

SEALED  
WITH  
THREE  
KISSES

After  
Three  
Best  
Friends

MOLLY  
EDEN

# *Her Three Best Friends*

SEALED WITH THREE KISSES: BOOK ONE

MOLLY EDEN

**Her Three Best Friends:**

Sealed with Three Kisses Book One

Text Copyright © 2023 by Molly Eden

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

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

First printing, 2023

Publisher

Molly Eden

molly@mollyedenauthor.com

[MollyEdenAuthor.com](http://MollyEdenAuthor.com)

Cover art by: miblant

# *Contents*

## Molly Eden Books

1. Olivia
  2. Olivia
  3. Noah
  4. Jacob
  5. Olivia
  6. Noah
  7. Olivia
  8. Jacob
  9. Noah
  10. Austin
  11. Jacob
  12. Olivia
  13. Noah
  14. Jacob
  15. Austin
  16. Austin
  17. Olivia
  18. Jacob
  19. Noah
  20. Olivia
  21. Jacob
  22. Austin
  23. Jacob
  24. Olivia
  25. Noah
  26. Austin
  27. Noah
  28. Jacob
  29. Austin
  30. Noah
- Epilogue

[Molly Eden Books](#)

[Other Reverse Harem/ Why Choose Romances You'll Love](#)

## *Molly Eden Books*

To keep up with all of my new releases, visit my website and sign up for my mailing list:

[MollyEdenAuthor.com](http://MollyEdenAuthor.com)

The newsletter features information on upcoming books and special offers.



## CHAPTER 1

Usually, the gym where I worked was my happy place. I loved being able to teach and work out at the same time, and seeing my regular students hit their goals was truly satisfying. But today, I just wanted to be back in bed, dead to the world.

It was supposed to be my day off, and I had so many plans. I was going to go to the farmer's market, work on my business plan for the vegan protein powder company I'd dreamed of creating, and just take a break from teaching spin and yoga five days a week. I'd been pushing myself lately. As much as I loved being active, I needed breaks, too.

But my friend and coworker Gracie was sick, so I was filling in for her private yoga class. She'd do the same for me in a heartbeat.

Ugh. I just wished this had happened on a day when I *didn't* need just a few more hours of sleep.

Whatever. It was just a session. I'd be able to go back home before I knew it.

I went into one of the small, private yoga rooms that Gracie had prepared for my student. Gracie had mentioned that the student was a bit of a snob, but I was used to that. Most of my students were great, but every once in a while, I had to deal with one who fit every stereotype of a wealthy, bitchy woman. I wasn't thrilled, but it was either taking over for my coworker, or the gym getting some awful review because her lesson had to be rescheduled. Word of mouth was a big deal, especially in South Beach.

I laid out two mats and a few blocks, then started on my own warm-up. I discovered yoga when I was a teenager, totally by accident. Someone taught a one-off class in the park where I used to hang out with my best friends, Noah, Jacob, and Austin. I took the class, fell in love, and got a receptionist job at the studio where that teacher was from.

Now, here I was all these years later.

By the time I finished loosening up, I had one minute before our session started. Too bad the student wasn't as punctual.

I waited and waited, until finally, she strolled in fifteen minutes late, looking at her phone and barely acknowledging me. She looked exactly like I thought she would: not a hair out of place, decked out in expensive athleisure. She looked super fit, but that didn't translate to how she was moving. Everything she did was at half speed, from her sauntering in, to her toeing off her shoes.

"Hi! I'm Olivia," I said after an uncomfortable pause. "I'm filling in for Gracie. You must be Blaire?"

"Oh. Hi. Yeah." She looked up from her phone for a moment before tucking it back into her purse. She handled it like it was made of glass, once again sucking away precious seconds of my life. "Yoga."

"Yep!" I slapped on a smile, as much as I wanted to roll my eyes.

I walked Blaire through a few warm-up poses, then got to the series that Gracie had outlined for me to teach. Blaire had clearly been practicing for a while. In most circumstances, I would have been excited to see someone pushing themselves, but Blaire was dragging me down. Did she want to be here or not? Every single pose came with a sigh or a look that said, *ugh, seriously?*

Finally, we finished with child's pose.

"So that's everything for today," I said, standing up. "Gracie will be back for your next session."

“Okay.” Blaire grabbed her purse and phone and left without another word or look. Lovely. I wasn’t expecting her to go from child’s pose to bowing and thanking me profusely. But even looking at me or acknowledging me on her way out would have been nice, considering how late she was.

I let out a long breath and started cleaning up. I had to report back to Gracie, then I could get back to my day off. I didn’t need for this woman to throw me off for another second. I hadn’t taken a rest in the sauna in a long time, so I wanted to do that before I left.

I was excited to rest, period. My boyfriend Clark and I had a trip to the Caribbean coming up, so we’d have plenty of time to escape and decompress together. He’d been so busy lately, and he needed the break, too. He worked for his dad’s law firm, but he didn’t get much special treatment; he was expected to put in all the hours like everyone else did. Well, most of the time.

Once I texted Gracie about how the session had gone, I went into the women’s locker room to change into a towel. Hopefully, I’d have the room to myself. It was the middle of the day, so not many people were around. I tucked my towel around myself tighter and put my hair up in a messy bun before stepping inside.

I opened the door, closing my eyes against the damp heat. It seeped into my bones, loosening up the knots that yoga didn’t quite hit. When I opened my eyes, I wished I hadn’t.

Two people were inside: a man sitting on a towel, and a woman straddling him. They were right in the middle of the bench, the woman—Blaire—bouncing up and down on the man’s cock.

*My man’s cock.*

Clark’s eyes were squeezed shut, his grip tight on Blaire’s hips. I stood there, staring in horror, as much as I didn’t want to accept or see what was in front of me. Between the heat and the way my heart rate had sped up, I was close to fainting. My brain just stopped working for a few moments.

“Clark?” I finally managed to say, bracing myself up with a hand on the door frame. My legs felt weak.

Finally, they realized I existed. Clark’s blue eyes widened, and he practically pushed Blaire off his lap. He tried to cover himself, as if that would have helped, his mouth opening and closing. Nothing coherent came out.

“What the fuck are you doing?” I yelled, finding my voice again.

“What are you even doing here? This is your day off!” he shot back, as if that even mattered. Some other woman was riding him seconds ago. He didn’t have the right to ask me anything right now.

“What am *I* doing here? What are you doing fucking her? What are you doing here, period? Aren’t you supposed to be at the office?” I asked, my chest heaving. The humidity in the air was choking me, and I needed Clark out of my sight immediately, before I did something stupid. “You know what? I don’t need to know.”

I pushed away and let the door slam shut, tears spilling from my eyes. The ache of being someone’s second choice, of people seeing me as a dead weight, was familiar and unwelcome.

The whole situation was terrible, but what really twisted the knife was that they’d both seemed to be enjoying it. I couldn’t say the same every time we had sex. Our sex life was fairly normal. Well... it was slightly boring if I were being honest. Clark wasn’t great at taking my directions and never had the intuition to find the positions that made my toes curl in ecstasy.

No wonder he never put much thought—or effort—into our sex life. He was getting what he wanted from someone else.

Was Blaire the first? Or was she one of many?

I didn’t know. I just wanted to escape.

## CHAPTER 2

I threw on my clothes and left, barely managing to hold my sobs back as I rushed through the gym to my car. And when I got to my car, I sobbed. Full-on ugly crying, to the point where I wasn't sure if I could drive. I rested my hands on my knees and did some deep belly breaths. Clark hadn't followed me outside, but I didn't want to stick around and see if he was on his way out.

My breathing centered me, and I pulled away, continuing my steady breathing all the way back home. Driving over the bridge to Star Island only made my tears start up again. I was almost home. Almost able to let go and cry in bed.

I lived with Austin, Noah, and Jacob in a sprawling mansion. I couldn't have afforded a closet in this location if I had to pay the market rate for rent. They'd made billions with the security firm they'd founded, so the small amount I gave them for rent wasn't even a blip on their radars. Still, I had to pay *something*. I'd grown up taking care of things myself, and I wasn't going to stop any time soon.

I pulled into my parking spot, my modest Volkswagen standing out against the row of luxury cars from every company imaginable. The guys never made me feel bad about it, though. If anything, they were always begging to buy me a newer, better car, since mine was "unsafe." It was absolutely fine—older, but with character. Sure, the battery and the AC were a bit wonky sometimes, but it ran ninety-nine percent of the time. Did they think that cars that weren't made in the past three years were metal death traps?

I rolled my eyes, even in my state. They were my best friends, but sometimes, they drove me a little nuts. I was more than capable of taking care of myself.

At least they weren't home during the day. They'd freak out if they saw me now.

I went into the kitchen to raid the fridge. Our Sub-Zero fridge was huge, so each of us had space for our own food.

"Shit," I said, staring at the array of beautiful fresh fruits and vegetables that I had. In any other circumstance, I would have whipped up something with those ingredients. I loved cooking. But now I just wanted something indulgent that I didn't have to prepare. I checked the freezer and found some chocolate oat milk ice cream.

For whatever reason, the ice cream made me start crying again. Was it because it was the middle of the day, and I was going to eat this ice cream alone in bed? Or was it just reality hitting me again?

I dug straight into the pint right at the counter, tears making the ice cream taste salty. It was probably both. I'd thought that Clark was... well, not "the one," if such a thing even existed, but I thought he was a good boyfriend on paper. He had a career, and he was nice enough.

*Nice enough?* How had my standards slipped so hard? Then again, it said a lot that Clark was one of my better boyfriends. My exes were so into me at first, then something always happened that made them drift away.

Jacob, who always gave me the best advice and wisdom, told me time and time again that it wasn't my fault. But looking back, wasn't I the common denominator in all my bad relationships?

The sound of a man arguing reached my ears. It had to be Austin—Noah and Jacob wouldn't have lost their shit on the phone to anyone.

Austin stopped in the doorway between the kitchen and the hall when he saw me, his hand still fisted in his short, dark brown hair. He filled the large doorway with his height and



broad, muscled shoulders, his colorful tattoos standing out against the light modern decor. His eyes widened, and he sucked in a breath.

