming those things are more than just the fact that she seemed to have no clue who my father was. You also mentioned cutting your parents off, and that needs explaining, too.”

He nodded his head and took a deep breath before he started to tell me what amounted to the foundation of lies that my life was built on.

“Your mother was a whore.” He scrubbed his hands down his face and shook his head, as if to shake off the words he’d just thrown at me. “I mean that in the most literal sense. She was with the president of a motorcycle club. From what I managed to gather from Clark over the years, whenever he was drunk and rambling, the MC was into selling women, pimping them out, auctioning them off to the highest bidder,

you name it. I'm pretty sure it went deeper than that, but your mom didn't start out as one of the whores. She was with the guy who later became president.

“As your mother is prone to do, she pissed him off somehow and he put her in his stable. That was how Clark found her. He wanted to keep her for himself and offered to buy her, so that he could have her as his personal whore. I don't think he ever would have married her or anything, but he wanted to set her up as his kept mistress.” Jeremy groaned as he put his empty mug down and sank back into the couch.

“Clark's family got wind of what he was up to and told him to get rid of the woman because he couldn't have her traced back to him in anyway, especially since blackmail was a real possibility. So, he pawned her off on me.”

“You knew all this and still took her to be your wife?”

Jeremy shook his head before he could even get the words out. “No. I didn't know about any of this until about ten years ago, but by then you were around, and I'd already been married to your mother for quite a few years. I didn't want to divorce her because I knew that she would get a huge payout if I couldn't find fault with the marriage. We'd been married too long, and had a kid, so claiming a fraudulent marriage, and proving it at that point, would be a tough sell in court.

“So, when I first met your mother, it was on a blind date set up by Clark. A double date with him and another woman. I was given a story about where your mother came from. It was a lie that was easily sniffed out. I married your mother anyway because she was pregnant once before you came along. I thought that one was mine, too. She lost that baby - it was

probably Clark's anyway - and while I married her out of duty only, I knew I had to protect my assets. So, your mother was led to believe that all the businesses and the majority of the money were actually family money belonging to my parents. That wasn't true."

"How is that possible?"

"Well, when my grandfather died, he left everything to me because he didn't trust his son or daughter-in-law with his legacy. My parents were given a stipend to live on, a very generous one, but the businesses were always mine. The money was all mine as well, including determining how much of a stipend my parents were entitled to."

"They took everything from me. They told me that it all belonged to them," I said, feeling as if I was going into shock all over again like I had the night they'd sent their goons to confiscate my life.

"I know they did, and they're learning a lesson about that now. Their stipend was cut in half, their house repossessed by me, and all their vehicles have been remanded to my custody, too. I need you to understand that my family didn't get away with doing those things to you."

"They got to keep half of what I'm assuming is a rather large stipend," I countered.

"They did, but only for one year. I told them that I was showing them the mercy they never offered you. And considering they were not in charge of the finances, like you were led to believe, they never had the authority to take from you to begin with. I know it doesn't seem like punishment to leave them with something when they didn't care about you,

but trust me, they are suffering and will continue to do so because neither my mother nor father have ever had to work for a day in their spoiled rotten lives. They won't be able to handle it when they're finally cut off completely. This is just a slower punishment for them because they think they'll be able to change my mind in the end."

"They're your parents, you should take care of them," I whispered.

"That's generous of you. Nova, you're my daughter. I never disowned you when I left. I didn't mean for your mother to force you to pack up and move on, too. When I told her to clean everything out of the house, I meant her things alone because you had your own apartment already. I knew you'd be okay until I could pull myself together and face you again. I felt like a failure when that test came back. It felt like I failed us both and I didn't cope well."

"I can understand that" I said to him because it was true. The news had been hard to hear and made me question everything in my life. It had to have been the same for him. "Is that it? No more surprises?"

"Other than who your dad is, the only other surprise that might pop up is one I'm going to disclose to you now anyway." He opened up his wallet and pulled out a debit card that had my name on it. Then he reached into his pocket and pulled out an envelope with some paperwork inside.

"I made this account for you. I had a different account set up for you from birth, but my family pillaged that one before I could get back. I haven't decided whether to file charges yet, so there may be more justice coming for my parents. This

account has two million dollars in it. It is all yours, in your name only, and no one else can ever touch it unless you give them permission to.”

“I don’t want your money,” I whispered. “I’ve never wanted your money.”

“I know that, but it has always been *your* money. I had a fund set up for you from the moment you took your first breath. It’s been building over the years, and this is how much was in it before my family stole it from you.”

“I would turn it down, but it means I can afford the extra semester of college I’ll need now that my internship is gone.”

“I’d rather pay for that semester myself and you keep your money for other things, like starting over wherever the hell you want. Considering you have some shady individuals looking for you, maybe we need to look into getting you a new identity anyway.”

“I really hope it doesn’t have to come to that,” I admitted.

“Me too, kiddo. Me, too.” Jeremy stood and held his hand out to help me off the couch as well. “It’s getting late, and I know you slept a lot today, but I have a feeling you need more rest. Let me show you to your room.”

“How long have you had this place?”

“Since I was twenty-three and discovered what a blessing that peace and quiet away from my family felt like.”

“I would ask why you never brought us here, but...”

“I tried a few times, but your mother said she wasn’t made to go ‘roughing it’ in the mountains with the hillbillies.”

“Of course, she did.” I rolled my eyes because that sounded exactly like something she would say. Only she would have shit a brick if she actually saw this place. It was gorgeous, and nowhere near what I would consider ‘roughing it’.

“Tomorrow, I want to hear more about what your life has been like since I left. I want to know all of it and not the cliff’s note version you gave me earlier. I especially want to know what some idiot did to break your heart and if I need to hire someone to take care of him. I’d do it myself, but you know... I’ve never been a fighter. I can afford to have people do it for me, though.”

He winked, letting me know he was joking because my father was actually a black belt in Karate and I suspected he had other disciplines mastered, too. He was the one who told me to punch a man in his dick to get away, if it ever became necessary. I smiled as the memory of punching Connie surfaced. It was too bad I hadn’t thought to run into that room today and punch Breakneck in his dirty dick. The bastard deserved far more than that for what he’d put me through, but I honestly didn’t think he’d care. He’d already proven that much to me.



Chapter 36

Breakneck

“We have to find her!”

“We will man,” Kip tried to tell me. The minute I called to tell him that Nova left the clubhouse and why, he had jumped into action. Unlike his father, he took it seriously and hopped on his bike to meet me at his house. By the time he got there, a text had come in from Nova on his phone telling him how sorry she was that she could no longer work for him or come back. It was all bullshit.

She wasn't at his house and that left us with exactly zero options for where she might be, since her phone was turned off and couldn't be traced. Nova didn't appear to have friends at her school that she could turn to, her family were all assholes who left her to drift in the wind on her own, and my club was the place she was running from. The only people she had in this world were the Savage Vipers and I fucked her trust in us when she saw me with... When she saw...

“FUCK!” I yelled into the air. Part of me wished we hadn't come back to the clubhouse because all I could feel here was the pain I'd caused her.

“There's no time for that shit. You caused the situation, but dwelling on your fuck up won't help find her.” Tripp might

have been my president, but my fist ached to knock a few of his teeth out. He knew she was leaving and didn't stop her.

“Wipe the look off your face. I didn't think she would do anything but go straight to Kip's house, if she even managed to get out of the fucking gate. She was never supposed to be able to get beyond there. But at the very least, she said she'd be at the house, since all her stuff should have been there anyway.”

“That girl still didn't ever leave without taking her bags with her,” Kip explained to his father. “Her family really did a number on her ability to trust people, and then that stupid fucking clown she rented the room from made it worse.” My brother eyed me but didn't say what everyone was probably thinking. That I added to her mistrust of people not just with what she saw when she ran, but by sending her back to Kip's house the way I did.

“Got her car,” Scout yelled from across the room. I wouldn't even bother asking how she managed to do that while sitting in the clubhouse with the rest of us. There was no doubt in my mind she was hacked into some network she had no business accessing.

“Just texted the address. It's a gas station, so you better hurry before you lose her. She can probably get about 300 miles on a tank in that car she has.”

I glanced at the text to burn that address into my fucking brain. She had better still be there when we arrived. It wasn't too far, but then again, it didn't take long to fill a car with gas and get gone.

When we got there, I almost fell over in relief at seeing that Nova's car was still in the parking lot. I went inside and looked around, and after not seeing her, I flashed a picture of the beautiful woman I'd fallen in love with to the asshole working checkout.

"Have you seen this woman today?"

"I don't think so, but I only just came on shift like twenty minutes ago."

"You've been here twenty minutes and haven't seen her?" I asked, suddenly feeling sick to my stomach. It had been about two and a half hours since Nova took off, and the gas station wasn't that far from the clubhouse. When her car was here, I figured she was just trying to make a plan and figure out where to go from there, but I'd been wrong and was now worried that someone else had found her here before we did.

I ran back outside to her car and busted out the passenger side window so I could unlock it and get in. Then I started looking through everything. The fucking keys were still sitting in the ignition. Her phone was in the glove box, turned off, and missing the SIM card. Her two bags weren't there though.

Nova's car had very deliberately been dumped at this gas station along with anything else that could have tracked her whereabouts.

"Son of a bitch," I mumbled before Kip made his way over to me. He glanced down at the broken window and then the phone and keys in my hand.

"Are her bags there?" He asked.

I shook my head. “Not unless they’re in the trunk.” I reached over and popped it for him, so he could check, but I couldn’t bring myself to get out of her car. The damn thing still carried her scent in it.

“Nothing back here. Did you know she doesn’t even have a spare tire?”

“What the fuck is she going to do with a spare tire? She’s either been abducted, or she left of her own free will. Either way, she left everything behind that...” It hit him then exactly what she’d done. “She didn’t want to be tracked. The car, her phone...” I reached underneath her seats to check and see if... “Fuck. The laptop you got her is here, too. Nova knew we had trackers on her.”

“She knew about her phone because I told her. It was a condition of her being a nanny to my kid. I had to be able to find her at any time, if she had my son with her.”

“You told her?”

“Yeah, of course I told her. I didn’t tell her about the tracker in the car or the ones I had in her old bag - the one she used to use for her clothing. The book bag - the one with actual books in it - was the only one she ever left behind, so I didn’t bother tagging that one.”

“Well, let’s track the bag then,” I demanded.

“I said her ‘old’ bag, Break. I never got around to putting a tracker in the new bag you got her because she was staying at the clubhouse, and it didn’t seem necessary at the time.” He pointed to the laptop I had fished out from under the seat. “And then there was that, but she left it behind, too.”

“Fuck! You’re telling me we have absolutely no way to find her?”

“I’m saying it’s going to be difficult, and it will be made harder by the fact that we don’t know if she left all this stuff behind on her own or if someone helped her decide. We can’t make a bunch of noise looking for her either, because the VOMC might get wind of her not being under our protection anymore. If they know that she’s no longer with us, then it’s going to be a race to see who finds her first, man.”

“FUCK! WHY THE FUCK DID I DO IT?”

“Man, that’s what everyone has been wondering. You had a good girl, one who most of our brother’s would have killed to have as their woman, and she was fucking enamored with you.” Kip was quiet for a moment and when I didn’t say anything else, he added, “Was it worth it?”

“Obviously not. The whole time, all I could think about was her anyway. Fuck man, I lost my hard-on once because I knew what I was doing would ruin everything. It’s just...”

“You couldn’t get out of your own way and now it cost you the girl and might cost the girl her life,” Tripp said as he walked by to get back on his motorcycle. “I called for the wrecker. They’ll be here to snatch her car soon.”

“You want to take her car?” I asked.

“Yeah, I want to take her car. If she’s missing it, she’ll know where to look for it. If we get her back, she’ll need it anyway. And that window is on you. Get it fixed before it rains and damages her interior.”



Chapter 37

Nova

“Why is your mother texting me?”

“How should I know?”

Jeremy stared at me for a minute and then back down at his phone. “When was the last time you spoke to her?”

“The day after I found out you weren’t my dad.”

“Nova,” the man who had been my father for most of my life looked devastated. “I had no clue that you two weren’t on speaking terms.”

“Did you think I’d high five her for getting one over on you and then run off into the sunset with her and Clark?”

“She said he was your dad,” Jeremy stated sadly.

“She said you were my dad, too. Besides, he left me behind just as surely as my mother did, so that they really could go be free together. I think they left the country, but honestly, I wouldn’t know.”

Jeremy turned his phone to show me the texts between him and my mother.

Ex-Whore: *Clark was picked up by some bikers and they beat him up pretty good before they took him.*

Jeremy: *This doesn’t concern me.*

Ex-Whore: *They were looking for Nova. You can't be so heartless that you aren't concerned about her.*

“She says some bikers came and roughed up Clark then took him. They're supposedly looking for you.”

I bit my lip nervously as I thought about what that could mean. It could be the Savage Vipers trying to make sure I was safe. If any of them had found my car at the gas station, they might be worried about what happened. Then again, it was possible that the Violent Order MC was the one who snatched Clark up, thinking that he could lead them to me.

“Do you want to turn me over to them to get Clark back? I guarantee there's only one reason my mother would concern herself with my whereabouts and it has nothing to do with protecting me and everything to do with protecting whoever is her latest paycheck.”

“I'm not telling her anything,” Jeremy insisted. Then he turned his phone off, opened the little side compartment, and took out the SIM card. He didn't do anything drastic like break it, drown it in water, or anything else. He just took it out and set it beside the phone on the counter. “I promised to keep you safe here.”

“I wish that I hadn't left my car behind.” February was creeping up fast and I felt caged in without a ride of my own. The temptation to go spend some of the money Jeremy put aside for me on a car was real. The problem with doing that, was that I would have to register the vehicle somehow and that could be traced. The men who were trying to hunt me down might not have been able to access that information, but I knew for certain that Scout could do it, if the Savage Vipers

were even still looking for me by now. I had sent Kip a text, so I doubted they were, but didn't want to chance it just in case.

“Chances were high that someone had your car bugged, especially considering what you told me about the house you were living in before. Then there were the people who are after you, and the club you ran from. Someone most likely had a tracker at the very least on your car and we didn't have the time to look for it.”

“I know. I just feel stranded and like everything is out of my control again. You don't understand what happened when your family sent those people to take everything from me, including the only place I had to live.”

“I can't apologize enough for that, Nova. I had no clue that my family planned to do something like that. Even after it was done, they told me you just disappeared from the apartment and left everything behind.”

“And you just took them at their word that I disappeared and didn't think someone might want to check on me?”

“It wasn't like that. They claimed they spoke to you and that you rejected our family and money since we weren't yours.”

I laughed at that. “You've known me my whole life and you believed that?”

“Nova, you have to understand, the entire foundation of my life was ripped out from under me when I found out you weren't my daughter. I didn't know what to believe anymore and I chose to believe the easy answers and not look too closely at the reality because I couldn't handle another hit.”

“I guess that makes two of us then.” We had been over all this before, but it was still hard to wrap my brain around.

Jeremy sighed and it worried me because there was obviously something else he wanted to tell me that had him feeling anxious.

“You might as well just tell me whatever it is now, rather than waiting until I’m worried you’re hiding something or lying to me,” I informed him.

The quick bark of laughter that followed wasn’t necessarily surprising. “You always were far too astute for your own good.”

“Not always, I did end up living with a serial killer who I thought was just your garden variety pervert.”

There was no laughter that time. Jeremy’s face filled with a fury that wasn’t meant for me. It was meant for the man who had nearly taken me from this world and who had given other people access to my private life. It might even have been for his family who put me in the position to have to seek shelter with that type of person to begin with.

He took a moment to calm himself and then sat beside me on the couch. “I need to head back to Danville to take care of a few things with the business. I can do a lot remotely, but every once in a while, I’m needed for an in-person meeting that can’t be put off. The only other option would be to have the meeting close by, but since we’re trying to maintain a low profile for you, I think that would be too risky.”

My acceptance of the situation was given with a simple nod. “I don’t have a car here,” I reminded Jeremy. “What am I

supposed to do if you don't come back for some reason?"

"If I don't come back, chances are, I'm dead, and you inherit my empire."

"I inherit...?" I asked, though I couldn't be bothered to form a complete, coherent sentence since that came as a complete shock.

"Yes, I cut my family off, remember? That meant I changed my Will, too. If anything happens to me, you inherit everything, and I put some legal safeguards in place to make sure no one could contest the decision. There's a copy of it here in the house, my lawyer has one and his information is with the copy I left here for you. Plus, you always have the account I gave you, as a backup in case somehow someone manages to stall you getting your inheritance."

"Jeremy, I'm not..." He flinched at me using his name instead of calling him 'dad'.

"You are the daughter of my heart, Nova. Nothing will ever change that. I raised you. I was more hands-on than your mother ever was. Biology isn't important, and if need be, when all this is over, we can make it official, and I'll adopt you."

"I'm an adult."

"Funny thing, you can adopt adults into your family, too. If it's what you want, then we'll do it. I already know you're my daughter, in my heart. A piece of paper telling everyone else it's true is just icing on the cake." He pulled me in for a side hug. "And I wish you would go back to calling me Dad. I hate it when you call me Jeremy."

I smiled at him. “When do you leave?...” I paused, as if needing a minute to test out the rest. “Dad.”

“First thing in the morning. I should be back in about two days. There’s another car in the garage. Keys are hanging in the lock box and the code is your birthday. Two-digit month and day, kiddo.”

Again, I nodded my head.

“It’s probably best if you continue to lie low, but if you need to go out, you’re not being held prisoner here. This is an escape for you.”

“I know that, and I can’t thank you enough for showing up when you did.”

“Fate put you in my path from the beginning, kid. I was always meant to look out for you, and I’ll never be able to make up for the time where I slipped in my duties, but I want you to know that I will do everything in my power to make up for that going forward.”

“You have nothing to make up for. I understand feeling overwhelmed and needing to get away from your own life. Look where I am.”

We both chuckled at the absurdity of our current situation. “We used to be such boring people,” my father said.

“Maybe one day we’ll go back to being boring.” It was an honest-to-God hope of mine to be able to settle back into a normal life where people weren’t out to kill me and maybe one day I could find a man to settle down with and start my own family. It was a change of heart from what I’d imagined for myself immediately after my life fell apart the first time.

If being with Breakneck had taught me anything, it was that I didn't want to go without love - especially a love I deserved. I just had to get over him first. You would think when a man cheats on you that he would immediately be erased from your heart, that the feelings would be replaced with ones of hate, and I don't know whatever was worse than hate.

That wasn't the case for me. Every time I thought about how angry and disappointed I was, my heart ached with the fact that he wasn't wrapping me up in his giant arms and protecting me. He couldn't protect me from himself though, so that was the thing I clung to most when I found myself missing him.



Chapter 38

Nova

~February~

“Where is my father?!”

Whoever the Savage Vipers had working their gate was a new prospect. I didn’t recognize him, and he certainly didn’t recognize me.

“Look lady, if your dad is here, then that’s too bad for him. Carry your ass back to the fancy side of town because this ain’t it.”

“Get Tripp or Kip out here right now!” I demanded. That finally caught the idiot’s attention.