“Something more important came up,” he said into the phone, hanging up. But then he immediately dialed another number, not taking his eyes off of me. “Yeah, come home. Something’s wrong with Olivia.”

He ended the call and finally entered the kitchen, his green eyes stormy with rage. But underneath that was worry.

“Who the fuck did this to you? Why are you crying?” He gently gripped my shoulders. “What happened?”

The intensity of his eyes made tears spill down my cheeks.

“Clark.” I sniffed, wiping away my tears and looking away from him. He moved into my line of vision again. “I found him fucking someone else in the sauna.”

Austin’s eyes flared with rage again, even more intense than when he found me. He stepped away from me, taking a deep breath to steady himself. He paced around, seemingly trying to gather himself and not fly off the handle. It took him a while, but eventually, he came back to me, his body language calmer but his eyes as fierce as ever.

“Do you want me to take care of Clark?” he asked, his deep voice low. I didn’t doubt that he’d wreck Clark without breaking a sweat. Austin was just as strong and vicious as he looked, even if his outside hid a protective heart. “Because I’d do it in a heartbeat.”

“No. No, it’s...” I blew out a breath, making the hair that had fallen loose from my bun float up, then down. “Well, it’s not fine. But it’s the reality, and I can’t go back and un-see it.”

“Just give me the word, and I’ll do it. Seriously. I’ve been kicking the asses of all the shitty men in your life since we were, what, eleven? Why would I stop now?”

He hadn’t kicked *all* the men’s asses, but only because he’d been too small when we were eleven. The first time we met, I was crying, just like this. My entire world had flipped upside down months before that day. One day, I was happy

and loved with my parents. The next, my parents were dead from an accident, and I was living with my uncle, who my parents hadn't even liked. But he was all I'd had left.

That day, my uncle had yelled at me for some minor mistake I'd made. I didn't even remember what it was since all of his angry moments blended together. Somehow, that was worse than when he just ignored me, which was how it was the rest of the time. Austin must have spotted me from his house next door and appeared next to me.

I didn't know him, but when he put his arm around me, some of the pain inside me disappeared. I felt like I was being noticed, but not for how I'd screwed up.

Then, he introduced me to Jacob, who lived not far from us, and later Noah, who met them both while playing basketball in the park that lay between the nice side of town and our slightly more run-down area.

"I know. Always my protector."

I gave him a hug. His body was warm, his muscles hard under his thin t-shirt. Even in this mess of a state I was in, I couldn't help but notice how good his body felt. I wanted to explore his body someday, as ridiculous as I knew that was. He was my best friend. As much as I loved him, it could never be like that. We had way too much to lose.

"Always." He held onto me just a beat longer than I expected him to, his hands lingering on my back.

We separated, a flush warming my cheeks. Austin had never outright said anything, but all the little glances and casual touches over the years told me he felt a similar way about me, at least physically.

But he had never pushed it. And honestly, he never would. He valued our friendship just as much as I did.

Besides, throwing myself into some other relationship, especially one with someone as important as Austin, was the last thing on my mind.

## CHAPTER 3

Seeing Olivia cry always hurt me, but seeing her this shaken up while Austin looked like he wanted to commit murder was a knife in my chest. Her beautiful blue eyes were puffy and red, and her normally good posture was deflated. Even her bun looked limp, like it had given up. Her light had dimmed.

I never wanted her to feel like that. I didn't give a shit if I'd dipped out of a Zoom meeting early. I just wanted to make her smile again.

"Liv, what happened?" I asked, crossing the kitchen in a few steps and resting my hands on her slender shoulders.

"Her asshole of a boyfriend cheated on her," Austin said, disgust written all over his face. "She caught them in the sauna."

I took a deep breath and let it out through my nose. I wasn't the kind of guy to blow up in rage, but whenever someone messed with Olivia, I always had trouble holding onto my control.

Who did Clark think he was, cheating on someone like Olivia? Did he know her at all? Anyone who spent more than a minute around her knew she was the kind of friend you'd want to hang onto for life. Being with her was just *easy*.

Did Clark not see how gorgeous she was? Even in her exhausted state, she was stunning. Her features were soft and feminine, and her body was the perfect mix of fit and lithe. But the way she carried herself made her even more attractive

to me, like she walked into every situation with poise and confidence.

I guaranteed whoever he was cheating with couldn't compare to Olivia in any sense. No woman did. I'd dated a handful of women in a semi-serious way, but none of them had ever held my attention the way that she could. If I didn't know how Jacob and Austin felt about her—the same way as I did—I would have made a move a long time ago. But I wasn't going to wreck our friendships for my own selfish needs.

Olivia wiped her eyes again, sniffing and pressing a hand to her chest, as if she was literally holding in a sob. My irritation took over my thoughts again.

I hadn't liked Clark before. Everything about him reeked of the kind of pampered trust fund kids I'd grown up around—the kids I'd turned away from in favor of Jacob, Olivia, and Austin. Sitting around with them at the park was infinitely better than zooming around in someone's dad's Lamborghini. They weren't going to judge me, or anyone else, for that matter.

Clark did, though. He always had some shit to say about whatever we were doing in the rare instances when he hung out with all of us. He hated the actor in the movie, or he'd heard something negative about some musician, or his clients were being assholes for reasons he claimed were unjustified—even though they were very justified.

It was fucking exhausting, even for me. Jacob managed to be patient, as always, but Austin just got up and left when he got tired of him.

I played nice for Olivia's sake, smiling at the right times. The guy had always felt off, like he wasn't all the way there for her. Part of him was always looking for the next opportunity. I hated that I was right.

I pulled Olivia into a hug so she wouldn't see the anger written all over my face. She smelled good, like her lemongrass shampoo, and her body felt so good against mine. She was tall, around five feet, nine inches, but I had about six inches on her. She was a perfect fit.

I pulled back. This wasn't about my dick—she needed me as her friend.

“Quit your job,” I said, still holding onto her shoulders. I didn't want to stop touching her. “You don't need to be in a place where you'll run into those assholes.”

Olivia shook her head. “I can't. I need the money.”

This nonsense again. We'd offered to “hire” her on at the company as a consultant, but not actually give her anything to do. Then her only worries would have been working on her wellness company and taking care of herself. She didn't need to run herself ragged teaching intense classes and taking on more and more private yoga sessions. I sighed, running my hand through my hair.

“We've already made you a partner of the firm, Liv. Just —”

“Take the paycheck. I know. You've told me a thousand times. You guys have already done enough.” She gestured around the kitchen. “You let me live here almost rent-free. You're amazing friends. It's more than enough. I can't just take your money when I'm capable of making my own.”

“You shouldn't pay rent at all,” Austin grumbled.

“I should.” Her eyes were fierce.

We weren't going to convince her to give in any time soon. Her stubborn streak drove me nuts, but on some level, I liked her backbone. She was sure of her ability to take care of herself, too. She wasn't going to sit around and wait for someone else to fix her problems.

“You're killing us, Liv,” I said, gently bopping her bun. “Someday we'll wear you down. Let you loosen up. A little yoga for that stubborn streak.”

The teasing lilt in my voice made her smile, just a little bit. But it was more than enough. I'd made her feel better than she'd felt before.

My phone buzzed in my pocket. The guards at the front gate of the neighborhood were calling.

“Yeah, hi,” I said, keeping my eyes on Olivia.

She had stopped crying, to my relief. I turned the phone on speaker.

“Hello, Mr. Anderson. We have a guest here to see Ms. Williams? His name is Clark,” the guard said.

“Fuck no,” Austin said. “Send him—”

“Wait, no.” Olivia put her hand on his arm. “I want him to explain himself.”

Austin and I exchanged a look, right as Jacob came bursting in, breathing hard, as if he’d run a mile at a full sprint to get here. He was almost always nearby at the office, but today was the one day he’d gone out to meet with a cybersecurity consultant.

“What happened?” he asked, his voice gentle as he approached Olivia.

Jacob was the only one who could keep his cool in the face of Olivia being upset, even though I doubted he was calm on the inside.

Olivia took a deep breath, steeling herself. “I’m going to talk to my cheating asshole ex.”

## CHAPTER 4



I'd rushed home as fast as possible when Austin told me something was wrong with Olivia, but I was the last one here. At least she hadn't been alone, crying her eyes out. Olivia crying wasn't unheard of, but it was rare enough that when she did, it was almost physically painful to witness. I always trusted Austin and Noah to keep her safe when I wasn't around.

But not safe enough. Clark had cheated on her? And she still wanted to talk to him? I wanted to make his life hell. Fighting him was more of Austin's thing, and giving him a tongue-lashing was Noah's. So I'd ruin him behind the scenes.

It would be so easy, too. He probably used the same password for every last one of his accounts, something simple. He went to an Ivy League university, but speaking to him for more than two seconds showed that his family had to have paid off the admissions department to get him in. I knew those kids well from my time as a scholarship kid at Harvard. I'd graduated almost ten years ago, but those types still pissed me off. Olivia and Austin had moved to the Boston area with us, even though they weren't in school, and they'd gotten a dose of these types as well. I wondered how Olivia tolerated him.

I doubted he'd satisfied Olivia the way she needed. I wasn't going to ask her, of course, but everything about Clark screamed that he never ate pussy but demanded that he get a blowjob all the time.

He was such a piece of shit. I was glad Olivia was free from him, but I wished it hadn't happened like this.

I swallowed hard, stuffing my rage down and keeping my expression calm. As good as my revenge would feel, I knew that Olivia wasn't the type to hurt people intentionally. She wouldn't want me to ruin his life—which I could easily do. Planting some malware on his computer was the closest I could get to revenge. What good was it being the chief technology officer of our company if I didn't use my knowledge from time to time?

That still wasn't enough, though. I hated not being able to control this situation, to actively steer it in the right direction. To steer it to a place where Olivia felt safe and didn't have to deal with this at all.

I pushed down the anger and fear multiplying inside of me. This was Olivia's battle to fight, and I had to stand behind her.

"Send him in," Noah said to the guard, who was still on the line, and ended the call.

"I can't be within arm's reach of this motherfucker," Austin said, going to the other side of the kitchen island. "I don't trust myself to keep my cool."

"We're just going to chat," Olivia told him, holding a hand up. "It's not going to be a huge fight."

"We're not leaving." I put my hand on her upper back.

"Yeah, of course not," Noah added. "I don't trust him being alone with you."

"Just let us talk, okay?" Olivia gave us each a meaningful look.

She was capable of handling herself, but it wasn't easy to let her be in harm's way. We unlocked the front door remotely, and Clark came in.

"Liv?" he called. "Where are you, baby?"

Austin's jaw twitched at the pet name. It left a sour taste in my mouth, too. It sounded so wrong on his lips, so insincere.

"I'm in the kitchen." Olivia's voice didn't waver.

Clark came around the corner, pausing when he saw me, Noah, and Austin. Clark was in shape, but in terms of raw strength, all three of us would win, and he knew it. Plus, I doubted he'd ever been in a fistfight.

Clark tucked his hands into the pockets of his shorts, curling in on himself like he was trying to disappear. His hair was still damp, and his cheeks were flushed. Had he stopped to take a shower before coming here? He should have gotten in his car and rushed over to her if he was really sorry.

An apology wasn't enough, though. How was Olivia strong enough to stand here when he'd betrayed her?

"Can I talk to Olivia for a minute in private?" Clark asked.

"No." Austin crossed his arms over his chest, the muscles in his biceps bulging.

Clark looked at Noah and me, as if we'd ever relent. Both of us echoed Austin. Clark's nostrils flared, and he sighed.

"Fine." He took one step into the kitchen, and Austin started to close the gap, like a bodyguard. Clark stopped in his tracks. "Olivia, I'm sorry. That woman meant nothing to me. At all."

I held back a bitter laugh. Really? Was he really using that line? It didn't matter whether the woman meant anything to him. What mattered was that he had shown Olivia that *she* didn't matter. That he felt like he could go behind her back and do something as awful as he had. I opened my mouth to say this, but Olivia held up a hand.

"You're a real piece of shit, Clark," she said. "You can't seriously pretend this wasn't a huge deal."

"I'm not pretending." Clark's genuine confusion baffled me. He really didn't understand why his 'apology' wasn't worth anything? I already knew he wasn't the smartest guy, but somehow, he'd sunk even lower than that. "I'm serious. That woman was just a mistake."

Olivia frowned. "A mistake is forgetting to run by the store on the way home, not fucking someone else in the sauna because you thought I wasn't going to be there."

“Seriously,” I said, unable to hold back for once. “You’re way too good for him, Liv. You deserve someone as incredible as you are.”

Her cheeks flushed, the pink trailing all the way down to her modest cleavage. How much lower did that blush go? My cock twitched against my will, and I forced my eyes away from her.

“Babe, we’re supposed to go on vacation in a few days for my birthday. What are we supposed to do?” Clark asked, swallowing.

“Don’t call her ‘babe,’” I said. “She’s made it clear she wants nothing to do with you.”

Clark shot me an irritated look, then looked back to Olivia. His pleading, apologetic look was gone, replaced with irritation. “Liv. Come on. We’re so good together.”

He started towards her just a touch too fast, and Austin flew into action, punching Clark clear across the face. Clark staggered back and fell on his ass, slumping over. He was out cold.

“Austin.” Olivia sighed, resting her hands on her hips. She didn’t seem all that mad, though.

“Well, he was coming at you. I was just being proactive.” Austin nudged Clark with his toe, and Clark groaned. “He’s fine.”

I pulled out my phone and dialed security. “I’ll have security take him and his car home.”

“Good.” Olivia looked down at her ex. “I’ve heard more than enough from him.”

## CHAPTER 5

“Coffee?” Jacob asked me as I dragged myself into the kitchen two days later.

It was six-thirty in the morning, so the light was barely trickling in through the huge floor-to-ceiling windows on the far side of the room.

He was in old basketball shorts and a white t-shirt, his dark curls messy, as if he'd just rolled out of bed. He hadn't had the chance to put in his contacts yet, and his glasses were low on his nose as he looked down at the French press filled with coffee.

Jacob wasn't massively muscular, but he was cut, his frame fit like a soccer player's. I rubbed my eyes, trying to push that thought away. My best friends were hot, and denying that reality would have been stupid. But I really didn't need to be thinking that right now. If anything, all my thoughts should have been focused on being grateful for them.

The guys had been nothing but supportive of me and made sure that they took care of anything I might have needed while I sorted myself out. Thankfully, my schedule had been rearranged to have two days off in a row. I'd laid around, cooking myself elaborate meals to keep my hands and mind busy.

When the guys were done with work, they hung out with me. They'd tried to take the days off with me, which was touching. Especially when it came to Jacob, who was meticulous with his schedule and day. But I refused their offer. I didn't want to throw them off their game.

We sat on the back patio, just relaxing, then went inside and watched all of my favorite movies for a while.

I would have been fully rested and recharged in any other circumstance, but my mind was still wrung out. I wasn't as sad as I thought I'd be, but I didn't have a name for whatever I was going through. Upset, but weirdly relieved? Glad it was over, but nostalgic for when our relationship was good? Whatever it was, it drained all my energy.

"Please." I held back a huge yawn, but it came out moments later. "I slept like garbage. How do you look so perky and fresh?"

Jacob looked down at himself, his eyebrows going up. Then he went into the fridge and pulled out my favorite creamer, then his. "Perky and fresh? I was just in bed two seconds ago. If anyone looks awake, it's you."

"What, because I have some clothes on?" I'd showered last night and laid out all of my clothes to make getting ready as easy as possible. I never wore much makeup to work besides a little waterproof mascara and tinted moisturizer, so I was good to go in ten minutes. "Or is it because this is the first day in a while that you've seen me in anything besides an old t-shirt and leggings?"

"No, it's because you're up and ready to go back to work despite everything you've been through. You have a bunch of vacation days, but you're not taking them. Some people wouldn't be brave enough to face the issue head-on."

A bit of the knot of tension in my chest loosened up. Jacob's words always did that in a way that was borderline magical.

"I guess so."

"Take it easy, though," he said, pressing the plunge of the French press down. "You don't have to be a hundred percent at your best. I'm sure your students will have a good time in your classes, anyway."

I smiled, just a little bit. "Thanks, Jacob."

“No problem.” He grabbed my travel mug from the cabinet and filled it up, topping it with the perfect amount of creamer. “Have a good day, Liv.”

“You, too.” I gave him a hug and left, getting ahead of morning traffic.

Even walking into the gym, its clean, citrusy scent washing over me, made me queasy. Work was tainted now. Would it ever feel the same, or would I wander around like it was a haunted house, on edge, as if Blaire and Clark were around every corner?

“Hey, Olivia,” Marissa, the girl who worked the front desk, said with a hesitant wave.

Great. She’d probably heard. Then again, everyone in a quarter-mile radius had probably heard me yelling at Clark the other day.

“Hi.” I tried to keep my tone upbeat, but I didn’t muster enough energy to sound neutral.

The coffee was delicious, just not enough to perk me up. I desperately needed some energy back before the spin class I was going to teach, so I went to warm up in the studio and get some music going. I turned the corner towards the row of rooms and ran right into Clark and Blaire. We stared at each other for a beat.

Why had they come back? Clark knew today was a day I worked, so they had to have come on purpose. Maybe they had the same logic as criminals who returned to the crime scene after the fact to relish in what they’d done. I wouldn’t have put it past them at this point.

My blood simmered. The guys had thrown Clark out on his ass, so he’d probably come back to prove some sort of stupid point. At least he had a hideous black eye, the bruise still purple and slightly swollen. He was always a huge baby about even a small cut, so the shiner probably drove him nuts. I hoped Blaire had to listen to him whine about it all day.

“You’re showing your face here again?” Blaire looked me up and down, her eyes narrowing.



“I work here. Of course I’m showing my face again. You’re the ones who shouldn’t be here.” I snorted, trying to step around them, but they didn’t move. “I have a class in a half hour. Excuse me.”

I pushed past Blaire, bumping against her shoulder. She let out a cry of pain, even though I’d barely tapped her. Clark took her hand, concern written all over his face. Had he ever looked at me that way? Then again, I wasn’t that soft. He glared at me.

“Looks like you’ve been influenced by those assholes you call friends.” He gestured at his face. “Who does this to someone, or just sits back and lets it happen? Brutes who aren’t smart enough to just talk to someone, that’s who.”

My mouth gaped open. Out of all the insults he could have lobbed, he chose the one that made the least sense. Austin might have been the muscle without a college education, but he was just as intelligent as Jacob and Noah. He learned about the security industry from working as a bodyguard when we were nineteen, which had sparked the idea for the company in the first place.

“That’s what you’re going with?” I turned to face both of them. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed people gathering at either end of the hall, but I didn’t care. “Says the guy whose dad had to donate a small fortune to get you into college *and* keep all the professors from failing you. My best friends are the smartest, most caring men I know. You’re lucky that anyone would even breathe your name in the same sentence as theirs.”

Clark’s cheeks went violently red. It was a low blow, but I’d let go of the idea of playing nice the moment I saw Blaire riding his dick in the sauna. The longer I looked at him, scrambling to think of a good comeback, the more I wondered what the hell the past version of me saw in him. He was handsome, sure, but he was average at best in every other way. Superficially charming.

And not that great in bed, to add insult to injury. He always treated me giving him a blowjob as a foregone conclusion but

half-assed going down on me like it was a chore.

“You...” Clark sputtered.

“Olivia!” my boss, Pete, barked from the end of the hallway. He almost never raised his voice, so he caught my attention right away. “Don’t speak to our guests that way.”