“S-s-sorry,” he stammered, “didn’t realize Tripp had another kid besides the ones I’d already met.” I could have corrected him, but that would only delay the inevitable.

“Prez, your daughter’s out here and she seems to need you kinda bad,” the kid said into what looked like an old-fashioned walkie talkie.

“Well, let her in, dammit!” Someone yelled back through the thing, but I honestly couldn’t tell if it had been Tripp or not. My heart was beating so loud, it was nearly all I could hear. As soon as the gate slid open just enough, I slipped the car inside and headed for the clubhouse. The door opened and

both Tripp and his son came running outside, most likely thinking that Star was in trouble,

“What the hell?” Tripp asked as Kip called out my name. “Nova?”

“Where in the hell is my father?” I screamed as I parked the car and got out to face off with the men I’d once thought of as family. “Where have you taken him? I want to see him right now! You had no right.”

They both seemed to be stuck in a semi-shocked state for just a minute before Tripp pulled back out of it. “Listen, Clark was...”

“That asshole isn’t my father. Where the hell is Jeremy?”

The clubhouse door banged open once more and out walked Bagger and right behind him, Breakneck came running. Scout followed the two of them, and when I saw her hand clinging to Breakneck’s arm, I figured he had gotten over me easily enough. He’d sent me away to have his club whore affairs after all. Now that Scout was a member, I guess he upgraded to fucking members, too.

I shook off the thought because none of that mattered. I was there for one reason, and that was to set my father free. He was guilty of nothing but loving me and I wouldn’t allow him to be hurt by people I had once trusted.

“Take me to my father! Take me to Jeremy Williamson, now.”

“Nova?” Breakneck called out, and it was weird to hear his voice break as he did so. My eyes never wavered from Tripp’s.

“I’m talking to the President of the Savage Viper’s MC. You have taken my father hostage for some reason, and I want him back. He’s done nothing. NOTHING.”

“Okay, darlin’.” Tripp called out as he took a step closer with his hands in the air, as if I was holding them at gunpoint. “It’s really good to see you. We’ve all been worried about you.” The rest of the men started to follow in Tripp’s footsteps and move closer.

“STOP!” I screamed at them. They all obeyed as if it was a command, and they were there to serve. “I ONLY want to talk to Tripp. Everyone else needs to leave.”

“That’s not going to happen, Nova.” It was Breakneck. I ignored him and continued to keep my eyes on Tripp.

“If you don’t do this, I have a friend who is willing to dial 9-1-1 and report two abductions by your MC - that of my father and me. I suggest you listen to what I’m saying because I’m done playing your sick games.”

“What sick games do you think we’re playing?” Tripp asked.

“You stole my dad. I know you have him because my mother texted and told him that you guys had Clark and then when my father came back to town on business, he disappeared. It’s not too hard to figure out that you’re the ones who took him. I want him back.”

“I’m not going to lie to you, Nova. We do have him here, but for his own protection because he was poking a hornet’s nest and nearly got himself killed.”

“So, there’s not a scratch on him then?” I asked and by the way all the men fidgeted, I knew they couldn’t answer in the affirmative.

“I can’t promise you that either. He provoked Breakneck and told him he had you stashed away somewhere he’d never find you.”

I rolled my eyes. “What the hell does he care? He didn’t want me here anyway.”

“That’s not true,” Breakneck tried to deny.

“I’M NOT TALKING TO YOU!” I yelled, but again never bothered to look at the man who had broken my heart. “I want to see my father.”

“Do you mind telling me what changed, because when you were working for my son, you didn’t want anything to do with any of your parents, since they abandoned you and left you in a position to wind up living with a serial killer.”

“Send them away,” I demanded again, though I was losing steam and my body had started to shake. Hopefully, none of them noticed. That hope was diminished when I heard Scout speak.

“She looks like she’s going into shock. You need to hurry this along, so she can be treated.”

That was the first time I took my eyes off of Tripp instead of taking everything in through my peripheral vision. Scout was still clinging onto Breakneck’s arm, claiming her territory.

“Don’t worry, he’s all yours. I don’t want a whore’s leftovers,” I called out to her. She snapped back as if I’d

physically slapped her and immediately dropped the hand she had wrapped around Breakneck's bicep.

"You don't call one of our members a whore," Breakneck corrected in an angry tone.

"Get rid of them," I demanded again before holding up my phone and pushing a button. "They're not cooperating," I said.

"Whoa, Nova. You do not want to do that," Tripp called out to me, and I could see that his patience was beginning to wear thin.

"Get rid of them and get my father out here," I demanded again.

"Scout, Bagger, and Breakneck go inside. Bagger get Mr. Williamson ready."

"I'm not going anywhere," Breakneck argued.

"Breakneck, she doesn't trust us because of what you did to her, and you didn't help that any when you stood there and took the back of another woman, who was hanging all over you, again. You're making it worse. Get the fuck back in the clubhouse, go to my office, and stay there until I call for you. That's a fucking order."

Breakneck hadn't taken his eyes off me, but he shook his head which sunk forward on his shoulders as he turned to follow the directions he'd been given. Scout put her arm around him to take him back inside again. Tripp turned to watch and shook his head, clearly disappointed.

"Scout!" He shouted. Both of them turned to see why their club president had done so. "You keep making things worse and we'll reconsider your patch." Breakneck shook off her

hold as they disappeared into the clubhouse. I was even more shocked that Tripp threatened her position in the club than I had been by my own audacity to come here and bluff them into giving my father back to me.

My eyes slid to where Kip stood watching everything go down. He seemed just as shell-shocked by seeing Scout all touchy-feely with Breakneck. Apparently, whatever was going on between them was new to him, too.

Honestly, they should both be ashamed because Kip was the one they were going to hurt by carrying on with one another. Then again, it wasn't my business and further proved that the Savage Vipers couldn't be trusted. It looked like they weren't even loyal to one another anymore, if they ever had been.

"Nova, I'm so fucking glad to see you," Kip said as he started inching closer to me, after snapping out of his shock over how close his friend and ex-fiancé were.

"Stay where you are," I warned, though my voice was already losing the edge of madness as the ache in my heart squeezed different emotions from me.

He stopped mid-step and stared at me. "Nova, it's me, Kip."

"She knows who you are, Son. The girl is pissed, she doesn't have amnesia," Tripp grouched. "Thanks to Breakneck, and whatever's going on with Jeremy Williamson, she no longer trusts any of us to get close to her."

Kip looked like he might throw up. "Is that true?" He asked. When I said nothing, he took a step back and put his hand over his heart, as if he needed to hold some kind of pain in. I knew that gesture because I'd worn a similar one far too many times.

“I trusted you with my son. I put my boy’s life in your hands every single day. I moved you out of the house of fucking horrors and tried to take care of that problem for you. Nova, the last we heard Jeremy Williamson was the man who abandoned you, threw you out of your home, and left you to die.

“We picked him up because he was the last person seen with you on the surveillance video from the gas station where we found your car. We thought he was the reason you disappeared, and that you might not have gone willingly. Then he was seen months later, poking around in the Violent Order’s business and pointing a giant finger in your direction while he did it.” He swiped at his face. “We all thought you were dead, or soon to be, considering the sloppy way your father was going about things!” That last admission was yelled across the parking lot at me.

“The last man who abandoned me and threw me out to fend for myself was your club brother.”

“No,” Kip denied as he vehemently shook his head.

I pointed at him accusingly. “THAT! That right there is why I can’t trust you. He is your club brother and can do no wrong. I’m just some girl who brought trouble to your club’s doorstep. He threw me out the minute Tripp lifted the lockdown. He couldn’t wait to get me out of there. My safety wasn’t a priority to him, getting laid - by people who weren’t me - was. And all of you went along with it. Even your president allowed me to walk out of that clubhouse and drive away that day.”

“Did you meet our new prospect on the gate today?” Tripp asked. I nodded my response. “He’s there because I relieved the last one of duty after he let you through the gate that day. I expected them to hold you back and not allow you to leave by yourself. I gave strict orders that we were using the buddy system, and even stricter orders that someone was supposed to be *your* shadow no matter where you went. I didn’t chase after you that day because I didn’t think you’d be able to get anywhere but the parking lot to cool down.

“Shit, girl, I stood there and tormented Breakneck with the fact that you were probably long gone, just to get his reaction and see him hurt the way he hurt you. The joke was on me though because our old prospect screwed up.”

I stood there staring at father and son as Tripp revealed his truth. Part of me demanded that I not believe him. The other part of me, the sane one, knew he was telling the truth.

“We’ve been searching for you ever since you went missing. When Jeremy Williamson came back to town, we snatched him up because we thought he made you disappear. He made us believe that he did once we got him here. He took great pleasure in telling us that we’d never see his daughter again. I’m not gonna lie, Nova, we beat on that man while thinking he did the worst with you. He never once gave you up.”

“You hurt him?” I cried and dropped to my knees. “He helped me. He hid me away so no one would be able to hurt me. That’s all he’s guilty of - taking care of me. His family threw me out and took everything while he was out of the

country. This is so messed up. Why is everything so damn messed up?”

“We didn’t know. He never said one word in his own defense.”

“And why would he defend himself to the people who he thought hurt his daughter? The man cut his own family off, ruined them financially for what they did to me. Did you think he’d tell you where to find me after knowing I left here with my heart broken? I spent our time in the mountains trying to put myself back together and the only thing I managed to say about this club was that y’all taught me another lesson about not being able to trust anyone. Of course, he wasn’t going to tell you where I was or cooperate after that.”

“Shit,” I heard Kip hiss under his breath. “I wish you had come to me, Nova. I swear to God, I didn’t know Breakneck was with anyone else until I came back to the clubhouse that day. If I had known, I would have told you. I would have been there for you the same way you have been there for me and my son. You would have come before his dumbass decisions. You might not want to believe me, but you filled more of a hole than the nanny position I hired you for.

“My sister and I were estranged for so long, that you became a sister to me, too. Being a part of an MC and having brothers means someone always has your back, it doesn’t mean those people are always right or that we take their side above all. Sometimes, they’re wrong. Breakneck was wrong.”

I shook my head and stared at the dirt. Whether Kip said he would have had my back or not, it was easy to say something and another to prove it to be true. I was tired of letting people

get away with walking all over me, treating me as though I was disposable, and thinking that I'd just roll over and take it. Maybe, for a while there, I was broken enough to allow it to happen, but my time away had taught me something about myself. I had worth and I was worth more than what Breakneck gave me, even if I couldn't blame the whole club for his actions.

“They brought Jeremy around. He's inside, but you're going to have to come in to see him for yourself, sweetheart. We can't have him outside right now in full view of the road. I promise you that I've already texted our doctor and he's on the way to tend to your father before you take him out of here.”

“Swear to me on your club, your blood, that you will let us walk out of there after he's seen.”

“I promise you and swear it on my patch, my blood, and anything else you need me to swear to.” Tripp agreed.

“Fine.” I followed him into the clubhouse where it seemed like every member was standing around in the communal space. The whores were there, too, on the periphery. I didn't miss the fact that the two women Breakneck had been in that room with were sitting up at the bar. Once they noticed it was me, they both looked away and slinked off the barstools they'd been perched on. I watched as they left the room and some of the men shuffled the rest of the whores out as well.

I wasn't sure if they were removed from my sight to make me feel better or if they simply weren't allowed to see my father or know what had been done to him.

“Nova,” Breakneck called to me as he closed the distance between us.

“I have nothing to say to you.”

“Nova, please,” he tried again. I could hear the strain in his voice, as if it meant the world to him that I hear him out. I shook my head, as if in answer. “Please,” he begged again.

I glared at the man and wondered what kind of cruel fate it was to have to face him like this in front of everyone. Then again, the entire club already knew what happened and that he’d been cheating on me. I glanced over at Trench, the man I’d seen stand up in the room just before I fled that day.

There was no hiding the disgust on my face as I looked his way. He bowed his head in what looked like shame. That wasn’t good enough, though. If I was around the club ever again, working for Kip, he was one member that I would not allow to speak to me. The disrespect he showed by participating in that scene was gross.

My eyes darted back to Breakneck where he was on his knees in front of me. “Please, Nova,” he whispered.

“The thing I don’t understand is that you somehow used me as the reason you needed to cheat. For some reason, you thought that I couldn’t be enough for you sexually.” I cringed as I admitted that in front of a whole clubhouse full of men. “The crazy thing was that you were never enough for me. Sex with you was awful.”

“Oh shit!” I heard someone say, though I couldn’t pinpoint who it was.

“I’m not saying that to hurt your feelings. I legitimately was left wondering why people even want to have sex. It was only ever painful or awkward with you and never fun. I thought

maybe you just thought more of yourself, and the whores had been trying to build you up, so you wouldn't have ego problems."

I ignored the chuckles from the men who still stood around us listening to everything I had to say. I wished they weren't there because this was a private conversation. It didn't matter though because they were all privy to what happened in our private lives, so they might as well know the full story.

"Then I saw you that day, and I remembered the other times I'd seen you, from before we were together. When you were cheating on me with two whores, and apparently Trench was there with y'all too, I realized it was definitely a compatibility problem. You seemed to give them more attention than you ever gave me, certainly more energy than I got from you anyway. You had that woman on her knees while you rode her from behind, spanked her ass, and told her what to do to the other cum dumpster you conned into helping you out that day. All I ever got was you putting me flat on my back and rutting away until you got off.

"Go back to enjoying your whores, your club brothers, and whatever it is you all get up to together. It seems like they're the only ones you can fuck normally. I'll find someone who can treat me better and won't be afraid to fuck me like they might break me. Just me though, because I'll be good enough for them and they'll want to be truly in it with me and not phoning in a subpar performance while dreaming of really giving there all to someone who supposedly doesn't matter to them."

Rustling at the back of the room caught my attention and I glanced up to see Jeremy standing there with what looked like an extremely painful grin plastered to his face.

“Nova,” he called out.

“Dad,” I yelled excitedly before I maneuvered around Breakneck who was still on his knees completely blown away by the truth bombs I’d just dropped in his lap. I made my way to where my father stood just as he started to sway on his feet. If it wasn’t for Mack and Bagger holding him up, he would have fallen over.

“Get him to my office,” Tripp called from somewhere behind me. “Pull yourself together, and don’t come back out until they’ve gone,” he ordered to someone. I knew who he was speaking to but refused to turn around and acknowledge the man any further.

I truly didn’t mean to drag Breakneck for the shitty sex I’d had with him, especially in front of everyone in his club. It was the only way he was bound to hear me though.

I followed the men who escorted my father into Tripp’s office and sat beside where they placed him on a couch. “Shit,” Jeremy hissed as they settled him in. His hand immediately flew to his ribs to protect them.

“Why did you let them do this to you?”

“There was no way I was going to give you up to them.”

“Dad,” I whimpered when he sucked in a pained breath.

“That one,” he stated as he tipped his head toward Kip, who had walked in behind his father.

“What about him?”

“He’s married to one of them. The assholes who were after you.” I gasped and turned to see angry faces staring back at us, but the anger wasn’t for us, it was for the accusation my father had just launched against Ashlynn.

“Dad I need you to explain,” I insisted.

“I saw the woman coming and going from his house. He yelled at her about not staying home to take care of their son. When she left again, I followed her. She led me straight to that son of a bitch who fathered you.”

I remembered what Jeremy had said about who he thought my father was and what he had done to my mother all those years ago. I’d managed to get him to admit his theory to me after the first month of us being hold up in the beautiful mountain town together.

“Clark Anderson?” Tripp asked.

“No,” Jeremey said at the same time I said, “Malcolm Larson.”

“What the fuck?” Both father and son yelled at the exact same time.

“Are you telling me that Mal, the President of the Violent Order, is your father?” Tripp asked me.

“Did you just say that my wife was meeting with Mal?” Kip asked Jeremy at the same time.

Jeremy nodded and I shook my head. “I don’t know if he’s my father. There hasn’t been a test done, but Jeremy had a theory.”

“He is,” Jeremy said quietly. “I got a sample from him. I paid a waitress five hundred dollars to pretend to trip and yank his hairs out of his head. That’s what was taking so long for me to come back, initially.” Dad sighed. “I’m so sorry, kiddo. Wish I could have given you better news, but it’s true. He’s the one who got your mother pregnant.”

“You’re saying that Mal Larson is truly Nova’s father?” Tripp asked again. When Jeremy agreed, Tripp threw something across the room, and we all watched it shatter. “Mal is the asshole behind trying to kidnap Nova. He has videos of her in compromising positions and he isn’t afraid to hand them out. If he wants her, it’s most likely because he has an interested party on the hook waiting to buy her.”

“Sounds about right, considering he did the same thing with my wife before we met.”

“You bought your wife?” Tripp asked, disgust obvious in his voice.

“No, but before she managed to sink her fangs into me, he had been pimping her out in his stable. I didn’t find out until about a decade after the fact, but Clark knew all along. He was the one who tried to buy her.”

“Can we get back to the part where you said you saw my wife meeting with the asshole?”

Jeremy nodded and winced as the movement pulled at one of his wounds. He reached up to dab away fresh blood from somewhere behind his ear. “I followed her to that restaurant where I paid the woman to get me his hair sample. She sat down and had a meal with the man before leaving again.

When she left I followed Mal instead, so I'd know where he was headed and could come back for him."

"That was the day we decided that we needed to pick you up before you stirred up the fucking hornet's nest and either got Nova killed or handed her over to the asshole," Mack said. Again, Jeremy nodded, but he was more hesitant with his movements that time. "We weren't sure what your angle was, so we followed you for a couple days in the hopes that you would lead us to Nova."

"I got the DNA results back a few minutes before you picked me up. That's why I was at the hospital that day," Jeremy agreed.

I was obviously missing something, considering my dad hadn't kept me up to date on his whereabouts while he was away. The two days he told me he would be gone had turned into a week before he stopped contacting me at all. That was when I knew something was wrong.

I sighed as I started thinking out loud. "My mother was in league with a man who sex trafficked women, who paid for videos of girls in the shower, on the toilet, and everywhere in their homes. He paid to see them killed and I'm guessing he knew about what happened to them after they died, too. My mother was a part of that. Even if she didn't know what happened to me, she was a part of it from the beginning and she kept going back when she didn't need to. You were already married to her when she got pregnant with me."

Jeremy nodded his head again after I recapped exactly how horrible both of my biological parents were. A knock on the door made all of us turn to look. Tripp cracked the door to see

who was there and then opened it wide for whoever was on the other side. A doctor came in with his bag at the ready. He took one look at my father and sighed before turning back to Tripp.

“I can already tell you he’s going to need x-rays and probably a little reconstructive surgery on his face. This isn’t something I’ll be able to handle here.”

“I have a private physician whose offices we can use. You just need to get me there,” Jeremy informed them. “My daughter is coming with me.”

“Of course, I am.”

“Would you mind if I come along?” Kip asked. “We have some things to discuss.”

“I don’t mind.”

My father seemed to go along with my answer and nodded to the man who had saved me from an early death at the hands of a serial killer. The doctor and Tripp both worked to get my father out of the clubhouse and loaded into the special transport van he had arrived in. Kip asked me to wait a minute once we were in the main room of the clubhouse.