I blinked. His office was at the end of the hallway, and he always kept his door open, so he should have heard the whole exchange. I didn’t start anything. But Pete stared at me as if I was wrong. I’d been a model employee for the years I’d worked here and had a good following of students who sought out my classes specifically. I’d never, ever had a bad interaction with any of them, even if they were rude. And now Pete was calling me out in front of even more guests?

“You know what?” I threw my hands up. “I don’t deserve this. I’m done. I quit.”

“Wait, Olivia,” Pete said, following me down the hall. “You can’t just quit. This was just a one-off incident, wasn’t it?”

“It was, but I just...” How could I explain how much I was questioning my life choices to him? He was a nice guy, but he didn’t understand. “I just need to reevaluate a lot of things, and I can’t do it here.”

“Olivia, I’ll give you a raise. Or better hours—”

“It’s not about that, Pete. I’m just done.” I hiked my bag up higher on my shoulder and walked out the door.

He didn’t follow me.

My heart was pounding as if I’d just taken a spin class myself. Had I really just done that? I was shaken, but less than I assumed I’d be, especially since I’d protested against quitting my job to the guys. I had done a great job at the gym, so I’d have references if I ever wanted to teach again. And I did have some savings to last me for a bit. I needed some time to collect myself before making my next move.

I pulled my phone out and called Jacob. Noah was usually on the phone with clients and making deals, while Austin was

sometimes training the security personnel without his phone, so Jacob was the easiest to reach during the day. He was always behind his standing desk, coding away on his numerous screens and managing to take in all the details.

“Hey, Liv,” he said after one ring. “What’s up?”

“I need to talk to all of you. Are Noah and Austin there?” I turned the corner toward the parking lot.

“They can be. Hold on.” I heard him typing furiously. “Are you all right?”

I took a deep breath and let it out. “I think so?”

“You think so?” he asked.

I easily envisioned his eyebrows going up.

“Yeah. It’s...” I unlocked my car and slid inside, locking the doors behind me. “I think it’s good. Or will be.”

“Olivia?” It was Noah. “Switch to video chat.”

“Oh, god, I look terrible.” I wiped my eyes.

When had I started crying? They were tears of frustration, at least. I wasn’t going to shed another sad tear over Clark.

“I’m sure you look beautiful,” Jacob said.

A notification for a video call popped up on my screen, and I accepted it. If anyone looked good, it was the two of them. Jacob’s face was the perfect balance between masculine and approachable. He’d tidied up his curls and changed into a dark button-down shirt since this morning.

Noah’s face looked like a Classical Greek statue—regal and handsome. Combined with his golden hair and blue eyes, he looked like a modern Hercules in an expensive suit.

Austin walked into Jacob’s office moments later, his phone in hand and his expression serious.

“Jacob was right,” Noah said, adjusting the angle of Jacob’s phone on a stand.

Even though I was self-conscious about how I looked in that moment, seeing the three of them calmed me down.

They'd help me with anything.

“What’s going on?” Austin asked.

“I still want to go on the vacation I booked, and I want you all to come with me,” I said. “The reservations are in my name, anyway, so why not? And there’s already space for all of us because the two-bedroom suites had a better view, and they were in my price range. It’s only three nights.”

The three of them considered my words, looking at each other.

“I’m in,” Noah said. “We just have to make some arrangements with the company.”

The others agreed, bringing a real smile to my face for the first time today.

## CHAPTER 6

**W**e all needed this vacation. When was the last time we'd been away? At least a year or two. Our security firm had grown quickly and consumed most of our time. Leaving it, even just for a few days, was a big deal, but Olivia needed us, and being there for her was more important. Our team was more than capable of keeping the ship running without us at this point.

"It's nice to get off a flight and not feel like I'm unfolding myself," Olivia said with a smile. "First class has so much legroom. Thanks for upgrading me."

I was very, very grateful for the legroom, too. Olivia was wearing a flirty sundress that showed off her long, graceful legs, and having extra space let me ogle all of that bare skin more easily. She hadn't noticed. Did she even realize how much she drove me nuts? Probably not. It had to stay that way.

"We'd be assholes to leave you squished back there in coach while we were up front," I said. "Even for a relatively short flight."

"I don't think I'd even fit in coach," Austin said, hiking one of Olivia's bags up higher on his shoulder. He was the tallest of the three of us at six feet, three inches, and the bulkiest. He came from humble origins, but the idea of him in coach now was laughable.

"They'd have to check you like baggage for you to fit," Liv said, a grin spreading across her face.

Austin shuddered, but a half-smile was on his lips. The tension that was always between his brows had lessened, too.

“Damn, not even an overhead bin?” I nudged Olivia and laughed. “And I thought you two were friends.”

Olivia slid her sunglasses on as we walked out of the airport. The temperature wasn’t much warmer or cooler than it was back in Florida, but seeing the almost uninterrupted paradise beyond the airport made the weather feel better. Optimistic, somehow.

A driver was waiting for us by the time we got our checked luggage, and he whisked us off to the resort.

“What do you guys want to do first?” Olivia asked, perching her sunglasses on top of her head again. The windows of the luxury SUV were tinted enough to keep the sun out without making the car feel too dark. “Maybe the beach, just to relax until dinner and drinks? There’s dancing, apparently, at one of the bars, if we want to do that after.”

“Dancing?” Jacob raised a dark eyebrow.

“Yeah. You know, moving your body to music?” Olivia gave him a cheeky smile. “Have I ever seen you dance before?”

“The better question is, do you want to see him dance?” I asked.

Jacob wasn’t bad at dancing, really, but seeing him doing it was like watching a cat walk on its hind legs for a few steps—possible, but weird as fuck. He was always in control, and to be honest, a little uptight sometimes. He didn’t even listen to music all that much.

Jacob chuckled. “Exactly.”

“Now I’m curious.” Olivia tapped her foot on his. “Austin, have you seen him dance?”

“If I have, I bleached it out of my memory.” Austin ran a hand through his hair and rested his elbow on the armrest. “What about getting drinks by the pool and figuring it all out later? We don’t need to plan anything yet.”

“Sounds good to me,” I said. “We have a lot of time.”

The space between the buildings of town spread out more and more until we were on a secluded road, weaving through tropical plants. Finally, the resort came into view. Its grounds were expansive, with a golf course on one side of us and multiple buildings with suites, restaurants, and other activities on the other, right along the shore. The water was crystal blue, and I couldn't wait to dive in.

Hotel staff appeared as we pulled up and unloaded our bags onto a cart. The lobby was open and airy, with the check-in desk on the far side of it. A man and woman were the only two people in front of us. Something about the man was vaguely familiar, setting off an alarm in the back of my mind.

He turned when he heard us come up.

Fucking Clark. And the woman he was cheating on Olivia with, based on the look on Olivia's face. Like Clark, the woman had the same pretentious energy as the people I'd grown up with, like everyone else was below her. Jacob put his hand on Olivia's back, as if to steady her.

"What the fuck are you doing here?" Olivia blurted.

"Would you like your charges to go to the credit card on file?" the woman behind the desk said to Clark, either oblivious to the tension between all of us or a pro at hiding discomfort.

Olivia said no right as Clark said yes. Austin shifted his weight, as if he was getting ready to jump in, but I took a half-step in front of him. We didn't need to start off our trip with a fistfight, even if Clark deserved to get his ass kicked again.

"No," Olivia said again, glaring at Clark. "That's my credit card, and that's my reservation. You can't just decide to use it."

Clark rested one elbow on the check-in desk, looking Olivia up and down. If Olivia didn't claw his eyes out for looking at her that way, one of us would.

"You didn't want to get back together, and I wasn't going to let my birthday vacation go to waste." He shrugged. "It's in



both of our names, and it looks like I got here first. So I get the room.”

I stopped Austin from lunging at him, but barely. The solution was simple and didn't involve escalating the situation.

“Is the penthouse available?” I asked, still standing between Austin and Clark.

Clark had rightfully shrunk back. Hell, the black eye that Austin had given him was still visible.

“Um...” The person behind the front desk finally looked uncomfortable and typed away on her computer. “Yes. It's available.”

“Don't use the credit card on file for Clark's room. He can have it and pay for it himself.” I pulled my wallet from my pocket and got out my Amex Black Card. I shoved past Clark and slapped it down on the desk. “We'll take the penthouse for ourselves.”

## CHAPTER 7

I was still so shaken up from seeing Clark that the guys had to steer me toward our penthouse room. Clark had some serious balls all of a sudden to try that in front of Austin, Jacob, and Noah. But of course, they had it handled.

The penthouse suite was gorgeous, sitting at the fifth floor of the resort. One entire wall of the living room was made up of floor-to-ceiling windows with a view of the ocean. A balcony was just beyond that, the perfect spot to have a cup of coffee in the morning. I peered into one of the bedrooms on one side of the suite, then the other, frowning. The views were also great, but we had a problem.

“Hey, it looks like there’s one king bed in one room, then two queen beds in the other,” I said. “I can take the couch.”

“Nope,” Jacob said right away. “You can’t sleep on the couch.”

“Yeah, one of us will take it.” Austin put down my suitcase, which he’d carried around ever since we’d left Miami.

“I can. I’m the smallest.” I rested my hands on my hips. “What, is Austin supposed to squeeze on there? Or any of you, really?”

“I’ll take the couch,” Jacob said, glancing at the other two. “I guess I’m the second smallest if you want to decide based on that. You can take the king bed, then Austin and Noah can take the queen beds.”

I snorted. Jacob was at least six-foot-one. He wasn't as bulky as Austin or Noah, but he was still muscular and fit. Just by eyeballing it, I knew he was too tall for it.

"Lie down on the couch and tell me this is a good idea." I said, pointing to it. Jacob sighed and did as I said. His legs dangled off the end at an awkward angle. Even when he curled them up, he looked uncomfortable. "See? We can share the king bed. There'll be plenty of room."

Jacob blinked, something unreadable coming across his face. He was the most even-keeled of all of us, so being unable to get what was going on in his head wasn't that strange. But still, something in my chest tingled. I would be sharing a bed with one of my hot best friends. Of course I felt *something*. I had eyes.

"Okay, fine," Jacob finally said, sitting up.