“Knox is upstairs. I’m going to grab him and then we’ll follow behind them. I meant what I said earlier, if I need to keep my club brother from seeing you, so that my son has you in his life, I will. That is a promise.”

“You’re not really promising her that, are you?” Breakneck’s voice cut in from the couch in the corner where I’d once set up a playpen he brought me for Knox. I remembered how quickly he left me there with the baby to go back to the two whores he had waiting for him. I knew better

than to get involved with him then. Unfortunately, I thought he was upfront with what he did and therefore I'd never have to worry about him cheating on me.

Kip stared at his friend for a minute before he finally answered him. "You're damn right, I am. Whatever she decides to do about you, even if that means she's cutting you completely out of her life, then that's what I'm going to abide by. She deserves that much after everything this club put her through."

Breakneck nodded and then his eyes moved to meet mine. Our gazes held for a full minute before my feet unglued themselves from the floor. I turned and walked out of the clubhouse to go be there for my father. He might not have been mine by biology, but he was the man who raised me and set out to protect me from the evils of the world – even at great cost to himself.



Chapter 39

Breakneck

~February~

I was a fucking mess.

Nova wouldn't speak to me. She had been back in town for a solid week now, and she refused to have anything to do with me. As far as I knew, she didn't have any other affiliation with my club brothers either. She was staying at her father's house, and that much I knew because we had members pulling rotating guard duty even if she didn't want anything to do with us.

Thanks to the little revelation about Ashlynn that Jeremy made in his office, we had been keeping a closer eye on her. For whatever reason, Scout's PI hadn't been tailing her that day and had missed the important interaction between her and Mal. Kip and I were about to get to the bottom of things, though.

"Someone told me they saw you meeting with Mal Larson," Kip mentioned to Ash. We were at his house, and I was sitting with Knoxville on my lap. Since Nova took off, I'd spent a lot more time with the little guy. For some weird reason, being near Kip's kid made me feel closer to my girl.

"Mal Larson?" Ashlynn questioned, but there was no mistaking that the color drained from her face. "Who told you

that?”

“Doesn’t matter. I want to know what the fuck you were doing meeting with the President of the Violent Order,” Kip demanded.

Ashlynn dropped into a seat as if her legs were too heavy to hold her boney ass up. It was only then that I realized she really was skinny in an unhealthy way. Kip was watching her like a hawk too and I could almost see when he came to the same realization.

“My mother finally came clean about who my father is. My real father, not the bullshit one she tried to claim was mine for so long.”

We both sat there, not believing where she was going with this. What were the fucking odds?

“Are you saying that Mal Larson is your father?”

She nodded. “I met with him so that I could verify it. For once, my mother wasn’t lying.”

“Holy shit.” The words popped out of my mouth before I could pull them back.

It looked like Kip was about to inform his wife that she had a sister, until I grabbed his arm and shook my head. He couldn’t do that. If Ashlynn had the ability to set up a meeting with Mal, that meant her mom still had to be in contact with him. At the very least, one of them knew how to get him on the hook for a sit-down meeting. We couldn’t chance Ash spilling the fucking beans about who Nova was.

The piece of shit probably already knew she was his daughter, but on the off chance he didn’t, that was information

we needed to keep close to the vest.

“I need to run. I have a showing in forty-five minutes across town and need to go set up.” Ash stood and didn’t wait for anyone to say anything else. She left and didn’t bother looking back.

“How in the hell is that possible?” I asked once she was out the door.

“We’ll talk back at the clubhouse,” Kip stated as he looked around with a shrewd eye. I knew what he was doing, attempting to see if there were any camera we hadn’t noticed. I hadn’t even thought there was a possibility of hidden surveillance in his house before, but now that we knew that not only did Ash take a meeting with our rival, who had threatened our club, but she was related to him, too... We needed to be extra cautious.

When we made our way back to the clubhouse, Kip immediately pulled his father into the office to let him know what we’d just found out. “Are you saying Ashlynn is Mal’s kid, too?”

“Yeah, that’s what we’re saying. That means Nova is her half-sister,” Kip finally said what I’d been thinking for the past thirty minutes.

“Your nanny was actually your son’s aunt all along,” I added.

“Son of a...” Trip muttered. “How the fuck didn’t we know this? Mal and his club have always been enemies and even when they weren’t, they were on our radar so we could keep

an eye on the shady fuckers. We did a background check on Ash when Star started hanging around her back in the day.”

“She claimed her mom only just informed her who her real father was and that she had it checked out. I’m assuming she lifted his DNA in a similar way that Jeremy did.”

“Fuck,” Tripp growled again.

“Who is going to tell Nova?” I asked.

“Maybe it would be better if she didn’t know,” Kip suggested.

“You really want another secret to make her not trust you, too?” I asked. “You see how she treats me.”

“Think that’s a little bit different. I only meant to keep her from feeling worse. Imagine finding out you have a sister in the world, but she’s the bitch who has treated you like absolute shit since you met her,” Kip said and I kind of got his point, but still didn’t think it would be right to hide it from her. I had no qualms about keeping it from Ashlynn, because that was about making sure Nova stayed safe.

“I’ll tell her. I wanted to talk to her about coming back to work for me anyway. At least this will give her more incentive to say, yes.”

“Might want to tell her that it’s imperative not to fill Ash in on their kinship,” I reminded him.

“I will. Not that Ash is home all that much to interact with her anyway.”

“Still, Nova might hate me right now, but I’ll do anything to keep her safe, and that includes killing your good for nothing

wife if she steps a toe out of line and points fingers at my sweetness.”

Kip narrowed his eyes on me. “If only you were this protective of *your* sweetness months ago,” he taunted.

“Fuck you,” I called back before I stood and left the office. I’d had enough guilt dropped in my lap for how I treated Nova. It was time I started working toward building her trust again because giving up on us wasn’t part of my plan. She was the only woman I ever imagined having my children, and there was no way I was giving her up, or the dream of them. My fuck up wasn’t bigger than my dream of the family we were supposed to have.



Chapter 40

Nova

It was weird being back on campus, especially after everything that happened. The feeling that I was a completely different person continually plagued me. I once knew what direction I wanted my life to go, and over the past couple months, I'd done nothing but question if that was still true. It felt like there was a vital part of me that was missing, and I wasn't sure I could ever get that back.

I missed the family that had been created for me when the Savage Vipers rescued me from the short life I was doomed to have. There was also the fact that my own biological father was the man responsible for my continued torment and worry.

And Kip came by to drop the news that Malcolm Larson – I refused to think of him as my father – had at least one other child in this world, and we already knew she hated me. Kip's wife, Ashlynn, was my half-sister. That also made his son my nephew. Out of all that news, the last bit was the part I cherished. I hadn't seen my little buddy yet, but Kip did ask if I would come back to work for him and take care of his son.

That was one of the questions in life that I struggled with. If I accepted his offer, that would put me back in a position of dealing with a club and people that I no longer trusted. It would mean that I'd eventually have to be confronted with *him* and I wasn't sure my heart could take it. The money was no

longer a big enough draw for me to overlook those things, but the fact that Knoxville was my nephew most certainly was.

“Are you Nova Williamson?”

I glanced up, from where I’d been lost in thought while sitting at a random picnic table on campus, to see a young guy who didn’t quite fit the picture of university student. “Why?”

He grinned. “Yeah, you’re her. Look, I have this delivery for you. I’m just going to sit it down right here and you can wait until I’m gone to look inside. There’s a note that explains everything, so make sure you open the bag and read it before you toss it.” He chuckled, obviously knowing that was exactly what I’d do with a gift from a stranger.

The boy backed up and spun around before he strutted halfway to the parking lot and got sidetracked by a couple of sorority girls who didn’t mind giggling over his tattoos and easy grin. I’d bet money that the Harley parked over there belonged to him, too. Which meant that the gifted bag sitting in front of me was either from Mal’s MC – which I doubted considering how friendly the delivery guy had been, or it was from someone in the Savage Vipers.

On the off chance that it was from the latter, I decided to open it, in case it was Kip trying to entice me to come nanny for Knoxville again. When I pulled the bag open, it was obvious that it contained lunch, but I ignored the food and pulled the letter out.

Nova,

Sorry for assuming you needed to take our sex life slow when you didn’t. You better eat up. You’re going to need your

energy when I win you back.

XO,

Breakneck

He could not be serious! I stood up and stomped over to the trashcan and tossed both the bag and the letter into the garbage, then I stomped over to where the idiot delivery boy still stood with the girls I tried to steer clear of around campus. His eyes bugged out in that way smart men get when they see an angry woman headed their way.

He threw his hands up in the air, “Don’t kill the messenger!”

“You tell that stupid, senseless, infuriating rat bastard who thought he could win me back with a bagged lunch delivered by a fucking prospect that had a note basically alluding to his fucked-up reason for cheating on me that it didn’t work. He can continue to fuck right off with Scout and the club whores because I never want to see him again in this lifetime.” I turned to stomp away after my angry, rambling outburst, but then stopped again. “And make sure you get that just right and don’t sugarcoat it for him.”

“Yeah, okay.”

“Holy crap! Did that just happen?” One of the girls asked as the others giggled at my expense.

To think I’d been questioning whether I could work for Kip again. The answer was no. As much as I would love to spend that much time with my nephew, especially now that I knew he was family to me too, there was no way to separate being his nanny from Kip’s life with the club, and that meant having

Breakneck pull stupid stunts like this. I pulled my phone out of my pocket and dialed Kip.

“Hello?” He answered questioningly. I realized that he wouldn’t have me show up as a contact because this was the new phone Jeremy had purchased for me.

“It’s Nova,” I growled.

“Is something wrong? What happened?”

“I’m going to have to politely decline your offer to work for you.”

“Nova, tell me what happened.” So, I filled him in on the prospect, delivery, and how his stupid friend thought he’d win me back with a reminder of why I was no longer with him to begin with.

“Fucking stupid motherfucker.” Kip exhaled so slowly after that outburst that I was about to hang up. “Please, don’t let his shit keep you from Knox.”

“I could still visit Knoxville, but I don’t think it would work out with me working for you.”

“I’ll have a talk with Break and make sure you never have to go near the clubhouse, if that’s what you need.”

“Yeah? What if the club goes on lockdown?”

“Then I guess everyone will have to pitch in to help keep an eye on him while I work. You won’t have to be there if you don’t think you can handle it. I can also talk to my dad and see if we can set aside one of the rooms upstairs for you and Knox if that would work for you. There are all kinds of workarounds to keep you away from Breakneck. Please, just think of my

offer and his bullshit as two separate things and don't make Knox suffer because Break's an idiot."

"I need to go to class before I'm late."

"Think about it, Nova."

"Yeah," I huffed out before hanging up the phone. "Stupid men!" I growled while on my way to class.

Once again, I was left with the overwhelming feeling that school was no longer the place I fit. Campus felt like a foreign world to me since I returned. My classes weren't holding my interest, and the people who surrounded me day in and day out got on my nerves.

"That itchy feeling like you need to get the hell out of here," a man said to me as I was leaving class, "it's short timer's disease."

"What?" I asked as I took a step back from him. Luckily, he didn't take offense.

"You're in your final semester, right?" He pointed back to the class that was only able to be taken after all the other prerequisites had been exhausted, which meant it was usually one of the last classes before graduating.

"Yeah, I should graduate this semester, as long as I can get the rest of my internship hours fulfilled."

He groaned. "My internship was working with a bunch of third graders who thought bugger jokes were only funny if they produced the buggers and put them on everything."

I scrunched up my nose and then laughed. "I thought they grew out of that by third grade?"

“Nope. Not at all. If my brothers are anything to go by, they never grow out of it.”

That made me laugh even harder. “How many brothers do you have?”

“Three. One is still in high school, the other is in California running up an incredible bill for my parents to pay for an education that I’m pretty sure includes how to chug beer and party while still maintaining ‘Cs’ to get his degree. The oldest is in the minor leagues, hoping like hell he can get called up to the bigs before he blows his shoulder out.”

“Wow. Maybe your mom should be teaching some of these classes. Raising four boys must have made her an expert.”

“You would think,” he agreed.

I hadn’t realized I’d been walking on autopilot toward the parking lot the whole time until I spotted something fluttering under my windshield wiper. “What now?” I asked the universe when it was obvious it wasn’t the typical business fliers I sometimes found there, considering no other cars had one.

“What’s going on?” My classmate asked. I should feel bad because I didn’t even know his name and I was pretty sure we’d had other classes together during my time at the university.

“There’s a note on my car,” I groaned.

“And that’s a bad thing, why?”

I stared dubiously at the flapping piece of paper, not sure I wanted to read it and at the same time desperate to know what it said. “My ex-boyfriend had a note and lunch delivered

earlier and he's a giant idiot, so I'm betting that one is from him, too."

"Do you want me to take it and throw it away for you?"

"No, it's best you don't get involved."

"I'm not going to leave a woman to deal with a man who doesn't know how to take a hint."

"He wouldn't hurt me, not like that, anyway."

"What does that mean?"

"He had no problem breaking my heart, but he wouldn't harm me physically, if that's what you're worried about."

The man didn't seem to believe me, especially since I was still stuck there staring at the piece of paper as if it might do physical damage.

"Listen, it was nice talking to you, but I really do have to get going."

"Sure," he said and took a step back. "Do you think maybe you'd want to grab some coffee or maybe dinner sometime?" He asked while staring at the note fluttering on my windshield.

"If you're asking as friends, or so we can study together, then maybe." I shrugged my shoulders to emphasize my point. "Anything else is off the table because I'm not ready to date again right now."

"Yeah, um, okay, I get that." He pointed at the paper as if it explained everything, then he walked away, and I watched him go. Part of me wondered what it would be like to be a normal college girl accepting dates with cute boys who wanted to do the same job as me when we finally grew up. We might end up

like those teaching couples that managed to work in the same schools. The thought made me shudder, and not in a good way.

I pulled the paper out from under my wiper blade and got into my car before I flipped it open to read what it said.

That was a shit way to start trying to win your heart back. I'm man enough to admit that. What I was trying to get across was that I'd never do that to you again. Knowing what that mistake cost me, what it could have cost you, Nova you have to believe me when I say I would never do that again. I'm sorry if the note I sent with your lunch came across too playful, or... I don't know... Too much in whatever way. It shouldn't have sounded insincere, and it did. For that, I apologize.

I balled the letter up and threw it behind me in the backseat. He didn't get it. His stupid letter said he'd never do that again, yet the last time I'd seen him he had Scout hanging all over him and he yelled at me for saying something bad about her. Honestly, while what I said had been mean, it had also been the truth, so I didn't deserve his anger. Breakneck didn't even realize he'd already proven to me that he would absolutely do it again.

A new lunch was delivered to me every day that I was on campus. A new note came with it, and while they weren't as dumb as the first one, they all basically said the same thing. *He's sorry. He won't do it again. What would it take for me to forgive him?*

They all ended up in the garbage along with the food he sent. Somehow, I couldn't accept any of it because it felt like I'd be giving in the moment I did. The only letter that gave me

a moment's pause was the one where he told me a crushing truth. That one made me cry.

Nova,

I know you're tired of hearing from me this way, but it's the only way I know to feel close to you and respect your request that I stay away.

I don't want to talk about the mistake I made or why I did it because that shit doesn't even make sense to me. There are things that seemed so black and white to me then that feel so different since you laid it all out for me in front of my whole club. They haven't stopped harassing me about what a shit lover I am- by the way. I'll take it, though. You were right. I held back so much of myself that I thought I had to find that part somewhere else. The truth is, I didn't find it there because the missing part was that I needed to do those things with you – no one else. The bitch of it is that it took me going there to realize that shit – and by that time, you had already run from me and the hurt my confusion cost you.

I fucked up in every way by not talking to you and by holding myself back. If there was a way to go back and change it, I probably wouldn't now. Only because I know you got your dad back out of the raw deal I left you with and that was important. Otherwise, I'd go back and do things so differently.

I found out a few days ago that I could have been a dad.

My heart dropped right down into the pit of my stomach, and I wasn't sure if I could continue reading his letter. Had he gotten one of the club girls pregnant that day? It wasn't like I looked to see if he used protection or not. I couldn't bring myself to take in the smaller details of what I'd seen. He

promised me that I was the only one he had ever gone without before, and I'd believed him. Then again, I'd believed a lot.

“Ugh!” I growled into the air, at the letter, at the man himself – if only he were there to hear my frustration with him. It was doing me no good to sit there wondering about everything, when I knew the letter would explain, still it was so hard to go back to those words.

I found out a few days ago that I could have been a dad.

You didn't know the woman. She used to work for the club, but she left over a year ago. She turned up at Star and Bagger's house and originally pointed the finger at him as the possible dad to her kid. Her kid... man, that's something else. Her daughter is in the hospital. Cancer. That's why she came looking for the father.

Tears dripped down my face as I read, thinking about the poor woman. It didn't matter if she'd been a club girl, or that she didn't know who her baby's father was. She sucked up her pride and went looking, and I'm assuming that was to save her daughter's life. My heart went out to her even as it ached with the knowledge that Breakneck could have been that child's father.

Kip, Bagger, and I all took a test. Star took a test, too. Hers was different. She was just trying to see if she was a match to donate bone marrow. Mine and Bagger's tests were negative. Not the fucking father. I can't tell you how thankful I was for so many reasons, but the main one being that I pictured you as the mother of my children. You are the only woman I've ever pictured in that position. Before you came along, I never even gave having kids of my own a single thought. Then I saw the

way you were with Knox that first day and I couldn't stop seeing you with a big round belly and a baby in your arms and I knew that it had to be me that gave that to you.

I wasn't the father! Kip wasn't either, but he is the kid's brother, so when you see him again, be extra sweet like I know you can be. His family is hurting right now. We were all blown away that it was Tripp's kid. He rarely ever goes there with the club girls, so it must have been a moment of weakness on his part, but he stepped right up. The man has been at the hospital with his daughter more than the clubhouse.

Anyway, I guess the whole point was that I still see you as the only mother to my children. The only way I'll ever have them. I know how badly I fucked up, sweetness. I fucking know and feel the ache of your loss every day, then I have nothing but anger toward myself because you'd be here if I wasn't such a fucking moron. I get it.

I hope one day you'll believe me when I say that you are it for me. While this next part may make that sentiment fall flat, I need you to know – I'll do better in the bedroom if you come back to me. Never felt so fucking low as when you laid everything bare for me in front of my brothers. I was a selfish cunt. I'm sorry.

All my love,

Breakneck.

It was the first letter that I didn't throw away. Instead, I tucked it into my backpack, got up, and left campus. There was no way I could sit through another class after reading all that. My heart felt as though it had been ripped wide open. Not just because of Breakneck and everything that happened

between us, not even the fact that he might have been a father to a little girl with cancer. It was shredded in part because the family I had been cultivating was going through something and I wasn't there for them to lean on.

Neither of the Martin men had ever truly disappointed me. They'd both looked out for me, taken me in, and kept me safe. They treated me with respect and care. I was the brat who put Breakneck's infidelity off on them like it was their own doing. That hadn't been fair. Tripp had still treated me so kindly, and with such damn grace when I came to the clubhouse demanding to see my father. A man who he had taken because they thought he hurt me and hid me away. I felt like shit knowing that all of this was going on and he still tried to be there for me. I owed the Martin family some apologies of my own.