"Now that we have that sorted, want to go down to the pool?" Austin asked, taking my bag into the room with the king bed. "I want a drink."

All of us were in. I took the bathroom first and changed out of my sundress and into my bikini. My breasts weren't big by any means, but this bikini top didn't leave much to the imagination. The bottoms weren't much better, but I didn't care. I liked my body and wanted to get a little sun everywhere.

I threw a sarong around my hips and met the guys in the living room. I didn't miss how their eyes skimmed over me, even for the briefest second. But to be fair, I was looking at them, too. Austin wore a shirt with the sleeves cut off, revealing his muscular arms. Jacob and Noah were wearing t-shirts, but the way they were cut on their bodies showed off their sculpted forms. If they were making me sweat wearing shirts, I was going to melt when they took them off.

We went down to the pool, threw our cover-ups on a chair, and jumped in. A swim-up bar was in the middle, and we went over to order. I got their special, some twist on a Mai Tai, and the guys got their regulars—a beer for Austin, a whiskey sour for Noah, and a Jack and Coke for Jacob.

“You guys didn’t want to go for something beachier?” I asked, sinking down onto one of the seats along the bar and sipping my drink. This thing was dangerous—it didn’t taste that boozy, but I knew it had to be, based on the description. “Like this thing, which is way too good?”

“Nah.” Austin wandered closer to me, sitting to my right. “Besides, we have a bunch of time. No need to go balls to the wall from the start.”

Noah gave me, then my drink, a pointed look. I laughed.

“What?” I asked, as if I didn’t already know.

“Little Miss Lightweight,” he teased, sitting on my other side. Jacob took the seat next to him. “Take it easy.”

“I know, I know.” I took another sip, savoring it. “I’m just excited to finally be here.”

Even with Clark and Blaire roaming around the resort grounds, the knot that had been tightening in my chest had finally loosened. I had a lot to figure out, but I didn’t have to worry about it right now. All I had to worry about was what we were going to do later and whether we were going to do that snorkeling tour I saw online.

We talked as we got our first drinks down, the bartender sometimes chiming in whenever he was near us.

“Oh, by the way, there’s a pool volleyball tournament happening in about fifteen minutes,” he said to us as he slid Austin another beer. “If you’re interested.”

Noah grinned, mostly at Austin. “You in?”

“Yeah, because you need me to win.” Austin took a swig of his beer. He was all business. “What about you, Jacob?”

“Sure. Someone has to keep you two from imploding.” The corner of Jacob’s mouth quirked up as he looked at me. “You want to join, too?”

“Uh, I’ll pass.” If their volleyball game was anything like them doing any other competitive thing, it would devolve into a bunch of trash talking, even if they were on the same team.

In good fun, of course, but they got really into it. Even Jacob, sometimes. “But I’ll definitely watch.”

The guys went over to sign up, and I took my second drink—a sparkling, pineapple-infused water because I really needed to slow down—over to the lounges alongside the pool. I put the guys’ shirts on the seat next to me and stretched out. The other teams of three were in the water, too, but my eyes always drifted to my friends.

Just based on their size and muscles, I put my bet on them to win. Seeing all three of them, shirtless and sun-kissed, was making my body heat from the inside out.

The few girlfriends I had always wondered how I was just friends with three gorgeous guys. I always shrugged and said that we’d known each other forever, so it wasn’t like that.

But was that even true?

I sighed, redoing my ponytail and adjusting my bikini top. Admittedly, I’d had little flares of these feelings before, especially when I was single. Maybe it was my increasingly long dry spell, but the more I thought about it, the less that excuse made sense. Something deeper was going on beyond the fact that Clark hadn’t left me sexually satisfied ever, but I wasn’t sure what it was.

“Hey, can you throw me my sunglasses, Liv?” Noah asked, swimming up to the side of the pool.

“Yeah.” I grabbed them from the tote bag I’d brought and walked them over to him. Knowing him, his sunglasses cost a thousand dollars or more.

“Thanks.” He slid them on, giving me that big, charming smile of his. “I’d say wish us luck, but do we really need it?”

I snorted. “You guys are out of control the minute competition comes up.”

Noah just laughed and swam back over to Jacob and Austin. A few minutes later, the game started, the guys on the side closest to me. Just as I suspected, Noah was completely carefree. Austin was intense and a little too into it, given the

fact that they'd only win a free spa treatment, and Jacob was being a good teammate to them both.

My book was in my bag somewhere, but the game had my full attention. Their muscles rippled with every volley and jump, the sun gleaming off their skin. Sunlight made Austin's tattoos stand out, the way his body moved making the intricate art dance on his biceps. I'd known him before he had even one tattoo—he got his first at sixteen from some guy who was completely sketchy, but talented—but now they were such a part of him that I couldn't remember how he'd looked before.

As if he knew I was looking at him, Austin glanced over his shoulder at me. I gave him a small wave, and he nodded in my direction before going back to the game.

A few people had wandered over, watching the game. Most of them were women, and I didn't blame them whatsoever. The whole pool was radiating masculinity so potent that I had to press my thighs together.

The water weighed Jacob's swim trunks down, so with every jump, his waistband drifted lower and revealed more of the V of muscle that I always found tempting. I wanted to explore the trail of dark hair below his belly button and see how far it went. Same with Noah. He hopped out of the pool to grab the ball when it went astray, and the wet fabric of his swimsuit clung to his thick, muscular thighs and ass.

I pressed my thighs together again, trying to stop the pool of wetness that was already forming. This was bad.

"Are you with them?" a woman asked, momentarily pulling my gaze from the guys. I nodded. "Which one's your boyfriend, and which ones are left for the rest of us?"

I laughed, then paused. The thought of any of them with these perfectly nice women sent a knife of jealousy through me. Why? The guys had dated before, though none of them were ever super serious with a woman. I hadn't been close to their exes, but them being in the picture didn't dig under my skin quite like this.

“Oh, I’m with all of them,” I said before I could stop myself.

The woman’s eyebrows went up in surprise before she smiled. “Well, damn. Lucky you.”

She moved on, still eyeing the guys. I looked back at them, too.

Now that the words were out of my mouth, it all made sense. This wasn’t just a passing feeling. Something had shifted inside of me, and I couldn’t ignore it. I wanted all three of my best friends to myself.



## CHAPTER 8

**W**e won the volleyball tournament easily, not that I expected anything different. Austin's competitive energy alone was more than enough to push us to the top. Add in our collective athleticism, and we had it in the bag. The organizer from the resort handed over a voucher for a free spa treatment, which Noah promptly handed Olivia.

"Thanks, guys," she said with a smile. She held the voucher out to us. "You're sure none of you want this? You guys need rest and relaxation, too."

"You deserve it more than any of us." I gently pushed it back towards her. "Just take it, Olivia."

"Fine. Thanks again." She tucked it into her bag, yawning. "Right now, I want to take a nap, though. Should I meet you guys back at the room?"

"We can walk you," Noah said, rubbing a towel through his wet hair.

"Yeah, it's not too far out of the way from the restaurant." Austin nodded his head toward the casual restaurant behind us.

"I can take her. I already planned to take a nap," I said. Traveling always took it out of me, even though we hadn't needed to wake up early.

"Okay. Want us to bring you anything later?" Noah asked.

"I think I'm good." Olivia hiked her bag up higher on her shoulder. "What about you, Jacob?"

"I'm fine for now. I'll grab us something if we feel like it later." I took the tote bag from Olivia, even though it wasn't

all that heavy. “I’ve got this. Let’s go.”

We walked one way, and Noah and Austin walked the other. The pool area was busy now, so we had to move out of the way of other clusters of people. I nudged her to go in front of me, which was both a gift and a curse. The wrap around her hips clung to her slightly damp thighs and ass, and pulling my eyes away from her was almost impossible.

I shouldn’t have been staring. Olivia was our best friend, and she’d just been through a horrible breakup. Even though the split had been a long time coming—I’d never liked Clark—she wasn’t going to get over it right away.

As much as I ran that through my head, I couldn’t convince my cock of that. Especially seeing her in a tiny bikini, soaking up the sun.

I’d eyed her a few times throughout the volleyball tournament and found her looking back at us. The way her eyes had greedily taken all of us in was impossible to ignore. But lust was lust. At the end of the day, it didn’t mean she actually wanted to do anything.

And I didn’t even want to touch my other feelings for her. They were an unspoken truth between the three of us—all of us loved Olivia more than we ever let on. Going there was another issue that I stuffed down even further than my lust.

I pulled my eyes away from her ass and stared at the back of her head as she walked in front of me. We took the elevator back up to the penthouse and kicked off our flip-flops near the door.

Olivia yawned and stretched, letting out a moan that made my cock jerk.

“I think I’m going to rinse the chlorine off my skin first,” she said, looking back at me as she walked toward the bedroom. “Do you want—”

Her toe caught on the corner of a rug, and she nearly fell right through the glass coffee table. I caught her by the wrist at the last second, pulling her into my arms to keep her from crashing through.

“Shit,” she said, breathing hard from the spike in adrenaline. Having her in my arms like this, her perky breasts just inches from me, made my heart race. “Thanks for the save.”

“No problem.” I swallowed, putting her back on her feet. I kept my arm around her. “Wouldn’t have wanted you to crash through that glass.”

“Definitely not.” Her hands lingered on my chest, her fingers almost unconsciously spreading across my bare skin.

Even that light touch made my blood heat, pushing my control to the edge. I hadn’t intended to rile her up by not bothering to put my shirt on, but apparently, I had.

I looked into Olivia’s eyes. They mirrored the desire that I was sure was all over my face. She shifted in my grip, like she wanted to be closer. Was it the relative chill of the room or her arousal that was making her nipples hard?

I wasn’t sure who went for the kiss first, but seconds later, our lips met. At first it was tentative, like we weren’t sure of ourselves, but our hesitation didn’t last long. I pulled her more firmly against my chest, taking her mouth without reservation. She tasted faintly of her fruity cocktail, plus something that was uniquely her. I cupped the back of her neck with one hand and let the other explore.