Chapter 41

Nova

“Hey, I saw you over here yesterday, too and thought I’d come see if you want to go have lunch.”

I snapped myself out of thoughts about my future to see a handsome enough guy standing there looking half cocky and half unsure of himself. It would have been adorable for any other girl, but I was a bit too jaded to be charmed by the cocky, yet innocent act.

“Didn’t I see you hitting on someone else over by the tree yesterday?” I tipped my head toward the tree that was right in front of the bench where I sat regularly. He had seen me, but I’d noticed him, too. Mostly, I’d made up a story in my head about the girl and the guy who came to sweep her off her feet and treat her right. The excited way she melted into his invitation had suggested that they might be dating already or had been off to a good start at least. The fact that he was here today, trying the same crap on me told me exactly who he was and what he was after.

The jerk still had some kind of conscience though as a blush of embarrassment made his cheeks pink up along with the tips of his ears. “Um, I don’t know what you think...”

“Cut the crap. I’m not interested.”

A deep chuckle from somewhere behind me caused us both to look and there was Kip with a basket in his hands and the biggest, dopest grin on his face.

“Kip?”

“Nova,” he called back as his eyes twinkled with humor. That was before they turned menacing as he switched his attention to the would-be player who stupidly still stood there, mouth agape, watching Kip like he was his hero. “You heard the lady. She didn’t fall for your lame ass game, so get gone.”

“You’re with the Savage Vipers?” He asked.

I didn’t bother answering as Kip took the seat beside me. Instead, I moved the bag carrying my books off the bench and tucked it down between my feet, while I put one on top of a strap for good measure, so no one could try to easily snatch it up. Not that they could, but after everything that happened, my paranoia was still riding me pretty hard.

Kip huffed and the boy took off in the opposite direction. “You’re looking good. Healthy,” he said to me as he lifted an envelope off the top of the basket.

“What are you doing here?”

“Brought you lunch.”

“Thank you, but that wasn’t necessary.”

Kip shook his head. “It’s not from me.”

“Then I don’t want it.”

“Read this, then I’ll go, and you can do whatever you want with your lunch.”

It was my turn to huff in frustration. I took the envelope from him, knowing it was the only way I'd get him to leave. When I opened it up, my eyes remained on my fingers instead of the words that were written in blocky text on the page. Part of me was curious. Anyone would be. The other part of me was not interested in the least in what my cheating ex, and barely that, had to say. We weren't together long enough that he should matter so much. I should have been able to keep him off my mind, and now, he was here in spirit to torment me into thinking about him again.

Nova,

I'm sorry.

There's no flowery way to say that, and it wouldn't be believable if I tried anyway. I fucked up again and I knew it even as I was doing it.

I'm sorry for the bullshit way I tried to win you back in the beginning, too. It didn't feel genuine, and I came off looking like a royal fucking dick. I'd like to tell you it was nerves, but fuck, it was just sheer stupidity.

That's what I get for never dating before you. I don't know how to do all the romance and shit.

I couldn't help chuckling at that line as I rolled my eyes. Writing 'romance and shit' in an apology letter proved his point for him, but he was right, it did at least sound genuine that time. Though, I disagreed about him knowing how to romance someone. He'd taken me on dates that I still dreamed about, which felt like a betrayal to myself.

I'm sorry for fucking up and not remaining faithful. I could tell you I had doubts about what I did - because it's true, but it wasn't enough to stop me, so my doubts meant nothing. I thought I needed something that you would never be able to give me. Something I would never be able to ask you for, is more like it. You were the beautiful, innocent angel in bad t-shirts that I fell for. My brain could not compute wanting you to one day be the mother of my children and sticking a butt plug with a cat-o-nine tails attached to it up your ass.

I cringed at the imagery. How could he think reminding me of seeing him with other people like that would make me want to keep reading? Breakneck was an idiot.

I'm sorry that I didn't realize you were a dynamic person and that you had wants and desires too that I never bothered to ask about. I assumed a lot and fucked it all up.

I'm so fucking sorry that I lost you, but that apology is for me.

I'm truly sorry that I hurt you by doing it, and that's for you alone.

You'll probably throw this in the trash along with the lunch Kip volunteered to bring to you - so I wouldn't fuck it all up again - and that's okay. Don't take it out on him.

He reluctantly agreed to do this so he could check on you and make sure you were doing okay. He misses you and I know Knoxville does, too. Even if you don't give me another chance, you should at least cut them some slack. He's only ever had your best interest at heart and his son loves you. Hell, you're the only mom that kid has ever known.

Hopefully, you enjoy your lunch.

Your Sorry Bastard,

Breakneck

Kip handed me a tissue and it was only then that I realized I'd been crying. "Damn him," I muttered. "If he hadn't included you and Knoxville in the end, I would have thrown it all away and now I can't because for once, he wasn't selfish."

Kip's brow rose in surprise. "I have no clue what he wrote. I didn't read it." I handed the letter to him, but he shook his head. "Those words were meant for you alone, sweetheart."

"I'm sorry for walking out on you and Knoxville."

"Can't say that I wasn't disappointed, but I also understood. Wish like fuck Ash hadn't caused her usual level of shit that day, otherwise..."

"Otherwise, you wouldn't have needed me at the clubhouse, and I would have been left in the dark. I should thank her for not showing up for her son, as awful as that sounds."

The look in Kip's eyes told me he disagreed wholeheartedly. "I would have found out, and that's not something I would have allowed Breakneck to keep from you. If he hadn't told you himself, I would have. Need you to know that. My loyalty will always be to my club, but you were too important to me and Knoxville to lose because you didn't trust me. I wouldn't have lied for him."

"He wants me to forgive what he did."

"Do you think you can do that?"

“He’s asking for the wrong thing. Forgiveness and trust aren’t the same thing.”

“No, they’re not. Maybe one is the first step to finding the other, though?”

I shrugged. Of course, that was how it worked. Letting go of the hurt and the heartache he’d caused was a different story. His actions hadn’t just stolen him from my life, they took my newfound family, too. Granted, my reaction is what ultimately did that, but still, his actions had been the catalyst.

“Would you ever forgive Ashlynn for all the things she’s done?”

“That situation is a lot different. When we were a lot younger and dated, I thought she might be the girl who could heal my heart and be by my side. She proved me wrong then. I lost the woman I loved because I was too much of a fool to fight for who I wanted. When Scout and I had our troubles, Ash was convenient.” I winced and he nodded his head as if he knew it was as bad as it sounded.

“Should have never gone there when I did, especially because the anger I felt toward what happened with Scout was short-lived. Beyond that, it should have been aimed at myself, instead of me feeling the need to punish her with my actions. My anger and impatience pushed me to react stupidly. I can’t regret what happened as a result because my son isn’t something that I’d ever give up. Even if it meant that Scout and I were together with babies of our own, I couldn’t wish Knox away.” He swallowed, as if something about that idea made him sick.

“Never thought I’d admit that having a baby with another woman was so important, but it happened, you know?”

“I understand where you’re coming from. Knoxville is a treasure. He’s here. You can’t look back and wonder ‘what if’ without losing him in those scenarios. I get it, Kip.”

His eyes glimmered with moisture I knew he wouldn’t allow to fall. “I love Scout. Still, after all these years, after everything I’ve been through with Ash. I never stopped loving her and that’s why Ash hanging on the way she did, making the threats that she did, it was the worst mistake she could ever make.” His hands shook as he spoke.

“Ash thought trapping me would earn my love back or something. Nothing would ever make me fall in love with her - even if she had been the model wife and mother I hoped she would be. Not even having a son and marrying her could diminish the love I have for Scout. Even knowing she stayed at the club and has been with...” He couldn’t bring himself to say it. “I couldn’t be angry with her for that when I married someone else and had a child with another woman. It’s all so fucked and that’s the only reason I’m going to say this, so take it for what it’s worth.

“If you love him, and think you can forgive him someday, don’t waste the time you have. Shit happens when we’re busy being pissed off at the people we love. Sometimes, there’s no taking back what happens. It could change the course of your lives forever, and I’d hate for you to look back with so much regret the way I do.”

We sat quietly for a few minutes before he circled back to my original question. “So, whether I could forgive Ash or not,

won't factor into whether you think you could ever give that to my brother. He fucked up. It's up to you to determine if that's something you can forgive and move on from."

"He warned me that he would cheat on me in the very beginning, but he swore that he would tell me before he allowed anything to happen. I just don't understand why he never talked to me about what he wanted, needed, before he went there. We had an agreement, and he broke it."

"Did you talk to him about what you needed?"

I shook my head. "It's not like he gave me the chance. When I mentioned things could be better, he shut down and left me alone."

Kip chuckled. "Yeah, I told you I wouldn't lie for him. My brother's a dipshit. He's literally never had a real relationship before. Didn't think he'd ever settle down after watching his father put his mother through the ringer for his whole childhood." Kip realized I was about to argue with him and stopped me. "Not giving him an excuse for his behavior, just telling you how it was before you came around. It's obvious he cared about you."

"Not enough."

"No, not enough. I don't think he realized what he'd be throwing away by doing what he did. If it makes things any better, Trench said he was having a hard time staying in the moment that day. He even asked Break if he was sure that was what he wanted to be doing."

"You're trying to tell me that you guys think he regretted being there? Do you really think that makes a difference when

he didn't leave before he stuck his dick in someone else?"

Kip eyed me curiously. "You saw what he was up to in there, is that something you could do? If it came down to it, and he had told you that he wanted to use those toys with you, would you have been comfortable enough to do it, or would it have broken you anyway?"

"It doesn't matter because he never bothered to ask me." I said, feeling a little betrayed that Kip would throw it back on me.

"I'm still not saying the choices he made were right. Shit, Nova, I could kick his ass. He didn't just lose you, he made you leave the rest of us behind, too. I get you being mad at him, hell at the girls and Trench, since they were there. The people hurt the most by you walking out afterward were my family. I won't include Breakneck in that because he hurt himself by doing what he did." His shoulders bounced as Kip looked off across campus, not really seeing what was there.

"I left because it felt like more of a betrayal than my boyfriend cheating on me. The club girls didn't matter, except that they both saw me standing there watching and they at least looked guilty for their part in that whole mess. Trench was there, too. He was there and he knew I was Breakneck's girlfriend. That meant something. It meant that it wasn't just Breakneck that was cutting my heart into pieces, it was the rest of the club, too."

"Trust me when I say, Trench got what was coming to him after that. Mitzi won't even look at him anymore. He was the one who convinced her, against her wishes, that she should

join in. She didn't want to be there, if that's any consolation. It's why she wasn't the one Breakneck was..."

"Fucking. You can say it."

"Yeah, well. Just thought you should know there was more going on than you probably understood at the time. Not that it changes the outcome."

"I'm just so tired of thinking about it. I'm tired of seeing it replay in my mind when I close my eyes to go to sleep. How am I supposed to forgive him when *that* is the last thing I see before I fall asleep at night? I want to believe that he'll never do it again. I want to believe that the club wouldn't try to hide it from me, if he did. Then I remember Trench was there, and..." I sighed.

"For what it's worth, I Don't think my brother is capable of not fucking up again, but I do know he'd never fuck up in the same way twice. He was beyond devastated when you were gone. Worried doesn't even cover it. The whole time he was imagining every worst-case scenario with you in it, he blamed himself for being weak, stupid, and dis-fucking-loyal." Kip sighed that time.

"Not sure if you can find it in your heart to forgive the bastard. No one would blame you if you didn't. No one would blame you if you refused to give him a second chance either. I hope like hell that you'll put all that aside when it comes to me and Knox. Would love to have you back for my boy and me because Nova, you are a sister to me, and no matter what, you are Knox's aunt."

I leaned in and wrapped my arms around Kip's waist and placed my head on his shoulder. "I don't think you know what

that means to me,” I admitted.

“I do, sweetheart. Lost one sister to my own stupidity before, lost the other sister to my friend’s bullshit. Don’t want that to ever happen again. No matter what you choose, you will always have a place in my family, and I promise not to keep things from you, even if they’ll hurt.”

There were fewer and fewer students wandering around and it occurred to me that my lunch break was long over. “Shit, you made me miss my class.”

“Sorry about that. If it’s any consolation, I still turned in your hours to the school.”

“I know you did and thank you for that. It helped a lot.” Kip had saved my bacon while I was hiding out in the mountains. He turned in my hours along with a glowing recommendation for me, despite the fact that I’d abandoned him, his son, and my job when I ran away. “Once I make up the other classes I messed up last semester, I’ll be able to graduate, thanks to you doing that.”

“Good to hear. Still would love to have you back, and if it’s what you want, I will tell Breakneck he is not welcome at my home when you’re there. I will also make sure there’s a backup plan in place, so you never have to pick Knox up from the clubhouse and run the risk of running into Break again.”

“Can I think about it?”

“Sure.”

“Thank you, for everything, and I’m truly sorry-”

“Don’t apologize for what he did again. I already told you that your reaction was understandable. For what it’s worth, I

hope you two can work it out. Think you would be good together if you'd both just pull down all the barriers and figure each other out."

"Pull down the barriers?"

"He isn't the only one whose past stood between you two. Whether you meant for it to, or not, your mom's bullshit was part of why he treated you the way he did and tried to keep everything pure with you."

I laughed at that. "It was awful though, and not very pure to go have kinky sex with other people when my mom's issues were that she cheated all the time."

Kip shrugged. "Obviously, something got lost in translation, but this is Breakneck's brain we're talking about. He ain't the smartest bulb in the bunch. Too many hits to the head..." Kip made a face as if to demonstrate just how not okay Breakneck was and we both devolved into fits of laughter.

"He's not dumb," I finally argued, though I was still trying to stifle the laughter.

"No, he's not, but when you can say that with a straight face, maybe it will be because he proved you right." Kip winked and squeezed me tight before letting go and standing. "Need to get back. Give me a call if you want to come back and help out with Knox. You set the rules, and I'll make sure they're followed to the letter."

"Thanks, Kip."

"Anytime, Nova. Love you little sister."

He walked away then, and it was a good thing he didn't look back, or he would have seen me blubbering like a lunatic

over being called his little sister. Technically, I was. His sister-in-law anyway. At least, until everything with Ashlynn finally imploded, as it was bound to do.

Part of me wished Tripp had somehow been my dad, so that Kip could be my brother for real, but I had a feeling that we were already close enough. Certainly, more so than my actual half-sister. It was still hard to wrap my head around the fact that we were related, I'd cared for her son, and she never once treated me well.

I wondered how she felt now that she knew who I was to her. Or maybe she didn't know. Would it have changed things? Would I have been able to get to know her?

That was one thing I'd learned along the way though, you could never go back and change things, so it was ridiculous to wonder about all of life's 'what ifs'. Maybe, in another world, Ashlynn would have been a wonderful big sister to me. In the one we inhabited, that wasn't the case, and it was something I would just have to live with. Kind of like what happened between Breakneck and me.

It was something that I was either going to get over or I could allow it to fester and keep picking at the wound he'd left behind so that it never healed. What I did know was that I couldn't stop thinking about the letters. The most recent one and the other that I'd kept. He messed up. We all knew that. There was more to it than just one screwed up instance, though and that was what I struggled with more than anything else. I struggled with all the beautiful parts that came before.



Chapter 42

Breakneck

“Where are you going?” Trench asked as I slipped a fucking book bag over my shoulder.

“Going to fucking school.”

His laughter made me want to punch him in the fucking face. Then again, I felt like those fucking hang-around posers the club would sometimes get. They’d hang out trying to play like they were hard and linked to the club until shit went down and they ran as fast as their piss-dribbled legs would carry them.

“You think pretending to be a student in the same school is going to win her back? Doesn’t that just give her more reasons not to trust you? Feels like a deception to me.” All humor was gone as he threw out that last bit.

“Maybe if I was actually pretending to be a student, but I’m not. I’m there to fucking guard my woman. The threat against her isn’t completely neutralized yet, and I’m not playing student.”

“Then what’s in the fucking bag?”

“Snacks, asshole.”

Trench started laughing again, so I flipped him off and walked out of the clubhouse. Tripp was standing there with his

baby's momma when I walked out. They seemed to be in deep discussion, but when he looked up and took note of the backpack slung across my shoulders he grinned and tipped his head in acknowledgment. Fucker already knew what I was up to without me having to say a word. That was a good sign. Tripp had far better judgment when it came to women than I did.

“You can't just step in and start making demands!” Vina yelled at him, making me second guess that theory.

“The fuck I can't. She's my daughter, too.”

I tuned them out. Too many troubles of my own to worry about to rock up in someone else's shit. Nova's next class started in twenty minutes, and I wanted to be there in time to get a seat close enough to her that she knew I was there, but far enough away that I could observe her and the rest of her class.

The roar of my pipes must have been loud enough to disrupt Tripp's argument since they both stared at me. He seemed grateful for the interruption while she seemed to resent it. I'd wish her luck, but my brother had already raised two really fucking good kids into the most amazing fucking adults a person could hope for. Kip and Star were both solid.

If they were having an argument about what to do for their daughter, then he probably had it covered and she should put her pride aside and pay attention. It was still a kick in the balls for me to think of him as having fathered a kid with a former club whore. Every man had his weak moments though, and for fucking sure I wasn't one to judge.

~*~

I slipped into class with about five minutes to spare. The university was aware of my presence and each of the professors teaching Nova's classes knew not to bother me. I'd procured a private investigators and security license ages ago and kept it updated. A few of us originally got them so our runs that involved guarding people's cargo would be covered without question.

It also gave us plausible deniability in certain instances so we could keep the club's nose clean. If we don't know what fuckers are shipping in their containers we can't be responsible. We were just hired to keep them safe from highway robbers. I chuckled at the thought. It was ridiculous, but it had worked in our favor a time or two. Now, having those credentials worked in my favor for personal reasons. The school never questioned the fact that there needed to be a bodyguard in class with my woman once they saw I was legit.

Nova was seated three rows up. No one sat on either side of her. There weren't a whole lot of people in the class. I had imagined it packed to the fucking gills for some reason. There were clusters of people who sat together and a few other loners like Nova, but she was one of the few who was seated by herself in that section. That was until some douchebag sat down next to her.

She smiled at him and moved her stuff further over toward the other side, as if he might try to steal her shit. I grinned at the thought. My woman looked like she was fresh from prison, eating in public for the first time, tucked around her food like it might not be there two seconds from now. It killed to know that her own family had done that to her. They made her believe that someone could come along and take everything

from you in the blink of an eye whether they were entitled to it or not.

I wanted to show Nova that she was strong enough to stop them, strong enough to take it all back and then some. She was. When I first became infatuated with her, I never would have thought that, but the way I watched her stand up to me - fuck to my whole club - I knew she had started to realize there were some things you were never meant to allow people to take from you. She was determined to regain dignity - something I didn't think she'd ever lost. If anyone needed to reclaim that shit - it was me. I'd fucked up in the shittiest way and could have cost that girl her life as a result. Some of my brothers still couldn't look me in the eye.