I skimmed over the long, toned muscles of her back, down to her rounded ass. I wanted to touch her everywhere, all at once, but she pressed against my chest and broke the kiss.

“Everything all right?” I asked, freezing.

Had I crossed a line? I never wanted her to feel uncomfortable, ever.

“Yeah, but...” She bit her lip, which was already kiss-swollen. “We can’t do this. You’re my best friend—all three of you are—and I’ve wanted this for so long. But I can’t choose between you. It would wreck everything.”

I tucked a stray lock of hair behind her ear. “You don’t have to choose, and I don’t expect you to. I understand.”

“You do?”

“Yeah. And I know I need you right now.” I smoothed my thumb along her bottom lip.

She looked into my eyes for a moment before she closed the gap between us again. She threw everything into this kiss, digging her fingers into my damp hair. My need for her overflowed. I wanted every inch of her, right now. I’d never had this kind of uncontrolled desire before, like I was going to die if I didn’t taste her everywhere.

It was freeing. I spent so much time on a schedule, planning out everything and mapping out every possible outcome so I had everything under control. But I had never planned for this, and I was perfectly okay with that.

I picked Olivia up with ease, her legs going around my waist, and brought her over to the king-sized bed. Both of us had the same idea after I laid her down on the bed, and we peeled off our swimsuits. She was flawless, her nipples hard and her skin soft. I raked my teeth across her neck, making her gasp, and worked my way down.

She arched into my mouth as I sucked and nipped on each of her nipples, but I didn’t linger. I knew exactly what I wanted, and it was between her thighs. I slid her up further on the bed, so I had enough room to lie on my stomach. My cock was achingly hard, and the friction almost set me off, but I refused to come before she did.

“Jacob,” Olivia gasped as I ran my tongue up her center.

“You taste unbelievable,” I said, gripping her hips and diving into her again. “I don’t know if I’ll be able to leave this spot.”

I tasted her core all over, alternating between teasing flicks of my tongue and sucking her clit between my lips. Her hips writhed under me, so I braced an arm across her hipbones and kept going. Every gasp and shiver made me harder, and I absently ground my cock against the comforter, just for a bit of relief.

I slid a finger inside of her, which she clenched around so tightly that I could hardly drag it back out again. She dug her fingers into my hair, gasping and crying out without me even moving. When I crooked my finger just so, she exploded, flying over the edge in the most beautiful orgasm I'd ever given a woman. Her thighs wrapped around my head as she rode through it, and I didn't stop until she squirmed away.

I kneeled, looking at her splayed out beneath me. She looked spent, but I wasn't done with her yet. I stroked my cock, even though I was so sensitive that it nearly hurt.

"I need to be inside you," I said, my voice gravelly.

"I can tell."

"I don't have a condom on me, though." I wasn't in the habit of carrying them because I never had random hookups.

Shit.

"It's okay. I got tested after Clark, and everything came back negative. I'm on the pill, too," she said.

Olivia got onto her knees and crawled towards me. I wanted to see her on her knees in front of me again and again.

Instead of laying on her back, she stayed on her hands and knees, turning and lifting her ass towards me. The sight of her slick pussy, pink and ready for my cock, nearly undid me. I grabbed her hips and pulled her towards me, lining her entrance up with my tip.

I took a second to take her in, her fit curves spread out beneath me, her hair spilling over her tanned shoulders. I'd dreamed of this so many times, and now it was finally happening.

I pushed inside her, holding my breath as I inched forward. She was snug and hot and wet, a perfect fit. Once I was fully seated inside of her, I gripped her waist to get a hold on myself.

"Wait," I said, squeezing her waist harder as she tried to push back on me. "You have no idea how close I already am, sweetheart. Don't tease me."

She rested her elbows on the mattress and looked back at me, her smile lighting up her face. “Fine, I won’t tease this time around.”

I thrust into her hard, making her gasp. “This time around?”

“I already know I won’t be able to give this up,” she said, gripping the comforter as I started fucking her earnestly.

I’d never dreamed Olivia would feel *this* good. She appealed to every one of my senses—her taste, the scent of her arousal, her moans, everything. I wasn’t sure what I’d done to deserve this, but I was glad I had her now.

## CHAPTER 9



I slid the keycard to our room in as quietly as I could. Of course, the clicking of the lock was loud as hell. I didn't want to wake Olivia or Jacob, especially since I was just popping in to grab a fresh shirt before returning to the restaurant. I'd bumped into someone holding a frozen piña colada, moments after I'd pulled my shirt back on. The sticky fabric was in a ball in my hand. The situation was moderately annoying, but not enough to kill my good mood.

I expected the lights to be off, but all of them were on. And Olivia and Jacob were definitely not sleeping.

Olivia was bent over on the bed, her chestnut brown hair spilling onto the comforter. She was doing a terrible job of muffling her moans in the blankets. Then again, I was surprised she was still on the bed with how hard Jacob was fucking her. The complete bliss on his face was unlike anything I'd ever seen on him before.

I stared at them, unsure of how to process this or what to do. Had they even noticed me? My eyes fell to Olivia, who had lifted her head, her eyes squeezed shut in pleasure. My cock hardened in an instant. How long had I jerked off to thoughts of her in this exact position? More times than I could count. Now she was right in front of me. With our other best friend.

Part of me realized that I should have been jealous or upset that he had her, but I just didn't feel that way whatsoever. I was only painfully hard and hungry to join in.

Jacob finally noticed me, his cheeks flushed, but he didn't scramble to cover himself. Olivia looked back to see what the problem was, then looked at me as well. She didn't move, either.

The room was nearly silent besides the sound of Jacob's and Olivia's breathing. My brain sputtered back to life, and I blurted out the first clear thing that came into my thoughts.

"Do you have room for a third?"

Olivia glanced over her shoulder at Jacob, who nodded. She turned back to me and gestured for me to come closer. I didn't need any convincing. I came over to the edge of the bed, and she reached for the waistband of my swim trunks.

I helped her push my trunks down, freeing my cock. I was completely hard already. Olivia grasped me, her hand small and warm, gently stroking. I sucked in a breath through my teeth as she ran her tongue along the underside of my cock.

"That's it, Liv," I murmured, gathering her hair in one of my hands. "Suck me deep."

Her enthusiasm made the blowjob so much hotter. She loved giving me pleasure, and I loved watching her be pleased. I couldn't wait to feel more of her, to be inside of her.

The whole situation was so damn easy. We fell into sync, Jacob thrusting into her, pushing her forward until my cock went deep into her throat. At first, I worried I was going too far in, but she welcomed me, working her hand in tandem with her mouth. Feeling the vibration of her moans around my cock was almost painfully pleasurable. My legs were getting weak from all the sensations, so I held onto the bottom post of the bed to steady myself.

"I'm close," Olivia cried, taking her mouth off my cock.

"Come for us, beautiful," I said, cupping her chin.

Jacob muttered something that sounded like, *I'm close* also, but he was too far gone to speak clearly. He pounded his release into her, coming with a gasp right as Olivia did. The two rode it out together, Olivia's hand still around my cock.

The moment she gathered herself again, she took me deep into her mouth, sucking and licking me with so much enthusiasm that I nearly lost it in an instant.

I held on just long enough to bask in how hot and wet and perfect her mouth was before I came with a low moan, spilling down her throat. In most circumstances, I lasted a lot longer, but shit, this was far from a usual circumstance. I was surprised I hadn't lost it without even being touched, so I wasn't going to beat myself up about this. She swallowed every single drop, looking up at me with a smile in her eyes.

I grinned back down at her before leaning down to kiss her forehead.

"You smell like piña colada," Olivia said, sitting back on her heels.

I loved seeing her tits when she was on all fours, but I loved them even more head on. I couldn't wait to get a taste.

"Yeah, had a bit of an incident and needed to get a fresh shirt." I looked behind me, where I'd dropped my shirt. I hadn't even realized that I'd let it go. "Good thing I did."

"Definitely." Jacob flopped onto his back, totally spent.

We laid in comfortable silence for a while, catching our breath and cuddling around Olivia. I couldn't believe we'd just done that. And that it hadn't felt awkward in the slightest. I was even more surprised that Jacob had been the first one to jump in. I highly doubted fucking Olivia, then falling into a threesome with me, was on his detailed calendar.

But now what? What were all of us to each other? I wasn't interested in just sex, and I doubted that Jacob and Olivia were, either. I didn't want to put the conversation off, so I dove right in.

"Not to burst the post-sex bubble, but this changes things," I said. "What do you guys want to do? About us? I don't want this to just be physical."

Olivia sat up, pushing her hair out of her face. She looked between me and Jacob, a million thoughts obviously racing through her head.

“Where do we start?” she asked. I shrugged, and she bit her bottom lip, gathering her thoughts again. “Are you guys into each other?”

“No,” I said. “We care about each other like brothers, but that’s it.”

“Exactly,” Jacob added. “Each of us could be with you, but not with each other.”

Olivia nodded, a frown appearing between her brows. “So, dating. But with three of us.”

“Sure?” I had no idea what we were doing, but that wasn’t going to stop me. “So we could hang out like we always do, but more. We don’t have to have it all figured out right away. We can just see what happens.”

To my surprise, Jacob made a sound in agreement. He wasn’t the type to go with the flow, but Olivia was enough to break him out of the habit.

“We’re already best friends. We can build on that,” Jacob added, cradling her in his arms.

She smiled, though she was still obviously unsure. “And what about Austin? Would you guys be okay if he was in this arrangement, too? I feel for him the way that I feel for you two.”

I’d known Olivia was attracted to Austin before, so hearing that she had feelings for him as well wasn’t surprising.

“I’d be okay with it,” I said. I glanced at Jacob.

“I’m okay with it, too,” he said. “Especially if it makes you happy.”

Olivia smiled, making my heart flip in my chest.

“Good,” she said, her voice gentle. “I want us to be one happy family.”

“We can be that,” I said, kissing the crown of her head. “We don’t want you to choose, either. Besides, we’ve all been close for years. We act like a family, anyway.”