Nova's laughter captivated me. Her head tipped back, and she looked so much younger and far more carefree in that moment than I'd ever seen her. Maybe being here was the wrong way to go about things. Not for the first time, I found myself wondering if she would be better off without me in her life. The answer was no. If for no other reason than there was still a threat to her life. I didn't deserve her, her forgiveness, or another chance, but I was stubborn enough to take whatever she was willing to give anyway.

The dick sitting two seats behind me dropped his book on the floor and caused Nova to glance back. Her eyes immediately found mine and locked there. Her brows pulled in toward the bridge of her nose and she cocked her head to the side as if to question why I was there, but before she could seek answers, the professor finally arrived and called everyone's attention to her. My eyes scanned to the front briefly to assess the woman.

She seemed like a bitch, which was probably why she was stuck teaching adults how to teach children. The only threat she posed was whether she would bore me to death or simply annoy the shit out of me with her droning voice.

My gaze shifted back to Nova and her pencil fell from her fingers almost as if she could feel my attention focused solely on her. Good. I didn't want to upset her but knowing that she still got flustered around me was a good sign. It meant there was hope - even if it was only a sliver.

I watched as she participated in class and otherwise pretended that I didn't exist. When class was done, the cock-weasel that sat down beside her tried to hit on her and Nova stared at him like he was speaking another language. Then, she pointed to me and shook her head. I would have wondered what that was about but when the dick bothered to glance over at me he paled and took off without saying another word to her. I smirked, figuring she'd used me as the reason to turn him down.

Even after using me like that - not that I minded since it meant she was turning the punk down - Nova still walked by me without a word. That was fine. She deserved her little moments of rebellion. Still, I followed behind until we were outside and there was enough room to move up beside her.

“Brought you lunch.”

“I'm too busy to eat it.”

“Like fuck. I've seen you wasting away from starving yourself for school before and that shit ain't ever happening again. Not on my fucking watch,” I argued.

“It’s not your watch anymore. Remember when you couldn’t wait to ship me back to Kip’s house so you could fuck other people? That officially ended your watch.”

She picked up her pace which was just silly, since I could outpace her without even trying. “Maybe so, but I’m here. Nowhere else, Nova. I’m right here.”

Her feet stopped moving and it took me two more steps to realize before I turned around to face her. “For how long?”

“For as long as you’ll have me.”

She shook her head, obviously not believing me. “And just how much of you is *here*?” The hurt in her eyes was painful to see as she waited for me to answer.

“All of me, Nova. I promise you all of me this time. Whatever you can handle, and if you can’t handle something, then we’ll work on alternatives until we find what works for both of us.”

“Why couldn’t you do that before?”

“I didn’t think there were alternatives before. I thought it was all or nothing with you.”

“Well, then it was always doomed to fail because you never gave me the “all” part.”

“You’re right,” I agreed. She shoved the short pieces of her hair that had escaped her ponytail back behind her ears as I watched and waited. She was still so fucking beautiful and full of life despite all the shit life had handed her. Despite what I’d given her - a fucked-up, half-assed attempt at a juvenile relationship. “You were my first real try at a relationship,” I reminded her.

She rolled her eyes and shook her head at the same time. “You were my first everything, but at least I tried and made you my *only* concern.”

“I’m not saying you’re wrong or that it excuses my behavior. I’m just saying that I didn’t realize we could have the more that you wanted. I thought it would...”

“You thought it would, what?”

“I don’t know, change me maybe, and not for the better.”

“I’m young, and maybe a little naive, but at least I know that a good relationship is meant to change you a bit. It’s meant to mold you into the best person you can be for your partner while still maintaining your sense of self.”

I nodded my head absently because my smart woman was right. That’s exactly what should have happened. “Know that now, beautiful.”

“What are you hoping to get out of this little charade?”

“It’s not a charade. Swear to fuck, Nova. When I thought you were missing, it was like everything clicked and it felt too late. It’s probably still too late, but I want you to know that I want to give us a real shot this time.”

“You told me you were going to give us a shot last time too and it didn’t exactly work out.”

“No, I told you I’d try and I fucking didn’t even do that much. I’m man enough to admit that. I fucked it all up before we even got started and that was down to selfishness and the inability to see what I had in front of me. I saw you, but I put you on a different playing field and that wasn’t fair to either of us.”

“No, it wasn’t.”

“Will you please eat with me, so I know that you got at least one meal today?”

“Is that what you’re hiding in that poser backpack?” She asked with the cutest little smirk painted on her face.

“Fucking poser backpack,” I mumbled as I pulled the thing off my shoulder. “Yeah, it is,” I admitted after moving us off the beaten path a bit, so I could spread the thin blanket out on the ground. Then I pulled out the collapsible cooler that had everything packed away in it and the thermos that had a smoothie made just for her. “Thought maybe we could talk while you eat, but if you want me to just shut the fuck up, I will. As long as you’re eating something.”

“I’m not anorexic or anything,” she huffed.

“I know, but I still remember how you looked when we first met and before we pulled you out of that fucking house. Never want to see you looking that thin again. It’s unnecessary. You look good all the time, but better when you’re healthy.”

She chuckled. “That compliment was hard to work out for you wasn’t it?”

“Fucking women, always take things the wrong way when it concerns their bodies or weight.”

“You’re not wrong about that.” The light humor in her tone was so fucking welcome. It was the first real glimpse of something other than rage or sadness in her eyes when she looked at me and I was going to savor it and lock the memory away for later when I couldn’t have her lying in bed with me. I was a fucking moron. She had been there before, and I

stupidly gave that up because I was the idiot who didn't at least attempt to give her my all and see if she could handle it.

"You're thinking awfully hard over there," she said before chomping down on a carrot stick.

"Thinking about you."

She was quiet for a minute as she thought about something and then she tipped her head and sighed, unable to look at me for some reason. "I knew it was over before you ever cheated on me."

I nodded my head. "Because I packed you up and sent you back to Kip's place."

"No, before that."

"What do you mean?"

It was her turn to nod. "The first time I got into your shower, it clicked that I wasn't meant to be permanent."

"How so?"

"I never said a word and just waited for you to clue in. That was probably my fault, but then when you packed my things up and even brought my shampoo bottle out and put it with my stuff, I knew. That was the moment I knew that the club whores, and what they could give you that you felt you couldn't get from me, would always be more important to you than I was."

"What are you talking about?"

"I bet if we went back to the clubhouse right now, and looked in your shower, we would see your Old Spice three-in-one." I grinned at her because that was true enough, but it

didn't explain where she was going with that shit. Did she not like the smell of it? Fuck me. That couldn't be it because she had used it on herself more than a few times.

“We would also see a bottle of apricot scented body scrub, a minty shampoo, and I think strawberry and vanilla were in there as well. I'm having a hard time picturing what they were now.”

I swallowed thickly, imagining all the bottles of shit that had collected in my shower, left behind by club girls at one time or other. I didn't think about them, they were just there, window dressing at best. Options for whoever shared my shower next. And then it hit me.

“You thought I should have thrown it all out the minute we became a couple.”

“At the very least, before you invited me to shower in there after we became a couple,” she agreed. “But you never did. I lived there in that suite with you for a little over a month and the only thing that changed was my shampoo was added into the mix when Kip brought it from his house. Before that, I had to use yours because like hell was I going to use one of the club girl's scents and have her know exactly why I smelled the same way when I walked out into the common room.”

“Shit,” I groaned, finally understanding why it would bother her so damn much.

“That wasn't the worst part.” We stared at one another for a few minutes before she finally relented. I guess she was waiting for me to put it together on my own, but I didn't know how I could have possibly thrown everything in her face any

worse than that, now that she'd explained it to me. Besides the obvious day when she caught me with someone else.

“The worst part was when you brought my shampoo out and put it on my backpack for me to take back to Kip's house.” She had said that before, but it was only now dawning on me why that had been important. I felt sick because my intentions hadn't been to single her shit out. I'd made sure to grab it because she was always squirreling her money away and I didn't want her to have to go buy new shit when she didn't need it.

“You left all of their things in your shower the whole damn time I was with you, and even after you kicked me out, it's all still there.” I was about to argue that point, but she was right. I had effectively kicked her out and we both knew why. I was a selfish bastard. “You made damn sure to yank mine out of that shower though while their things got to stay. That's when I knew it was over between us. That's when it really sank in that I could never compete with those women because they were more important to you.”

“That's not true at all.”

“I wasn't important to you,” she reiterated, “and you proved that to me just four days later.”

“Nova, I packed your stuff up because I knew you would need it and wouldn't want to spend the extra money to buy new, not because leaving their stuff and getting rid of yours was more important. I couldn't even tell you who that shit belonged to or how long it's been there. It's possible whoever left it there doesn't even work at the club anymore. I don't even know.” I huffed out a sigh and tried to keep my temper

from flaring because while she had the right to feel the way she did about those things still hanging around my bathroom, she was wrong about why they were there.

“I don’t care whose shit is in there. It never occurred to me to remove them because they weren’t important. The fact that I removed yours was simply because you were going back to Kip’s, and I didn’t want you to do without. Swear to God, that shit doesn’t mean fuck all to me. It certainly doesn’t elevate anyone in importance over you. That shit was all in your head just like needing something I didn’t think I could get from you was all in mine. That was our fucking problem all along. We didn’t talk about the things that we were building up that should have never been given headspace to begin with.”

“Why don’t we pull our heads out of the past and live in the moment then?”

It was the best suggestion I’d heard in a really long time. “Yeah, that sounds just about right.” She grinned and then we both got down to demolishing the lunch I’d packed for us. When I got back to the clubhouse, I had some cleaning up to do. There was no way she would ever find someone else’s shit mixed in with mine again. Not unless it belonged to her.

Over the next few days, I continued to go to class with Nova, only she sat beside me instead of wherever she used to sit. A couple times, she even let me hold onto her hand or put my hand on her thigh while she took notes for class. If I could make a living just being by her side, I would never leave.

We ate lunch together, most days outside. Once, was in the student union when it rained, but I ended up having to put some uppity bitch in her place when she tried to hit on me in

front of Nova. I thought it would freak my girl out, but she smiled and kept eating her lunch as if nothing happened.

Later that night, after I pulled back in at the clubhouse, I got the shock of my life when Nova pulled in behind me and jumped out of her car to meet me.

“What’s going on?”

“Living in the moment,” she muttered before she pulled me down and slammed her lips to mine. I didn’t even think about what we were doing when I picked her up and she wrapped her legs around my waist.

I carried her into the clubhouse and back to my room without registering if we passed anyone else along the way. There was no one. Only Nova and me. Her lips trailed sweet kisses down my neck as I walked into my room and shut the door behind me.

“I hate to look a gift horse in the fucking mouth, but why?”

She smiled kind of sheepishly at me and shrugged her shoulders while I still held her. “You telling that girl off at school today was really hot and I thought you deserved a reward.”

I fucking laughed. “I never even came close to having you figured out before, did I?”

“Nope.”

“Then I guess we better get started with my education.”

“Yeah, I think that would be...” I shut her up before she could finish by shoving my tongue in her mouth. Her eyes widened in surprise and then she fucking melted into me and

ran dragged her nails across my scalp, directing me to keep going. I fucking listened.

“I need something from you if we’re going to do this again,” she told me as our lips parted.

It was weird to hear Nova making her demands clear, but after everything I’d put her through, I’d give her this. “Whatever you need.”

“I want to be the one in control tonight. That means you do as I say and allow me to do whatever I want with you. If you need to stop, for any reason, you give me a word.”

I grinned at her innocent suggestion. “A safe word?” I asked.

She bobbed her head up and down enthusiastically. “What’s your word going to be?”

“I’m fucked.”

“No, I’m being serious. You need to give me your safety word or whatever.”

“Yeah, that was it.”

“I’m fucked?” She asked and the way she cocked her head to the side in question made me want to throw her on the bed and show her just what that phrase meant to me.

“I’m fucked,” I repeated instead. “Because if I have to use a safe word with you, I am well and truly fucked.”

She laughed at my answer, but I was being completely serious. “You’re probably right,” she agreed. “Fine. So, I’m in control and you don’t touch unless I tell you it’s okay.”

“I’ll try my best,” I offered as she slid down my body until her feet touched the floor.

“If you touch me without permission, I will leave.”

Panic flared inside my chest, increasing the beat of my heart, and worse, it made me want to beg for her forgiveness all over again. “I swear to you, I will never do anything that will make you want to leave me again. That includes tonight.”

“Fine.” Her one-word answer was whispered, as if she didn’t believe me. “One more thing,” she looked me right in the eyes, as if to express how important this part was, “you can’t talk, except to use your safe word, unless I give permission.”

I nodded my agreement. The woman of my dreams was giving me a second chance after the hell I’d put her through, and there was no way in hell I was going to let myself fuck it all up.

Nova stared at me for a moment before turning her back so that she faced a wall. “Strip.” It was a singular demand and even more disturbing because she didn’t want to watch me do it. For some reason, I felt sick to my stomach. Then, she moved to the en-suite, and I heard the shower start while I stripped out of every stitch of clothing I had on. I was left wondering if I should follow her or stay put.

Shit, was this the kind of anxiety I put women through when they waited on me to tell them what to do next? Did they always worry that maybe they were doing the wrong thing? I didn’t like this at all, but they always seemed to enjoy it. For Nova, I would have to hang in there and see where the night took us.

After what seemed like hours of indecision and worry, but was really only a few minutes, Nova called from the bathroom.

“Come in here, get straight into the shower, step under the water, and make sure you are wet everywhere.”

Holy shit! Why was that so fucking hot? Maybe bossy Nova wouldn't be a bad thing after all. I didn't waste any time thinking about it and followed her directions to the letter. She stepped in behind me, once she knew that I was soaked from head to toe.

“I'm going to scrub you clean and you're just going to stand there while I do it. No touching. No talking. If you don't think you can handle it, lean forward and put your hands on the wall, that will give you something to hold on to.”

Jesus. Where was my timid little Nova?

I still didn't know everything that happened to her while she was on the run, and we thought she might be held captive somewhere. Most of the time she'd been gone, she was in the care of Jeremy Williamson, and as much as I didn't like the prick for abandoning her to begin with, he had come back to rescue his little girl when he thought she was in trouble.

“We should do your hair first. You need to get down on your knees facing away from me.” I did as she asked and felt when her feet straddled my lower legs. “You're still too tall, bring your ass all the way down to sit on your calves.” I followed her directions to the letter without saying a word.

Nova's fingers sifted through my shorn hair before she trailed her nails across my scalp sending goosebumps to flood

my system. Damn that felt amazing. Then she turned to grab my Old Spice and stopped with a little puff of surprise. I assumed she only just now noticed that it was the only bottle in my shower anymore. The minute she'd talked to me about how seeing the other shit made her feel, I came straight back home and cleared it all away.

I might have been a selfish asshole, but I was one who could learn from my mistakes, especially the one that seemed to make my girl feel even worse than the fact that she'd seen me having sex with someone else.

My semi turned into a full-fledged hard-on as she slathered some of my shampoo into her hands and then began working it into my hair while massaging my scalp at the same time. There was no helping the inadvertent groan of pure satisfaction that I made.

Her fingers hesitated at the sound, and I worried she'd count that as me saying something, but then she went right back to work before pulling the shower sprayer down.

“Tip your head back.”

I did. My reward was in how the warmth of the water felt as it washed all the suds away. It was in how her fingers still tracked through my short hairs to my scalp, making sure that all the soap ran down into the drain. My eyes were closed through the whole process as she finished and put the sprayer back up on its holder.

“Stay where you are for now while I do the rest. I'll tell you when it's time for you to stand.”

I offered a small nod of my head, but stayed true to my word that I wouldn't move. Having her taking care of me trumped the uncomfortable feeling of having my knees crammed into the shower tiles any day. I'd kneel like this on a bed of nails if she told me to. That was how grateful I was to have her back, to have her attention focused on me instead of running.

She soaped up a cloth and gently washed my face. It was a completely unreal experience. I'd had bitches try to wash my dick and balls before, but never my hair or face. She took her time to make sure she got every inch, then she started on my ears, and down to my neck.

As Nova finished one area, she'd rinse it clean and then silently move on to the next. After she finished with my shoulders, she stepped back.

"You can stand now." I followed her instructions, thankful to be off my fucking knees while simultaneously missing her closeness.

Nova stepped in close again and began washing my back. Once she was done, she had me turn in place so she could wash my front. She took her time scrubbing my torso quite a bit more vigorously than the gentle approach she'd taken with my face. She scrubbed each of my arms, all the way down to my hands and then took special care to scrub each fucking finger and it made me feel like I'd never gotten myself clean before because her attention to detail was nearly overwhelming.

"Do you know why we're doing this?" She asked but never removed her eyes from where she scrubbed my left hand.

I didn't answer verbally, just shook my head, but she could see the movement even as her eyes avoided looking up.

"I'm scrubbing you clean before we go any further." My gut clenched tight at her proclamation. "I'm making sure that every inch of your body is cleansed from the whores you preferred to fuck over me."

If I could have ripped my own fucking heart out in that moment, I would have.

"I'm washing away their stink. I'm washing away all the places they touched. Kissed. Sucked. Licked. Every single place their bodies have touched yours, and you have used to touch them. I'm scrubbing it all away."

You would think those words coming from her beautiful mouth would have made me hard or kept me that way. They didn't. My dick deflated with each one she uttered because as she spoke it was becoming clear the damage I'd done to this sweet, beautiful woman. She had only ever asked one thing of me, that I be hers alone. She hadn't asked for my patch, like nearly every other woman in the club had.

Nova had never asked for my money, though she desperately needed it. She'd never asked for me to put her on the back of my bike. She'd curiously asked why I wasn't doing it, but never demanded that I change my mind. She had asked one simple thing of me. To give back what she was giving. Loyalty. Fidelity. Trust. And I'd fucked it all to hell in the most literal sense.

I didn't trust her to be able to handle me even after she gave me her faith that I would be able to handle her and her one desire.

“Turn,” Nova demanded, and I complied.

She scrubbed my ass, but I didn't feel her hands there in a sensual way anymore. I felt my own fucking shame. I felt her hurt in every stroke of the soapy rag she used to clean my body of the betrayals it had made against her.

“Do you know what hurt the most?”

I was barely able to make my head move back and forth as it hung from my shoulders like the damn thing weighed too much to possibly hold upright any longer.

“My sexual fantasies have been harder, dirtier, sexier...” There was a pause in what she was saying even as her hands continued to bathe me without hesitation. She worked them down my thighs, but my body had gone numb to her beautiful touch. I didn't deserve to feel it and this - her scrubbing me - wasn't meant to bring me pleasure. It was meant to close a chapter in my life and open a new one. I got that.

“I've always wanted a man who would tell me what to do, toss me on the bed, chain me down, spank my ass, and fuck me like he couldn't imagine being anywhere else or doing that with anyone other than me.”

She got to my foot, from behind, and instead of picking it up to scrub it clean too, she simply said, “Turn.”

I did so, making my front face forward again as the water sprayed down my back and washed some of the soap away. She was the one on her knees before me now, but she was still very much in charge of everything that happened. I wanted so much to pull her up from that position and wrap my arms around her. I wanted to cocoon her in my body and whisper

promises that it would never happen again. That I understood now.

Instead, I drove my fists into the wall behind her and waited while she scrubbed my cock, then soaped up my balls. She spent a lot more time there than she had on the rest of my body, with exception of my fingers. I knew what she was doing. Those were the parts of my body I'd used the most on other women.

I swallowed down the bile that tried to rise up my throat as this beautiful siren kneeled before me, soaking wet, and cleansing us both of the bullshit mess that I'd made of everything.

"I wanted someone to be rough with me, to make my body sing in ways I'd only imagined." She paused, her words and the scrubbing as she sat eye-level with my dick. The sad little pout on her lips was almost too much to bear. For once, I didn't think about shoving my cock in between a set of lips that were so close. Instead, I thought about how I didn't deserve the privilege until she spoke again.

"You gave me soft, slow, and awkward. You left me there afterward for me to find you hugging and kissing on some other woman - no matter how innocent that supposedly was. You were far more loving, free, and real with her than you'd been while taking my virginity."

Fucking Hell.

"And then, when I walked in on you with..." she choked back a sob, but I could see her shoulders shake and the water running down her face wasn't from her hair any longer. It

came directly from her eyes as she started to scrub down the front of my legs.

“You were giving them a different part of you, one that I craved before I even knew you. You gave them toys, your demands, and just... You gave them the part of yourself that I wasn’t allowed to have, but that I desperately craved. They all got more of you than I ever did, yet you claimed that I was special to you.” She scrubbed the tops of my feet damn near raw.

“Turn.”

It took everything in me to give her my back at that point. “Lift,” she demanded as she tapped my right ankle. Once I lifted my foot, she scrubbed the soles of my feet, a bit gentler than she’d worked the tops over.

“They had access to you that I never did, even after you promised to try to give me what I needed.” She laughed as she stood. “You never really tried to give me what I needed though, did you?”

I didn’t bother to answer. She didn’t want my words because they were meaningless to her. That’s what all of this had been about. Yes, she took me in the shower to get me clean, but there was a lesson in it, too. She didn’t trust me. My word wasn’t worth the paper she wiped her ass with. We weren’t starting over from scratch. We were - maybe - staring from some negative hole I had to crawl myself out of.

I didn’t blame her.

If the roles were reversed, I never would have even given her the option to climb back out of that hole and we both knew

it. “You don’t get to be in charge anymore. You don’t get to make me promises because they’re meaningless words. You don’t get to touch me unless I give my permission.”

I nodded my head in agreement. Fair enough, really. If Nova needed to feel like she was in charge of our relationship until I could earn the right to be, then so be it. That’s what we’d do.

The shit I would take from my club brothers about it, if they knew, didn’t even factor into the decision. Most of them would understand that I earned the penance and needed to pay. They’d probably tell her it wasn’t enough. Everyone loved my woman. I’d be angry about that, too, but it proved useful when they were willing to go into battle to get her back. The craziest part of that was they hadn’t done it for me. They’d done it for her. Every member of my fucking club had gone out and searched for her tirelessly.

“Maybe we just had bad timing. You weren’t ready for me. I definitely wasn’t ready for you,” she admitted. “So, you’re clean now. If you stay that way, I’ll be here by your side trying to figure things out.”

“Step back,” Nova ordered again. The water washed over me, and any remaining suds quickly found their way down the drain. Somewhere with it went my pride and all the bullshit that made me act like a fucking prick. My ego and stupidity circled the drain right along with it.

“Now, you get to return the favor. You will scrub my body clean, too. You’re going to wash away every expectation I had, every desire, every dream that didn’t come true. You’re going to wash away all the heartache of having to see you touch

other women in ways you didn't dare touch me. The ways I watched, wishing it was my body your fingers dug into, my ass that you slapped, my pussy that you assaulted so vigorously. You're going to make me forget ever wishing for what you gave to other women and denied me."

FUCK. MY. LIFE.

I knew she could see the tears I had no hope in hell of hiding from her. I didn't bother ducking my head into the shower's stream to rinse them away. I gave them to her because she deserved to see that her words made an impact. She needed to feel my remorse. My words meant nothing. That's why she wouldn't allow me to speak them. My actions were what she was waiting for.

I slid her around my body so that she stood beneath the water. When she tipped her head back, exposing the smooth length of her neck, I wanted nothing more than to run my fingers down it and trail them with hot kisses. I needed to taste her pristine skin on my tongue, but I wasn't given permission to touch. She allowed my assistance in swapping places with her simply because it was slippery and I was caring for her well-being, not because I suddenly had blanket permission to her body.

I soaped up my hands with my shampoo, because it was all that was available in my shower now. I wondered for a moment, if she hadn't mentioned the other bottles and who they most likely belonged to, would I have been stupid enough to use another woman's shit on her? It was a good thing I cleaned them out because I might have been stupid enough, clueless enough to fail a test that would cost me my woman.

In that moment, a sort of clarity came over me while I scrubbed the soap down the length of Nova's blonde locks. I understood how it must have looked to her, how heartbreaking it must have been to have to see those things in my shower every time she stepped in here. Then, to know that I gave hers back and left there's. Yep, I was a dumbass and would probably spend the rest of my days paying for it. I'd do it gladly if it meant she was in my arms every night.

I took my time, massaging the scent I wore into her scalp, down the length of her hair, and repeated it from scalp to tip until I thought I had the feel of her hair memorized. Until I had my fingers trained that they were the only strands they'd ever touch again. I couldn't tell Nova that. She didn't want my words anyway, so I showed her through my reverence.

Even when I was being gentle with Nova when we made love, I don't think I ever worshiped her body the way I did in that shower. There wasn't a single moment when I took advantage of having her naked warmth under my fingertips. I cleaned her body in much the same way she had done for me.

While I did it, I memorized every single freckle, the way her flesh rose with goosebumps when something felt pleasurable, the way she swayed when her eyes closed, and she attempted to block out the feelings that lingered around the edges of my worship.

I didn't get near enough time to spend on learning her shapes and curves. It was over before it began, in the blink of an eye, despite the fact that we'd been in the shower long enough to run out all the hot water. Time was both my friend

and enemy. The one thing it wouldn't do for me was rewind, so I could fix my mistakes before I made them.

My eyes never left her as she dried herself off with the far-too utilitarian towel she had to use. I made a note to get some of those soft, plush, bath towels that seemed almost as big as a small blanket. She deserved the best. The too-thin, well-worn towel she used wasn't good enough to brush against her skin. Neither was I. Damn if I didn't want to make myself good enough for her though.

"Come to the bedroom," Nova ordered. I obeyed, leaving our towels hung over the shower curtain rod.

Nova stood there, staring at my bed like it personally offended her, and I suppose it did. More to the point that I'd offended her by all the women I'd had there. Fuck me. I couldn't magically replace the bed, so I stood there and waited to see what she would do next. Her eyes darted to the chair in the corner, and I could see the question there, of whether the chair was tainted too.

She must have realized that it probably was. Her knees buckled and she dropped to the floor in the middle of the room, and I stood there watching as her shoulders shook with the emotion she couldn't lock away, no matter how desperately she wished she could.

I wanted to go to her, call her name, tell her it would all be okay, promise her the world and wrap her up in my arms. It killed me to let her cry while she was on her knees on my dirty fucking carpet. I wanted to take her back into the shower and wash the filth of my room off her beautiful skin again.

I couldn't do any of those things because I told her that I wouldn't speak or touch her unless she asked me to. It was the hardest fucking thing I've done in my entire life. I never wanted to go through it again. She nearly broke me as I watched her break.

I did that.

I caused her to fall apart, and my touch, my words, none of it would bring her comfort and that killed me. It fucking gutted me.

Her sniffles indicated the end of her breakdown. I still couldn't see her face because she hid it behind the curtain of her wet, tangled tresses. I could only catch glimpses of her tear-stained cheeks and swollen eyes. The blotchy red marks on her cheeks peeked between the wet strands of hair a few times before she got back up to her feet. Slowly, so fucking slowly that my heart stayed lodged somewhere in my throat, she turned to face me.

"I thought I could do this," she admitted quietly before her eyes darted around the room again. "I don't think I can. I don't think I can be here where you've been with all of them. I look at your bed, where you took my virginity, and I hate it. I don't want to remember the way you were with me or be stuck imagining the different ways you were with them in here. It all feels so wrong."

I put everything I was feeling into my eyes as they pleaded with her to please, let me come to her, speak to her, or just take her away from here. She shook her head, as if to deny me. Then she offered me a simple, tiny little smile.

“We should get dressed. You need to take me somewhere else.”

I nodded and reached into my dresser to pull a shirt out that I handed to her. I worried that she wouldn't take it, wouldn't want to wear something of mine. She took it and pulled it close to her face, sniffing the damn thing. I closed my eyes and tried desperately to imprint that sight on my brain. It was one I never wanted to forget because that one simple gesture from her spoke volumes about how much she had missed me, even if she didn't realize it.

I grabbed a pair of sweatpants and a t-shirt for myself as she pulled her jeans back on her body. My shirt swallowed her up in the best way. It made me want to pull her into my arms once more, but I couldn't do that. We were still under her orders. She'd tell me when she wanted my touch, and until then, I wasn't to give it.

Once we were dressed, I followed her out of my room, through the clubhouse, and marveled at the fact that everything stopped as we passed through the common areas. Everyone stared, but no one spoke. It was as if Nova had all of us under her spell. Truthfully, she probably did. I didn't make eye contact with anyone as we walked through. My eyes stayed trained on the woman in front of me - the only person who mattered.

When we got to the parking lot, her shoulders slumped before she marched over to her car that was parked closer to the garage.

I didn't follow her and instead moved to the end of the line of motorcycles where I'd parked my Fatboy earlier. The paint

job on it rolled from an ice blue in the front of the tank and darkened the further back it went. At some point, the color shifted seamlessly to a green hue and lightened again, to an icy mint green, by the time it reached the tip of my fender.

I had Kip add a pillion seat to it when my woman was missing. I couldn't put her on the back of a bike I'd denied her riding before, so I pulled this one out of my garage, painted it to match our eyes, and added the seat with the back on it. She would be comfortable like that and wouldn't have to worry about falling off if she couldn't stomach touching me to hang on.

I hopped on, started her up, and backed her out of the spot. All the while, Nova stood there by the driver's side door of her car with a grim look on her face. I think she thought I was leaving her, that maybe her confessional in the shower, or her breakdown in my room afterward, had been too much for me to handle. It had, but not in the way she thought.

I walked my bike back and then slowly made my way to her. Without saying a word, I patted the back to indicate where I needed her to sit. It was an offer I had to make without words. She understood, and immediately came over to throw her leg up and over to straddle the seat behind me. There was plenty of room that she wouldn't have to touch me if she didn't want to. Nova surprised me by sliding as far forward as my body allowed. She plastered herself to my back and wrapped her arms around my waist. I silently thanked God for small favors and had to stop myself from patting her hands that rested on my abdomen.

No touching.

I drove us around the lot and back over to the gate where our most recent prospect had opened up for us. I'm not sure when they all came outside, but my brothers had all hopped on their bikes, too. Maybe they knew intuitively that she needed to feel like a part of the club as much as she needed to know that I was hers. They needed to be hers, too.

She needed to know that these men, and the one woman, who I called my brothers would have her back. Even if that meant their allegiance to her became priority above the one they had to me, I would make it clear that they were to honor that. If I fucked up, they should tell her. She needed to be able to trust someone. If it couldn't be me right away, then I wanted her to have them.

We rode out with Nova and me leading the way. Normally, that would have been unheard of since our President should have been out in the front. They were making an exception - for her.

The respect I had for my brothers grew that day and I understood a little about what our VP was always trying to tell us. *'There's no power greater than the love of a good woman until you feel the satisfaction it brings you to know that you loved her back even better. You'll understand one day.'*

It was what he always told the brothers who asked how he made it work with his woman for so long, especially when he didn't just refuse the club whores, but put them in their place anytime they took it upon themselves to try to encroach on his personal space. They never got past the imaginary buffer he set up for them.

They were lessons I never thought I needed to learn because I never imagined myself taking a woman in a serious way. Now, I understood and wished to fuck I had heeded his example in time to keep my woman from feeling the shit I'd put her through.

I was a fucking idiot.

I was a fucking idiot who would do anything to earn my place back at her side though.

We rode through town until we hit the highway and then we kept running south until someone signaled they needed to stop for gas. When we all pulled in, Nova held onto my shoulders while she dismounted the bike and then she stood back and waited for me to join her. Once we were both off the motorcycle, I finally allowed myself to look at her, and she was fucking glowing with happiness. That ride was exactly what she'd needed.

Nova pulled me close, though I still refused to touch her, despite wanting to grab hold of her hips and yank her even closer until her body was plastered to my front. My brothers probably thought I was being an idiot, that I should have been all over her right now, but she hadn't given me permission yet and I was not going to overstep her bounds no matter how much I wanted to.

“That’s the first time I felt like I was a priority in your life, like you gave me something that was mine alone, and something you still wanted, too.”

Well, fuck me twice. That both stung and pleased me all at once. I pleaded with my eyes again that she lift the ban on me speaking or touching her.

“You can talk to me,” she whispered while her eyes were cast down toward my booted feet. She hadn’t given me permission to touch, but I’d take the little leniency she offered.

“You are the only one, besides my mother. You will forever be the only one to ride behind me. I’m glad you enjoyed it, sweetness, because I fucking loved having you there with your arms wrapped around me.”

She pointed over her shoulder. “I’m gonna go get a drink while you pump gas.” She spun and was off before I could get a word in edgewise.

“I’ll go with her,” one of the prospects called out. He took off before I could say a word. Someone gas up the prospect’s bike, it’s on me today,” I called out.

“Did you two sort your shit? We couldn’t tell when you walked through the clubhouse.” Kip stared off at the store as he asked.

“Not yet, but I think we’re working on it. I need someone to swap me rooms at the clubhouse, man. She broke the fuck down when she looked around and couldn’t even find a single spot to sit that she didn’t think was tainted by my bullshit.”

Kip nodded knowingly. “I’ll swap with you for now, but you need to talk to Tripp. He’s been ruminating over making the upstairs suites priority for brothers who want to bring their old ladies around to the club. He wants it to remain off limits for the club girls and single guys still, but after that last lockdown it was painfully obvious we need the separation more than the club needs to have space for visitors. It’s not like those fuckers have a special place for us when we drop in on them.”

“That’s true. If that’s the case, I think it would make Nova feel a lot better about coming by the clubhouse, especially since there’s a separate lounge upstairs.”

Kip nodded again and walked off because Nova was headed back in my direction. “You enjoy the ride, sweetness?”

She grinned at me while tugging on her tangled locks. “I did, but I don’t think my hair likes me very much. It’s not quite the same as using a blow dryer.”

“No, it’s not,” I chuckled along with her, thanking whatever miracle happened that she was standing there with me and smiling.

She pulled a package apart and slipped one of those chunky scrunchie things women wore in their hair around her wrist before tucking the other one in her back pocket. Then she took the time to pull her hair up into a bun on top of her head.

“Now, I’m ready for the ride back.”

I didn’t know if it was the right time, but I wanted to reassure her anyway. “Kip is swapping rooms with me at the clubhouse for now, but I think Tripp might open up the top floor rooms for couples sometime soon. If that happens, and when you’re ready to accept my claim on you, I’ll move up there so you will have a space to come to that’s free of all the bullshit downstairs.”

She knew what I meant, but I didn’t think including the club girls in our conversation right now would be wise or welcome, even if it was to say we wouldn’t be around them as much. Nova nodded and waited for me to hop on my Fatboy before she joined me. When she squeezed her arms around me and

rested her face on my back, I closed my eyes and soaked it all in for just a minute before I hauled ass back to the clubhouse and a better future with my sweetness.



Chapter 43

Nova

I held onto Knoxville's hands as he attempted to pull up and walk. His grin was infectious and helped stave off the anxiety I felt from being around the club in this type of setting so soon after my return.

It was a huge family cookout, so the whores weren't out and about as they normally were. Still, it felt uncomfortable being there, especially since Breakneck was in hot pursuit of me every day at school still. Today was the first time I'd been back to the clubhouse since the day we took that ride. I'd been working for Kip again and watching my nephew when I didn't have classes. Vivian was watching him while I went to school because most days, Ashlynn didn't even bother going home. I wasn't sure how much more shit Kip was going to put up with where she was concerned, but it felt like he was at the very end of a lengthy rope.

My discomfort with being around the club wasn't even about them knowing that Breakneck cheated on me before. It was about the fact that when I came here looking for my father, I'd made a mess of things by yelling at him about what a lousy lover he'd been to me. I had said all of it in front of everyone. To Breakneck's credit, he never said one ill word toward me for doing that, which I appreciated, and wondered

about. I would have thought he'd be angry over my outburst, but he had not lashed out then or since.

Then again, he had a lot on his mind these past few weeks. He had come clean to me in that letter about how Davina's daughter might have been his and that it made him see things a lot clearer. There was something else going on with him, too. He had to leave a couple times in the middle of the classes he was auditing to try to get my attention. When I asked about it, he said that he was working with some investigators to help Kip with his Ash problem, but that he couldn't tell me anything else yet.

"Mama," Knoxville called out. I glanced up to see Ashlynn storming over to Kip in the middle of the cookout the club was holding to help raise money for Davina and Tripp's daughter, Coral. I pulled Knoxville up in my arms and held him close to me, anticipating another ugly scene with his mom. I wondered how many times she would call me a whore in front of everyone, like she had done so many times at her house since I'd been working there.

"You never even said a fucking word!" Ashlynn screamed at Kip even though he was standing directly in front of her by then.

"Because I didn't need to," Kip yelled back at her, obviously knowing what she was talking about. From the scathing look that Ash threw Davina's way, it became obvious what she was going off about. Poor Davina looked like she wanted to disappear, since she was standing in the circle of Kip's family and closest club brothers. They were keeping her close while Tripp was at the hospital visiting his daughter.

“Yes, you did! I had a right to know that you fucked some stupid whore, and she could have been pregnant at the same time I was.”

“That woman is my sister’s mother, and you’re going to watch how you talk about other people, Ashlynn.” Star growled the words out and there was no mistaking how angry she was with her brother’s wife.

Ashlynn laughed in her face and instead of making her beautiful, the ugliness of the sentiment pinched her features and turned her into something else entirely. “I’m just calling her what she is!” She finally managed to get out through the vile, distorted version of laughter.

“Nah, see, just like you, she moved on from that life. Now, she’s a mom and a paralegal,” Star countered.

“Once a whore, always a whore!” Ashlynn shouted, but that time she did it while staring Davina in the face, as if her words were a weapon and she was on the attack. That was exactly what it was. For once, I wished she had aimed it at me, because Davina had too much going on to have to deal with Ashlynn’s brand of vitriol on top of it.

I held Knoxville closer and turned his face away from his family as he whimpered into my shoulder. There was nowhere to go to get away from the scene his mother was causing because they were in the direct path to the clubhouse door.

It was odd that I hadn’t even realized Breakneck had been standing there among them until he started to speak.