“We do.” Olivia snuggled up close to us.

We lounged in bed for longer until I realized that I was supposed to have come here to change my shirt and return to eat.

“I should probably get back to Austin. He’s probably wondering what’s happened to me, since I left my phone.” I brushed her hair out of her face. “Be back later?”

“Yeah. I’m going to wash my face and freshen up a bit, I think, then I’ll meet you guys down there. Are you guys going to tell Austin what happened?”

“I think we should,” I said, a smile spreading across my face. “He’ll be able to tell, anyway. He knows what we look like after we’ve gotten laid.”

“But we can all talk about it together,” Jacob added.

“Okay. See you two in a bit.” She sat up higher on her knees, glancing at my lips.

I kissed her. It was such a sweet, simple thing, but it affected me just as much as everything else we’d just done. My heart skipped and pounded so hard that I was worried they’d both hear it. Then again, I didn’t want to hide how I felt for Olivia anymore, so who cared if they knew what the kiss was doing to me?

Everything had changed between us, but I was glad about it. Like we were finally taking a step in the direction we should have been going all along.

## CHAPTER 10

I checked my phone. Where the fuck was Noah? He'd run upstairs to change his shirt about half an hour ago. His food was cold, and I'd already ordered another round of drinks. He was extremely down to earth, despite the absurdly wealthy family he came from, but he couldn't stand eating cold food, and he wasn't the type to send it back over that kind of thing.

A few minutes later, Jacob and Noah came back, a brightness in their step. I expected it from Noah, but Jacob was usually much more mellow. He was almost *smiling*. Either he'd had the best nap he'd ever had in his life, or something was up. He wasn't nearly as serious as I was, but he wasn't one to walk around with a dumbass grin on his face for no reason.

"Already done napping?" I asked, looking between the two of them.

"Uh, yeah. Kind of." Jacob ran his hands through his damp curls. A slight flush spread across his cheeks. "We were a little caught up with Olivia."

"Caught up?" My eyebrows drifted up. "There's a lot of subtext to that sentence."

"We hooked up," Noah said bluntly, sitting down next to me. "Both of us. Well, Jacob first, then me. Walked in at just the right time. A hell of a way to have my first three-way. We'll tell you more about it when Olivia gets here, but it's more than that. Something more serious. We're feeling it out."

I blinked. I knew that all three of us had feelings for Olivia, but I hadn't expected them to hook up with her here, much less begin some kind of relationship. She'd made a lot of progress in getting over the piece of shit she called an ex. Seeing him at the resort had shaken her up, but more out of surprise than anything. She'd been a little all over the place dealing with her new routine without her job or her ex.

But this was a huge step. Nothing was going to be the same again.

That didn't scare me, though. I trusted them completely and knew they'd treat her right. They were the only two guys who deserved to be with her.

"Wow. That's fucking great," I said, raising my beer bottle to them.

"Thanks, man." Noah smiled, picking up his drink. His nose wrinkled slightly looking down at his abandoned stir-fry. "You want this? It's cold, and I haven't touched it."

"Nah. Do you, Jacob?" I gestured towards it.

"Sure." Jacob took the plate and dug in.

Whatever they'd gotten up to, it must have been intense. He only wolfed food down like this after intense workouts.

Jacob and Noah looked worn out, so we sat in comfortable silence. I had nothing to say, but the longer we sat in the quiet, the more I got lost in my own thoughts.

I was already getting used to the idea of Noah and Jacob with Olivia. It felt right. But an ache still rested in my chest, a longing one. I'd always been in love with Olivia, probably from the first time I'd seen her crying in her shitty uncle's backyard. And knowing my friends, they'd happily let me into this new arrangement. Olivia was definitely attracted to me, too. She wasn't a shy, blushing virgin, but she wasn't all that subtle, either.

But the idea of being with her the way the others were felt wrong, almost like wearing dirty boots in a clean home. I'd been through a lot of shit, and it showed. My temper, my overprotective streak...



I took a long drink of my beer. The distress swirling around in my thoughts made it burn as it went down, like a shot of hard liquor. At the bottom of that feeling was the painful truth I'd always noticed but had rarely looked at dead-on: I wasn't worthy of her. Not in that way. Hell, I was barely worthy of any woman, much less a woman like Olivia.

It had always been this way. My parents had made it damn clear that I was a waste of space. My mom had died six years ago when I was twenty-two, and my dad was in prison for at least another five years for armed robbery with a deadly weapon. I hadn't seen him since before he'd gone in, around the time my mom died. They weren't in my life anymore. But still, the feeling they'd branded into me was still there. I was good as the muscle, the one who figured out how to protect people. But that was about it.

Noah's expression brightened as he spotted someone past my head. I turned. It was Olivia, wearing a yellow sundress and looking every bit as perfect as she was. The smile on her face radiated warmth and satisfaction. I wished I could make her feel that way, too.

"Hey," she said, leaning down to kiss Noah, then Jacob. She glanced around us for another chair, not finding one.

She perched on my lap before I could offer my seat to her, kissing me on the cheek. She'd sat in my lap in the past, back when we were teenagers, but not any time recently. Her gentle weight and the clean scent of her skin up close to me was incredible. I wanted to wrap my arms around her and tug her closer, to feel her pert ass brush across my cock, but I held back. Noah passed Olivia a menu, making her shift in my lap.

What was I supposed to say to her, anyway?

"So..." Olivia put the menu down and angled herself to look at me. "Noah and Jacob have mentioned what happened?"

"Mm-hm."

Olivia paused. "I wish you'd been there, too."

My heart started pounding so hard that it was all I could hear. So she wanted me, too? Just like she wanted my two other best friends?

I didn't know what to do with that information yet. I just knew that my clothes felt too tight, and the cool ocean breeze suddenly felt like the stifling heat of a Florida summer.

I needed to go. I needed space to think.

"Hop up," I said to her, my tone brusque. I'd never used this tone with her, and I wished I could take the words back. But did I? I was just proving my own point that I wasn't good for her. "Need to use the bathroom."

Olivia did as I said, looking back at me with confusion and hurt in her eyes. The look was a knife to the chest, but I didn't say a word. I walked to the bathroom and didn't look back.

If I had left her there in my lap, I would have been leading her on. I refused to do that. I wasn't the right man for her, and she had to know that sooner rather than later.

I got to the single-stall bathroom and ran cold water over my wrists, staring at myself in the mirror. I had to figure out a way to tell her all of this. Not saying it openly was only going to make things worse.

But how? I barely liked thinking these thoughts, much less saying them out loud. My face heated up, the blush visible on my face. I turned away from my reflection and paced in the small space. I had to tell her now. And the others, too. Knowing Noah, he'd probably try to convince me otherwise. Jacob would probably try to also, in his own way.

Once I gathered myself, I went back outside, ready to tell her. Just to throw myself at the problem to get over it.

But when I came back, Olivia wasn't there.

## CHAPTER 11

“**W**here did Olivia go?” Austin asked when he returned.

“She wanted to be alone,” I said. The waiter had delivered another beer for Austin and a Jack and Coke for me while he was gone. I pushed his drink toward him. “She went to the other bar closer to our room.”

A small flare of annoyance came and went inside my chest. I hated that he’d hurt her feelings, but I knew Austin well. He never wanted to hurt her, so he had to have been in the bathroom thinking things over. He always wanted whatever was best for her, which made it obvious that he had always loved her. But his parents had done a number on him, and he never believed he deserved anything good—especially her. The overwhelm was written all over his face, and he never handled that well.

“Shit,” Austin murmured under his breath, casting his eyes down.

“Are you upset?” I asked.

He blew a breath out of his nose and grabbed his beer. He was always reluctant to put his emotions into words, but we knew him so well that we didn’t always need to hear him say what was on his mind. He was upset. Distressed. Not angry—he didn’t have trouble expressing that. I highly doubted he was jealous. We all knew how each of us felt about Olivia, and he had been surprised but happy for us earlier.

We’d always shared everything, from our home to our careers to whatever was going on in our lives. We were like

brothers. Now we had the chance to share our dream woman, and he was running from the opportunity.

I waited for him to speak—interrupting him now would have made him clam up again. I stepped on Noah’s foot as his mouth opened, and he promptly shut it.

“I’m not mad, if that’s what you’re wondering.” He ran his hand through his short hair. “I’m just... I’m not right for her. And you know how I feel about her, so it hurts. But I know you two are perfect for her, and that you’ll be happy together, so...”

He shrugged. I leaned back in my seat but kept quiet once again. The misery on Austin’s face made my chest ache. He was so devoted to her that he’d probably never be with anyone else for the rest of his life.

And for some reason, he thought he was too messed up or broken to be with her. He was one of Olivia’s best friends. He treated her like a queen and had protected her for most of our lives. Every time her uncle was an asshole to her, he was there to sneak her into his house to keep her safe. Whenever the other kids at school bullied her for not having nice, new clothes or for being a little awkward looking—like most teenagers were—he was the first to confront her bullies.

And every last boyfriend she’d had, had answered to Austin when they messed up and hurt her feelings. The worst of them walked away with a black eye or two, especially when they tried to justify whatever awful shit they’d done.

How did he think he wasn’t right for her? All of us were right for her in different ways, complementary pieces of a puzzle. And without him, it wasn’t going to feel right.

“Austin, you’ve always taken care of her. She—”

Austin put up his hand to silence me. “Don’t,” he said with finality in his tone.

I nodded, respecting his wishes. He needed time, and that was something I could give him.

Austin cleared his throat and sat up, sipping his drink.

“Anyway, will Olivia’s surprise be ready by the time we get back to Miami?” he asked, picking at the label on his beer bottle.

“Yeah. I just have a few more things I have to do,” I said.

Austin nodded, some of the tension on his face finally melting away.

I checked my phone for messages from our assistant, who was arranging everything back at our place. He’d sent a few confirmations our way, easing the low hum of worries in the back of my mind. It was all fine. Our business was running fine without us.

Besides, now we had Olivia to think about. We had to make sure that our almost lifelong friendships held up to our new normal.