“Funny you should mention that. Had someone following you for a few months now.”

Ashlynn's narrowed gaze swept from Davina to Breakneck, which was probably why he had spoken up, to help take the heat off his club president's baby momma. Something happened when she focused solely on Breakneck and the words he spoke.

The meanness bled out into worry, maybe a little devastation, as she looked from his face down to his hands and took in what he was showing her. That was before he threw the stack of what must have been photos at her. There was no way for me to see what was in them, but I watched as Star bent down and picked one up.

"You were fucking someone who wasn't my brother and had my nephew there to witness it?" Star screamed at the woman as she dropped the image only for her brother to bend down and pick it up. Kip stared at the image, his face turning ashen, as his sister jumped on Ashlynn and launched her fist into the other woman's mouth.

Everyone else seemed too caught up in the pictures that fluttered on the ground to care, but I had to turn so that Knoxville wouldn't see his Aunt Star beating the shit out of his mom. He might not know his aunt yet, but I had a feeling that was going to change considering what Breakneck had just said. My stomach knotted with tension as I realized what my absence had cost the precious little boy in my arms.

His mother had been taking him to work with her in my absence, but no one realized that her work had nothing to do with real estate. "I'm so sorry baby boy," I whispered to Knoxville. "So sorry I left you behind to deal with that. Never again. Swear on my life, I will never let you down again."

“What the fuck is going on here?” Mack bellowed from over near the clubhouse door. When he did, Bagger snapped out of whatever stupor he had been in and pulled Star off of Ashlynn, or he tried to until Kip stopped him and shook his head.

“I can’t do it, so we’re going to let Star get her licks in.”

“Ash was having an affair?” Bagger asked Breakneck, to clarify for everyone exactly what those pictures meant.

“Nope,” Breakneck answered as he slid closer to the two women, obviously ready to break them apart before the fight went too far. “She was running tricks for cash.”

My jaw dropped. That was so much worse than just an affair. Anything could have happened to Knoxville. Horrible things happened to prostitutes all the time, it was a dangerous occupation, but to have a child there, too. A defenseless baby, at that... If I hadn’t been holding Knoxville, I might have run over and got a few punches in as well. My stupid, stupid sister deserved every hit that Star landed on her.

“She was doing what?” Bagger asked for clarification, obviously not understanding the ramifications of what Breakneck told him.

“Turning tricks for cash. Been doing it for months. It was the job she claimed to have that was bringing in so much money that she could afford to hire Nova as her nanny.” Breakneck turned and scanned the yard for me. When our eyes locked, he offered a small smile, but my heart ached. It felt like this was all my fault somehow.

“Yo, finish up,” Bagger called out to Breakneck with a snap of his fingers to get his attention off me and back onto the situation at hand.

“Yeah, so there was no job. She’s been earning on her back and had the nerve to call Vina a whore.”

“All right, Twinkles, that’s about enough. There are too many witnesses here. I can’t fuck you from prison,” Bagger finally said as he moved in to retrieve his woman. Star didn’t look bad, but Ashlynn had been beaten bloody by Kip’s sister. I felt like I owed Star a drink or something more substantial for doing what I couldn’t.

“Kip, it gets worse, man.” Breakneck looked as though he’d like to stomp on Ashlynn’s face a few times as he tried to break more terrible news to Kip.

“How could it possibly get worse?”

“Half of her money was going to Malcom Larson.” Breakneck’s eyes came up to meet mine again. I felt like I was going to throw up. My own biological father, Ashlynn’s father, had been the one pimping her out.

“What the fuck did you just say?” Kip asked as his wife continued to groan and cry from where she was lying on the ground in a battered ball.

“Mal is her fucking pimp, and he is not hands off with his merchandise.” Yeah, I was definitely going to be sick.

“How the fuck did you end up working for Mal?”

“O-owed him before.”

“Before when?” Kip screamed at her. He had told me that she’d only just found out that Mal was her father around the same time Jeremy nabbed some of the man’s DNA to test against my own. According to Breakneck, Ashlynn had been working for him for longer than that. I had been hired at the beginning of September, so at least that long.

“Before,” was all she would say. “I’s why got pegnant. Protection. Blackmailed me.” Her words sounded slurred, and I imagined she was having a hard time getting them out considering the damage Star had done to her mouth. She said that was why she got pregnant. Poor Kip. He lost the love of his life because my sister cooked up the ultimate ‘catch a man’ plot because she thought he could protect her. Didn’t seem like it did much good, considering she’d been pimped out since having the baby. Maybe before then.

“He’s with The Violent Order,” one of the older club brothers who stood closer to me stated. I guess he thought I wasn’t aware who Malcolm Larson was. Not only was he the man we suspected behind the videos in Creepy Dave’s house and the threats against me, but he was also the man who I shared DNA with.

Bagger whispered something to his woman, but Star shook her head before demanding, “Put her in the shed and let me finish her off.”

Star was told that what was left of Ashlynn was Kip’s problem to deal with. Breakneck directed the prospects to take Ashlynn to a room in the clubhouse. I assumed she was being taken to whichever room they’d stowed my father away in

when he was a hostile guest of the club. Breakneck turned and moved immediately until he was standing toe-to-toe with me.

“You okay, sweetness?”

I nodded my head but wasn't able to stop the tear that escaped and ran down my cheek. “He could have been hurt,” I mumbled and leaned in to kiss Knoxville's head. “He could have been hurt and it was my fault for leaving him.”

“None of that shit was your fault, sweetness. His own fucking mother took him while she turned tricks. She was probably doing it before you got the job as a nanny, too. Really, you saved that poor kid months of being dragged around to dirty hotel rooms and worse while his mom fucked every swinging dick in the surrounding counties.”

I shivered at the thought of that. “Poor Kip, what if she gave him something?”

“Don't think Kip fucked that bitch once after knocking her up on accident, so probably not a problem.”

“Poor Kip,” I huffed out again. If that was true, then there really wasn't a single better father alive on this planet than him. I knew that he stayed with Ashlynn out of obligation, and I'd been there a few times when she'd threatened to take his son away and never look back every time she felt Kip stepped a toe out of line.

Kip had been at his breaking point with his wife back when I fled from Breakneck's cheating and she hadn't been around much since I got back. This revelation was next level. I wasn't sure how Kip was going to be able to handle it without wanting to kill her. Even I wanted that kind of justice for him

and his son. It didn't matter that she and I shared blood, I wouldn't have saved her.

"I should get this little guy back to his house for now."

"I can't leave just yet until I know how Kip wants to handle this shitshow."

"I understand."

"Sending someone to watch over the two of you, especially since we haven't been able to nab Mal yet. Would prefer if you stayed here at the clubhouse."

It was getting dark outside, and I knew what that meant. The club whores would be hanging around and truthfully, I wasn't ready to be confronted with them just yet. I shook my head in answer to his preference. "Kip asked that I be here for the cookout, and I couldn't deny him that since it was a family thing and to raise money for Coral, but I can't go in there, not now. I just can't."

Breakneck blew out a frustrated breath and tugged at the back of his neck for a minute before he nodded. "Fucking sorrier than you'll ever know that I ruined my clubhouse for you."

There really wasn't anything for me to say to that because it was the truth. He'd ruined it with his actions and the fact that those men inside that clubhouse had either been in on his cheating with him or had known what was going down and allowed me to walk right inside to find what I found. Then again, maybe I should thank those men who never stopped me. They did me a favor by letting me see for myself what was going down.

We were saved any further awkwardness when Vivian came over and hugged me and her great nephew all at once. “Come on, we’re going to go to my place and stay for a bit while the boys handle business. The lawyer is meeting Kip there after he drops Ashlynn off at the hospital to fix the damage done by his sister.”

“He’s just dropping her off there?”

She shook her head. “He’s calling the police and getting law enforcement involved in what she was doing.”

“Won’t they want to know about Star beating the crap out of her?”

“No, I don’t think they’re going to care about that.” She winked at me, and I didn’t need to know anymore. Apparently, they had someone on the inside who would make sure no questions were asked. Considering she put her son in harm’s way repeatedly, I didn’t have it in me to care that she wouldn’t be heard. Instead, I packed Knoxville’s things up while Vivian doted on him and got ready to go.

Breakneck leaned in and kissed my temple. “Be around later to check on you, sweetness. Keep Viv company and take care of Knox. If you need anything, call. We’ll have a man stationed outside Viv’s house, too.”



Chapter 44

Breakneck

It took two fucking hours to sort through the mess left in the wake of hurricane fucking Ashlynn. That bitch was handcuffed to her hospital bed and as soon as the doctors cleared her, she'd be off to jail to await arraignment on charges ranging from child endangerment, neglect, abuse, and of course prostitution.

Her best bet would be to roll over and rat on Mal, but I didn't think she would have the nerve to do that. Either way, thanks to the charges lobbed against her and the preponderance of the evidence collected against her, she would never have custody of their son. That was a fancy term Kip's lawyer tossed at us when he met Kip at the hospital. From the way the lawyer talked, she would be lucky if someone showed her a picture of Knox once he reached adulthood.

Knowing Kip was busy there, his father was also at the hospital with Coral and Davina, and Mack had gone to check on his wife, Knox, and Nova; I headed to the clubhouse to make sure all was good there.

Someone had already organized the cleanup, but there was a bonfire raging out back where most of the members and club girls were congregated. Before heading out to check on everyone, I moved to the bar and reached over to grab myself

an energy drink. It had been a long-as-fuck day with the promise of more to come.

A hand trailed across my shoulders and down the center of my back before wrapping around my waist. I looked down to see that it was Scout before she pushed her body against me in a full-on side hug. I stepped to the side and knocked over a barstool in the process. After leaning down and snatching the thing up, I shoved it back into place before turning to her.

“What the fuck do you think you’re doing?”

She took a step back, shocked by the way I was speaking to her. “I don’t understand.”

“You’re a fucking club member now, not a club girl. Even when you were a club girl, you refused to fuck with taken men, so what the fuck are you doing?”

“I thought you could use a hug,” she whimpered and sniffled back the emotion that looked ready to swamp her. I didn’t let her near-tears affect me though.

“That shit is off limits.”

“I’ve seen you hug Kip and Prez, and a few other brothers besides. I’m somehow different from them?”

“Yeah, you fucking are. This is one of those consequences of going from being a club girl to a member that Tripp tried to warn you about. We’ve fucked before. I’ve never fucked Kip or Prez or any other man in this clubhouse. Had I done so, they’d be off fuckin’ limits, too. I’m still struggling to get my woman back and this is the kind of shit that will make her not trust me.”

“I’m sorry, Break. I didn’t think of it like that.”

“No?” I questioned. “Well, you should have, or did you forget about the showdown in the parking lot when you were hanging all over me in front of her? First time I’d seen my woman in months, and you had your hands locked around me like you had a claim. I was too stunned by her showing up again then to even notice, but she did. Then, I fucked up by yelling at her for calling you out on it.”

Scout took another step away from me. “I thought we were friends,” she muttered. “I’ve always been like that with my friends. Girls, boys, it never mattered.”

“You’re not stupid, Scout. You know it matters now, so don’t do it. Things can’t be the same because we’ve fucked. Nova knows that, and so does every other fucker in this place. You need to remember that. If for no other reason, you need to remember it for your own sake. None of these men will respect you as a ‘brother’ if you’re hanging on them like a club girl.”

“Jesus, Breakneck!” She hissed.

“Sorry, Scout, but it’s the damn truth and you know it.”

She nodded her head. “Yeah, I know. I just really needed a hug too after seeing everything that went down with Kip and Ashlynn out there today. She ruined us on purpose and then whored herself out to everyone else anyway. What was the fucking point in tearing us apart if she didn’t even get him to protect her?”

“I don’t know the answers to that, honey, but you’re looking for them in the wrong place. You need to talk to Kip. He’s going to need someone to be there for him.”

She laughed. “He has Nova now, too. And with Ash out of the picture, Star will dive back in like she did out there today.”

“That’s true, but neither of them are the woman he’s been in love with for years. Think on that, and then make sure you’re the woman he needs when he’s ready for you.”

“Yeah,” she huffed and turned away. I didn’t have it in me to chase after her because I hadn’t lied. It couldn’t be me who offered her comfort, for so many reasons. The biggest one of all being Nova. She needed me now, too. That was her sister who was beat to shit in front of her. She heard things that I hadn’t meant for her to hear. Her father had taken advantage of Ash. Even though Ash didn’t know at the time that they were related, I was pretty sure Mal knew who he was to her.

That sick fuck went there anyway and then turned her out to every fucker from our little town of Danville to Augusta and on down to the Florida panhandle who could afford time with her. It made me sick to think that Nova was meant to suffer that same fate. She was meant for far worse unless Malcolm was willing to swoop in and pull her out of the corpse fucker’s clutches.

I shook off that thought because Nova was safe. Dave was dead and Mal didn’t have much left of his life. The minute that rodent surfaced again, we were going to pop his fucking head from his body to make sure he was never able to rise again.

I quickly walked outside and ran into Trench standing there on the back stoop. “Wild night,” he said.

“Yup,” I agreed.

“Heard that shit go down with Scout just now. You were right to set her straight. There have been rumblings about how we all made a mistake voting her in. Know she’s good at what she does with the computers and shit, but the men are worried about what will happen when she starts sleeping with brothers for votes about other shit.”

“Fuck me, I do not have time for this. Squash that shit if you hear it again. That ain’t even what Scout is about and you know it. I put her in her place because she hasn’t clued in that she needs to be different as a member yet. It’s just growin’ pains, not some big fucking conspiracy.”

Trench laughed. “Hey, brother, not saying it is. Just telling you the rumblings.”

“Whatever. Squash it if you hear it again.”

“Will do.”

“Can you hold the fort down with Grady for a bit? I need to go check on my woman and all the other officers are otherwise occupied tonight.”

“You know I will. Tell Nova I said, ‘Hi’.”

“Don’t think I will, brother.” He laughed, but I was serious. “She knows you were there that night. If you think she has a problem forgiving me, she blames you just as much for being there. She sees what you did as a betrayal that she put on the club as a whole. Good luck getting my girl to ever speak to you again.”

“She forgave you, why would she hold a grudge against me?”

“Only forgave me because I held a piece of her heart before I fucked shit up. You didn’t, so she doesn’t owe it to herself to try again.”

“That’s some bullshit,” Trench complained.

“It is what it is, man.”

“You don’t think she’ll cause problems for Mitzi and Dee do you?”

I shook my head. “Nah. She said they were the only two who looked guilty for being in that room. Don’t think she’ll be inclined to carry on a conversation with either of them, but I’d bet my pay for the month that she won’t go out of her way to be mean either.”

“That’s good,” he said and then went back to join the others by the fire. I turned to leave.

~*~

When I got to Mack’s place all the lights were on and Kip’s bike was parked out front beside Mack’s. Nova’s car was still there, so I went ahead on up and knocked on the door.

“Hey man,” Mack said as he opened it wider once he realized it was me. “Everything good at the clubhouse?”

“Yeah, Trench and Grady have shit handled.”

Mack looked worried for a minute and then blew out a breath. “Fuck it’s been a long night. Part of me wants to go check in while Tripp’s away, but the other part of me says, ‘fuck it’.” He closed the door behind me and then smiled as he offered to get me a beer.

I declined. “Nova’s still around, yeah?”

Mack grinned at me. “She is. They just got Knox to sleep. I think Kip’s going to crash here with him for the night, if you want to head on back to the house with Nova, you’ll have it to yourselves tonight.”

That made me chuckle because I knew exactly what he was insinuating. “Thanks for the head’s up.”

“Any time, brother.” He narrowed his eyes on me then as his fingers clamped tight to my shoulder. “So long as you never fuck her over like that again. Next time, it’ll be me helping her get lost and to stay that way, you hear me?”

“Yeah. Fuck, I hear you and everyone else. She’s going to be my old lady one day, as soon as she’ll agree to it, and I’m pleased as fuck you all think so highly of her.”

“But?” Mack asked.

“There’s no ‘but’. Pleased as fuck that you all have her back. I want it to stay that way. Her above me, always.”

Mack nodded his head and smiled at me. “Lookie there, you finally grew up and understood what I’ve been telling you assholes all along. Shit might just work out for you after all.”

“Hey,” Nova said as she came around the corner with her bag slung over her shoulder. “I was just about to head out.”

“I’ll ride with you.”

“You don’t have to. I know it’s been a long night for everyone.”

“Gonna ride with you, sweetness.”

She ducked her head, but I didn’t miss the smile on her face before it was hidden behind the golden curtain of her hair.

She drove her car and I followed on my Harley all the way to Kip's place. Once we were there, I had her park inside Kip's garage, so that we could be sure her car and my bike would both be safe from anyone who might be lurking around outside.

We came in through the door in the kitchen, and once the house was locked up, we sat down at the table and sort of stared at one another for a few minutes. Neither of us seemed to know where to start.

"I can't believe that happened tonight, or that you knew already," she finally said.

"I tried to tell you that I was working on something, but it was important to keep it under wraps."

"I get it. It's not like I'm accusing you of keeping secrets. There will always be things you do with the club that I can't know about, and I even understand you not telling me what was going on with Ashlynn. I'm just sort of blown away by it all. So blown away, that I don't even think I can comprehend some of what I heard today."

"It's probably best not to dwell on that part," I admitted.

"How is it possible that both of my parents are so evil and I'm..."

"Not?" I finished for her. Nova nodded. "You were lucky enough to have Jeremy in your life. I hated the guy when I thought he abandoned you and took everything away. After hearing his side of things, I think he did the best he could when he was blindsided. It helps that he fucked his own family over for what they did to you."

Nova laughed in response. “Yeah, I really wish I could see their faces when the last of that money runs out. They’ll grovel for more from him because neither of them knows what it means to work.”

“Are you doing okay? Being back here, I mean?” I asked as I glanced around the house.

“Honestly? It was weird being at my dad’s house again. That place is monstrous. My mom was the one who picked it out, so that stands to reason. I preferred the place I stayed at in the mountains. That house was gorgeous and understated. Even then, neither of them felt like home the way Kip’s house does for me sometimes. It’s not the house, and Lord knows, Ashlynn made it feel completely inhospitable at times, but there’s a peacefulness here when she’s not around.”

“So, you’re saying you like being back?” I teased her.

“Yeah, I do. It feels a bit different knowing that I’m actually Knoxville’s aunt, too. I grew up an only child and didn’t think I’d ever get to be someone’s Aunt Nova.” Her smile showed just how much she loved that idea.

“Out of all the bad news you’ve had coming down the pipeline lately, I’m glad you have that to cling to.”

“I have more than that. Did you know Kip told me he thought of me as another sister?”

I chuckled at that. “I could have told you that a long time ago, but the asshole seems to be collecting sisters lately, so watch out.”

“I’m happy he seems to be getting Star back and that Coral will be in his life, too. It’s weird that she’s younger than his

son, but...” She shrugged her shoulders. “I guess that’s cool in a way. I just hope the poor thing is able to fight hard and come away without having to worry about stupid freaking cancer ever again.”

“Me too, sweetness.” Nova tried to hide a yawn behind her hand as I agreed with her. So, I stood up and held my hand out for her. “Come on, let’s go tuck you into bed.”

“Will you stay with me?”

“My whole club couldn’t drag me away from you tonight if they tried.”

“Good,” she whispered as she stood and followed me back to her room.

When we got there, I took my cut off and hung it on the hook on the back of her door, then started stripping out of my boots, while my clothes followed quickly behind. I left my boxer briefs on and climbed into the bed while I watched Nova take her time about pulling her own clothes off. Instead of going to her drawers or her backpack to grab something to sleep in, she leaned down and picked up the t-shirt I just pulled off.

My eyes tracked her every movement as she held it up to her face and breathed me in, then slipped it over her head. She took her bra off underneath the shirt and tossed it into the pile of clothes she left at the end of her bed. Then, she slipped into the opposite side and turned on her side to face me.

“You like the way I smell?” I asked, unable to hide the cocky grin I wore.

“I do,” she admitted unashamedly.

“I like the way you look in my shirt.” I admitted as I played with the hem that hung down over her panty-clad pussy. Then, I shocked her when I flipped the shirt up and stripped it off her. Like you without it, too.” She giggled in response and that noise went straight to my dick. It meant she was happy with me, and fuck but that’s all I dreamed about these days was how to make her happy.

I rolled her over, ripped her panties off her body and dove down between her legs before she could think to issue a protest. Then I lapped at her sweet pussy until she came so hard she forgot her own fucking name.

“That was something,” she huffed a few minutes later.

“Nah, that was nothing.” I flipped her over and yanked her lower half up by her hips and slammed my cock home for the first time in months and it felt like fucking heaven. It felt like I was finally back where I belonged.

“Oh shit!” She yelped and then her words quickly devolved into moans as I attacked her pussy with my cock. There was no other way to describe it. I needed her, but more importantly, I needed to show her that we could make love in the dirty ways she wanted. In the end, it would mean the same as if we were making sweet, slow love to one another. That I loved her. That I worshipped her. That she was mine for-fucking-ever.

“Best fucking place on Earth,” I managed to get out between strokes. “Your pussy, sweetness. No place I’d rather be.” For the first time since we got together, I meant that with all my heart.

Before long, I flipped Nova onto her side and cocked her leg up. Then I slid in behind her and slowed everything down

for a beat before moving my hand around and circling her clit. “Play with those beautiful tits for me, sweetness. Want to watch you come so hard like this.”

“Yeah,” she moaned as her hands moved to do exactly what I asked. Nova pinched her own nipples and threw her head back soaking in the sensations hitting her from all over. I leaned in to suck on her exposed neck as I dipped my fingers into her pussy beside where I languidly thrust my cock in and out. Once they were good and soaked with her juices, I went back to torturing her clit with the same easy strokes I was using with my dick.

“Breakneck,” she groaned.

“Slow can be just as fun as hard and heavy, sweetness. Been wanting to show you that for a while. Should have done it before.”

“Just shut up and fuck me,” she hissed as she pumped her hips back at me, unafraid to ask for what she wanted this time.

I would give it to her. I’d give her anything she asked for. So, I slipped back out of the warmth of her pussy and flipped her to her back. Before she could protest about being put back into missionary position, I threw her legs up over my shoulders and slammed back inside her. Then, I held onto her thighs as I fucked her with a brutal pace that made anything she attempted to say slip into incomprehensible moans instead.

“Yeah, sweetness. You like me fucking you hard?” I asked as I pumped my cock into her harder and harder with each thrust and then I increased my speed too until I was worried I’d send myself into cardiac arrest if I didn’t catch my breath soon.

Just as I was about to have to switch things up again, her pussy fluttered around my cock and then the damn thing pulsed and gripped me so hard, I couldn't keep from blowing my load even if I wanted to. She milked my fucking cock for all I had and then we both crashed as I rolled to my side and made sure her legs were free of my body to avoid dropping my full weight on her.

I pulled Nova's body closer to me and spooned up behind her, ignoring any mess we may have made.

"That's what sex is supposed to be like." She mumbled, though the words came out somewhat slurred like she was drunk.

"Yeah, sweetness, that's what it's supposed to be like. That and so much more."

"No more holding back," Nova demanded, and I couldn't disagree with her. Holding back was what cost us so much time together. It cost me her trust too when I threw it away thinking that I couldn't get off with her until she was less delicate.

"No more holding back. That's a promise."

"Good." My beautiful woman sighed contentedly and closed her eyes. I fell asleep behind her only moments later and for the first time in forever, my dreams weren't burdened by my regrets and instead they looked toward a beautiful future with my woman by my side.



Epilogue

Nova

~Seven months later~

“Where are we?”

“This is *your* house,” Breakneck told me as we both got off his motorcycle. My legs wobbled a bit, and I knew it wasn’t from the ride, because that had been a short one. He pointed to a house across the street with a detached garage, and I immediately recognized it. In fact, I thought that was where he was taking me when we first headed this way.

“Mack and Viv live across the street?” I asked, even though – *duh* – that was the whole point in him showing me.

“Yeah, sweetness. You’ll be across the street from the club’s VP and his wife. It gives you an added layer of protection and someone to talk to if you need it.”

“So, you rented this house for me?” I didn’t understand. My stomach was coiled so tightly that I wanted to puke. Was this the latest way he was trying to get me away from the clubhouse, so that he could do whatever he wanted with the whores?

“No,” he said slowly. “I bought this house *for* you. It’s yours. The deed is in your name only, sweetness.”

“What? Why?”

“You need the security of knowing that you always have a place to crash, one that can’t be taken from you. I wanted to give you that. It is yours. You don’t have to be afraid to unpack your bags anymore.”

I heard the words he was saying, but my mind was a jumble of questions and some of them I didn’t want the answers to for self-preservation’s sake. “Mine?” I asked again.

“All yours, to do with as you please.”

“Where will you be?”

“Wherever you want me,” he stated as if it was that easy.

“So, if I said that I wanted you to live here with me, you would?”

“I would.” He chuckled. “I’d prefer it, sweetness. That’s a decision for you to make though. I told you this place is all yours. Not gonna encroach on your territory in the same breath and demand you let me live here with you.”

“Why the hell not?” I asked. What in the hell was even happening? I couldn’t wrap my head around it. “You usually don’t have a problem telling me what you want me to do.”

He full-on laughed then. “True enough. I want you to take charge on this though,” he tipped his head back toward the house. “It’s your place. You want me here, I’m here.”

“No more clubhouse?” I asked.

“Can’t promise you that, sweetness. I’m the club’s enforcer, there will be plenty of times I have to be there. It’s my fucking job to be around. My nights, unless I’m working, will be wherever you are, if you’ll have me.”

“So, you’ll be in my bed every night, unless the club needs you?”

“If that’s what you want.”

“What do you want?” I asked him, needing to be sure that he truly wanted to be here with me in this house he bought, so that I could feel like I had a home no one could take from me again. I dipped my head down, to hide behind the curtain of my hair as my eyes began to water.

Technically, I could have purchased my own home with the money my father had given me, but for some reason, it felt tainted. The money felt like Jeremy had tried to buy me off after what his family did, and even though I knew in my heart that wasn’t true, I couldn’t get my brain to believe me. Having Breakneck give me a house was an entirely different story, but it would only mean something special if he bought it with the intent of being here by my side.

“I want to be where you are – always. No fucking around. No lies. You, me, and whatever we build together. There are things I won’t be able to tell you that are club business, but that will never involve me being with another woman. That shit will never happen again unless you are the one to drag one into our bedroom because it’s something *you* want.”

“If that’s what you’re hoping for-” I started to say, but he cut me off.

“It’s not. If it’s something *you wanted*, you have to understand that I have boundaries now, too. Yours is the only pussy I’ll ever be inside of again. I’m just saying, besides my boundaries, you are the one in control here. It might be me

tossing your beautiful ass around in the bedroom, but you are in charge of the big things, sweetness.”

“You’re giving up a lot by doing that.”

He shook his head. “Nah. Finally got my head on straight where that’s concerned.” He glanced toward the house across the street. “Always envied what they had. It’s nothing like the shitshow I grew up in with my parents. Damn shame those two could never have children because they’re the ones who would make perfect parents. Prime example of what being in love with someone is, right there, across the street.”

“Is that why you chose this house? So, there’s a reminder of what a good relationship looks like?” I asked him. His eyes stayed trained on the house a minute longer before shifting to meet mine.

“They are a good reminder, but I bought the house because they’re good people, and if I’m working, you’ll have someone else close by. You and Viv can help one another. Viv has my permission to tell you anything she sees or hears about what goes down at the clubhouse when you’re not around.”

“You’re telling me our next-door neighbor is my own personal spy?” I laughed at the insanity of it as Breakneck nodded his head.

“If that’s what you need, until you can fully trust me again, then yes, that’s exactly what I’m telling you.”

“What about Kip and Knoxville?”

“Kip is going to bring Knox to you when he goes to work and pick him up on his way home. There’s a room here perfect

for Knox for now, and maybe one day it can be a nursery for our kids, too.”

I gasped in shock at him mentioning having kids with me. He had mentioned it before, but I’d always thought he enjoyed the fantasy of getting me pregnant more than the actual desire to build a family. “You want kids?”

“Never did before, but I’ve been fantasizing about knocking you up, watching your belly grow full with my baby, since I first saw you holding Knoxville like he was the most precious thing in the world. Took me a while to realize that my priorities were changing, and it wasn’t just a weird kink I was developing.”

I laughed and smacked the idiot on the chest playfully. “I can’t believe you thought getting me pregnant was a new kink.”

He shrugged those broad shoulders of his and grinned at me. “It’s a fetish for some people.”

I rolled my eyes at him. “I think if it’s a fetish, then you can picture anyone in that position, and it gets you off. Is that how it is for you?”

“No,” he shook his head to emphasize the point. “You are the only one I want to see knocked up with my kid.”

“Well, we can’t have kids and start a family if you’re not living here with me. That wouldn’t be the right way to bring them up.” I grinned as my head tipped back and our eyes met again. “Not that I want them right away, but we have to do all that practicing, and it’ll be easier if you’re around for that.”

“Wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

“Then I guess the only thing left to do, besides move in, is get you inked with my name, so everyone knows who you belong to,” I teased. It was me who was supposed to be inked with his name, but so far I had refused while I waited for him to prove himself to me.

Breakneck pulled his cut off and handed it over. That in itself was a sign of trust and faith in me on his part. He took his club seriously and wouldn't just put his cut in anyone's hands. Then he reached back and snatched his shirt off in one swift movement that I was envious of.

When it was off, he turned to face me so that our bodies were parallel to one another, and he held his arms out to his side. When he turned his body, so the uninked side was facing me, I gasped once more. There was fresh ink covering the whole of his upper arm from shoulder to elbow. It was an image of the night sky and the stars twinkling in it.

Breakneck skimmed his fingers across some of the brighter stars. “Scorpio,” he muttered, then traced where it connected to another constellation, “Pisces.” I moved closer to look at it. Above the stars forming the two constellations that represented us, there were random stars that formed the word ‘Sweetness’. That was what he had called me from the beginning when no one was around to hear him, and lately he didn't seem to care who heard it. Now, he had it tattooed on his arm, on the side of his body that had previously been a blank canvas.

“You... This is... You inked the blank side,” I finally got out.

“For you. This is for our family. When we add to it, I’ll get more ink on that side.”

“Our family,” I echoed. He nodded and slipped his shirt back on, then gently took his cut back from me and shrugged it back in place. “I love you,” I told him. Then I put my hand over the place where he got a tattoo that symbolized us, and I smiled up at him. “I want one that matches.”

“And what will the stars say on yours?” He was teasing, so I figured I’d give it right back to him.

“Dipshit.” I nodded my head as he stood there, mouth agape. “Yep. That’s for sure what it should say, and everyone will know it’s for you.” I giggled and took advantage of him being momentarily stunned as I ran. I only made it a few steps away before he caught up to me and flipped me up and over his shoulder.

“No fair!” I yelled as he ran the rest of the way to the house and up the three steps to the porch before he set me back on my feet.

“How about we go see the inside of your house now?”

“Our house,” I corrected. “Let’s go see *our* house.”

“Yeah, sweetness. Love the sound of that.”

I did, too. Our timing might not have been right at first. We both had to go through some things to realize that our pasts, our parents, didn’t get to dictate who we were as individuals, or who we were to each other. We had already wasted enough time on overcoming our past. The only way to a happy future was to live each moment in our present as if another wasn’t promised us. That was what I intended to do.

“Sweetness?” Breakneck questioned as he got ready to open the door to our house – our future.

“Yes?”

“Happy birthday.”

He opened the door and my new family yelled out, “Surprise!” The impact of them all being here, of Breakneck gifting me this house, on my birthday, knocked me back a step. Breakneck reached out and pulled me into his arms so that my backside was plastered to his front, then he walked us into our forever. My birthday wish come true.

A home.

A family.

And so much love.

After getting a round of hugs from everyone, along with well wishes for my birthday, my father pulled me aside. “I wanted to give you your present away from the others. It’s a little unconventional, and I don’t think they know yet, but...” He pulled a folded newspaper from behind his back as I stared at him curiously.

“Well, like I said, it’s a bit unconventional for a birthday gift, but I thought you might like it anyway.” He handed me the paper and we stood there like that, mid-transfer, staring into one another’s eyes as I tried to figure out what he was telling me without saying it.

When it became apparent that he wouldn’t give anything else away without me looking at his gift, I finally pulled it from him and glanced down. Breakneck made his way to stand behind me just as the headline caught my attention.

“What’s going on?” He asked my father as he wrapped his arms around my waist.

“Giving my daughter her birthday present.”

Breakneck pulled tighter against me and then leaned over my shoulder to see what the hell my father was talking about.

Local Gang Member Killed in Brutal Street Fight.

There was a picture of Malcolm Larson front and center and when I read about the supposed brutal street fight, that there were no witnesses, cameras, or leads as to who might have done it, I glanced back up at my father and knew instantly. One look at his fingers, his knuckles to be specific, told me everything I needed to know. How had I missed that when he handed me the paper?

“You did this,” I whispered.

“Your safety is my gift for you.” He handed over a sticky note to Breakneck. “Her continued safety is my gift to *you*, as well.” My father informed him. “The rest of the club will probably want to share, though.” Dad stated as Breakneck looked down at the note.

“Fuck me,” Breakneck hissed. Then he kissed the side of my head and ran off to go show the rest of the MC the gift my father had just given us. Beating Malcolm Larson to death had served more than one purpose, and apparently we now knew where the rest of his rotten club were hiding out.

“I love you, Dad.”

“Love you, too, Nova-girl. Never going to let anyone hurt you ever again.”

“Thank you,” I whispered into his chest as he pulled me in for a hug.

I thought I had it all just moments ago, but I’d been wrong. My father gave me the last missing piece to my puzzle and my man would make sure that piece was firmly locked in place for the rest of my life.

A home.

A family.

So much love.

Security.

And peace.

Finally getting to this point was worth everything I’d been through since my family devastated me with their news.

What's Next?

Surprise Me

A Savage Vipers MC novella #2.5

Kim

I was a stranger to him, but I knew exactly who he was. My brother's friend.

When I saw the opportunity to have him, I took it, even knowing the consequences could ruin us both. It was a decision I'd never regret.

June

I left on a family vacation the summer before senior year with an ache in my heart.

Tripp couldn't come with us. He had to stay behind because if he gave up his prospect position with the Savage Vipers, he would never have another chance. I understood, but I also felt like maybe my leaving for the summer would be the end of us.

Tripp

I reassured June that her trip abroad wouldn't ruin us. In fact, I was planning on making her my old lady once she got back. By then, I hoped to have my patch and it would be nothing to make it official.

Then, I met Kim.

It was one night.

One mistake.

It changed everything. The entire course of my life that I once saw with June fell away in an instant.

Baby Me

A Savage Vipers MC #3

Davina

I walked away from the club the minute those two pink lines showed up on the test.

There were only a few good options for a baby daddy among the club's men, and the odds weren't in my favor that my daughter's father was one of them.

So, I never told them.

Until I had to.

Her life was on the line and my secret might just destroy the happy little life I'd managed to make for us. Especially, when it turned out the baby's father was the President of the Savage Vipers MC.

Tripp

I married my kids' mom after a one-night stand led to her getting knocked up with my son. Despite leaving my high school sweetheart behind for Kim, we had a good life until she was killed. Eight months ago, I reconnected with my high school sweetheart and when I finally brought her around my kids, history repeated itself. Our former club girl had a baby, she was sick and needed help. That little girl also turned out to be my daughter. Her mother wasn't someone I really saw before, but she quickly became the one woman I never saw coming. I just knew I couldn't let go.

Available Now from Anne Storm

Wait for Me

A Savage Vipers MC #1

Star

He was just a crush.

That was the party line everyone used after I saw him with other women, breaking my young heart.

When he stood there and carelessly asked me to marry him, two weeks after seeing him screwing my best friend, I knew it was time to go. My place in my family's club be damned. I ran.

Then, after everything had changed, I was called home.

Bagger

They ruined me.

She was a club princess with a crush.

My club tried to force a union to keep her safely ensconced in our world.

I screwed it all up because I wasn't ready.

Then I fell for her as I was forced to watch from the shadows. If only they had given me the security detail the first time, maybe I would have chosen her instead of feeling like she'd been forced on me.

She's back now, and I need to decide if I'm finally ready.

Cupid Broke my Heart

A Loved for the Holidays Novel #1

Six years ago, Cupid bumped into me at a party and knocked me on my butt.

Well, almost knocked me on my butt, until a man stepped out of the crowd, as if by magic, and saved me from imminent disaster.

From that moment on, Jeff - my rescuer - and I were inseparable and the man I was supposed to meet that night...

Well, I never did find out what happened to him.

Not until fate stepped in to right Cupid's wrong.

See, Jeff and I weren't supposed to be together. He was meant for someone else, probably the woman who I found sleeping with him in my office!

Thank you, Jeff, for screwing up - or screwing her - so I could get a second chance with Mr. Right!

Ghosted by Texas

A Loved for the Holidays Novel #2

Austin

Loyalty to a life-long friendship cost me everything!
I wasn't sure if Becs would ever allow me to atone for my screwups, but I was going to use every trick in the book to earn the only treat I ever wanted.

Her!

Becs

My heart ached for the loss of the man I once loved.
It ached even more when I found out I was carrying his baby.

Finding out the reason he ghosted me...

Made my heart hurt worse.

He had been tricked.

Could I love a ghost?

There was only one way to find out.

About the Author

Anne Storm is a pen name for Christine Michelle.

Anne Storm's books:

Dark romance/subjects with triggers

Christine Michelle's books:

(mild) MC Romance, Rock Star Romance, and other
Contemporary Romance

Christine M. Butler's books:

Paranormal Fantasy & Romance

If you want to learn more about Christine, her books, or her crazy adventures into the wilderness, you can find out more through the following links:

Website & Newsletter sign up:

www.moonlitedreams.org

Signing up for the newsletter also gets you first option at future Beta reading and ARC (advanced reader copy) giveaway opportunities!

Universal links to everything

(social media, book links, and more)

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