I sighed, hopping up onto one of the tall barstools. Being at a bar alone was awkward, even though I wanted to be by myself. I needed some space to sift through all the hurt building inside of me. As amazing as Noah and Jacob were, I had to get through the beginning of it alone. Well, assuming that this hurt had an end in the first place.

I fiddled with the menu card in front of me, trying to push the blunt, almost harsh tone of Austin's voice out of my head. Sitting down on his lap had felt natural and good, but he'd nudged me away like I was a bother. He only went to the bathroom, but it felt like he was walking out of my life, or at least part of it, forever. I never thought he'd do that to me. I always thought he'd have me in his life.

Now I wasn't sure, and it was rocking the foundation of my world.

I didn't want Austin to be at the fringes of my life now that Jacob, Noah, and I had started dating. Honestly, I needed him more than ever. How else were we going to sort out what our new normal was without his input? Our lives were intertwined. Jacob, Noah, and I talked about what we wanted, but talking about it and actually living it were two different things.

I caught the bartender's attention, and he made his way over.

"Can I get this 'suntan sunrise' shot?" I asked.

The name made no sense, but it was fruity and boozy. Just what I needed.



“Make that two,” a familiar voice said from behind me.

A chill ran down my spine, but a very different one than what I’d felt when I’d discovered Noah watching me and Jacob together. It was Clark. The familiar scent of his cologne made my stomach turn.

I rolled my eyes when he had the audacity to sit down next to me.

“Put his shot on his tab,” I said.

“You’re not going to buy me a drink?” Clark asked, adjusting his sunglasses on top of his head. “It’s my birthday.”

“Oh, right,” I said. “Put my shot on his tab, too.”

The bartender snorted and went to make us our drinks.

“Where’s your new girlfriend?” I asked, glancing over at Clark.

He had the beginning of an unfortunate sunburn, the skin around his eyes lighter from where his sunglasses had been.

“Oh.” Clark twirled a coaster around on its edge. “She left. We got into a fight.”

Shocker. What’s-her-face wasn’t the kind of woman who was easy to deal with. Then again, maybe Clark had tried to pull some of his bullshit lines over on her, and she got fed up. Everything was clear in hindsight, but god, how did I not even notice how many times he’d fed me nonsense, just to smooth things over? Every fight we had never resolved. I just threw some glitter onto the shit, and we called it done.

No. I refused to beat myself up over it anymore. Like Jacob had said one night back at home, right when I was in the thick of my distress from the breakup, Clark was a manipulator. It wasn’t my fault that he’d played me—it could have happened to anyone. I wasn’t fundamentally unlovable. Clark was just shitty.

I was going to repeat that in my head until it stuck. It was probably going to take a while at this rate, especially with Austin rejecting me.

Clark had momentarily distracted me from the other mess in my life, and the pain of remembering Austin again was like a blade shoved between my ribs. God, how was Clark the less shitty of two options in that moment? At least I didn't miss him at all.

"I'm sorry, Olivia," Clark said, his voice gentle. My eyebrows shot up. He sounded genuine. The tone was so unfamiliar that I almost thought I'd misheard him. "Being with Blaire made me realize what a huge, stupid mistake I made. She doesn't compare to you at all. I want to get back together."

I stared at him, mouth agape. By some miracle, I didn't laugh in his face. Clark was truly serious. He thought that this heartfelt apology was enough to make me forget that he'd cheated on me and had been pretty shitty throughout our whole relationship.

Before I could respond, I spotted Austin's big, muscular frame out of the corner of my eye. My heartstrings pulled tight, and I looked down at the shot the bartender had just slid to me. Suddenly, I didn't want it.

"I need to talk to you," he said to me. Clark shifted so Austin could see him, both men tensing. "What the fuck are you doing here?"

"He wants to get back together," I said, barely containing my eye roll.

Austin didn't catch my sarcasm and gripped the back of my stool, propelling himself past me.

"Get the fuck away from my girl," he growled, getting in Clark's face.

My heart leaped into my throat. *My girl*. Had he come to tell me that he'd changed his mind about us being together?

Clark went pale underneath his sunburn, nearly falling off his stool. I thought he'd run, but he stood his ground. Austin punching him again was a very real possibility, but my thoughts were still reeling so hard that I didn't know if I could talk him down.

“Hey,” Jacob said, appearing behind me. A crease of worry was between his dark brows. He took my hand and kissed it. “Everything all right?”

“Um...” I looked at Clark and Austin, who were still facing off with one another. “I don’t know?”

Noah came up on my other side and planted a kiss on my lips, putting a barrier between whatever was about to happen between Austin and Clark. Clark’s eyes widened even more as Noah put his hand back to hold my other one.

“What’s going... Olivia, are you...” Clark looked between all three of my guys, his fear turning into confusion. He gestured vaguely at the three of them. “With all of them?”

“You should fucking leave. Olivia isn’t your business anymore,” Austin said, stepping closer to him, his hand clenched in a fist.

Clark shot me one more look before finally retreating. The tension in the air finally dissipated. I had the feeling that he wasn’t going to try to fix our relationship again after this.



**T**hankfully, Clark left. I didn't want Austin to have to hit him again in front of all these people. It was easier to sweep a punch like that under the rug when it was within our own home. Most wouldn't have recognized him, but some gossip columns knew who I was. An annoying side effect of my upbringing, even after all these years. My parents already disapproved of my choices enough, and I didn't want them to hassle me about being associated with someone my mom would call "barbaric." Never mind that we'd been friends for ages.

Olivia relaxed her shoulders, her grip on my hand loosening.

"Anyone want his shot?" she asked, picking up hers.

"Sure, why not," Austin murmured, taking the shot and throwing it back moments later. He winced, more out of surprise than the burn of alcohol. "This tastes like juice. What is it?"

"A sunscreen sunrise or something. Suntan sunrise?" Olivia picked hers up and took it, barely flinching. "Oh, it really isn't strong at all. Tastes good, though."

"Good. You don't want to do a hard shot on an empty stomach." Jacob squeezed her other hand.

Olivia checked her phone. "Oh, it's almost dinner. I want to take a shower, I think."

"I'll meet you guys later." Jacob looked at his phone, too. "I need to handle a few emails and tasks."

“I’ll go with you to shower, Liv,” I said.

Earlier, Jacob had texted Austin and me about what he had in the works for later tonight, and I didn’t want to ruin the surprise for Olivia by asking him what he was working on. As always, Jacob had all the details completely under control, so he didn’t need help.

“Okay.” Olivia tilted her head back, and Jacob gave her a soft kiss, his eyes warm with a smile in them.

Olivia reached for Austin’s hand, her blue eyes bright and hopeful. Austin took it with a touch of reluctance.

“Do you want to come with us?” she asked.

“I shouldn’t,” he said. His gaze was gentle, which only she brought out in him. “But we’ll be together at dinner soon.”

Olivia swallowed, letting go of his hand. She looked at a point past his head, like she couldn’t bear to look him in the eye.

“But you just called me ‘your girl.’” Her voice was painfully small. I threaded my fingers between hers.

“You’ll always be my girl. But we can’t be together.” Austin looked away from her, too, from all of us.

I felt just as disappointed as Olivia looked. Why couldn’t he just let go and show her how much he loved her? His devotion to her was just as intense as ours. He’d been the one to find her first and offer her his shoulder to cry on. And with how shitty her uncle was, that was a lot. Sometimes, she’d even stayed at his house for weeks at a time, since neither her uncle nor his parents gave enough of a damn to notice what they were up to.

Olivia’s mouth flattened into a line, and she inhaled through her nose like she was gearing up to say something. But she just stepped away.

“We should shower and get ready so we’re at dinner on time,” she said, clearing her throat. “C’mon, Noah.”

She walked away, and I trailed behind her. I was dying to say something, but the seriousness on her face told me to shut

up for once.

“I don’t understand,” she finally said when we got to the room. “How can I be his girl but not be with him? Wouldn’t he want to be with me because of that?”

“He wants to be. But you know where he came from.” I ran my fingers through her hair. “Intimacy isn’t easy for him.”

Our pasts couldn’t have been more different. He’d grown up with next to nothing besides himself and Olivia—neglectful parents wrapped up in their own addictions and wants, no money, no one to ask for help. And I’d grown up with both of my parents present and absolutely anything I could have asked for.

But Austin and I understood each other. We knew what it was like to have parents who didn’t care, or only cared about us when it came to appearances and not reality. Both of us hadn’t grown up in a household where we talked about emotions or anything close to it. Neither of us had ever felt like we fit with our families, the people we should have fit with the most.

The only difference between us was that I’d let Olivia in a long time ago. She had chipped away at the cheerful exterior I put on to get to the real me, the part of me that felt like I wasn’t enough for my family. It was hard, but it helped me in ways I couldn’t even begin to express. There wasn’t enough time to talk about all the ways she’d saved me.

Austin was her best friend, too, but he’d always held himself back. Now we were here, with Olivia being upset and Austin being torn.

She bit her bottom lip and wandered over to the sliding glass doors to the balcony.

“I know. But being best friends is intimate, isn’t it?” She stopped at the glass, staring out of it blankly. “It just feels like he knows everything about me, and I know everything about him. All of his weird quirks and dark secrets. It just feels natural to be together, but he’s just telling me he can’t. Why?”

“I don’t know, Liv.” I cupped the back of her neck and gave it a gentle squeeze. “I think he needs more time to figure this out. It’s all really different and new for him. And for all of us. And he cares a lot about you, so he’ll find a way to express himself eventually. Even if it’s in an Austin kind of way.”

The tension in her shoulders melted away under my hand, and she looked up at me. She wasn’t quite smiling, but she didn’t look as withdrawn as she had before.

“You’re right. We’ve been through bumps before.” She leaned against me. “This is a really big one, but I care about him, too. It hurts so much, but I know he’ll tell me more at some point.”

“I’m sure he will.” I kissed her forehead.

“We should probably get cleaned up,” she said.

She started to strip, peeling off her clothes and tossing them to the side. Arousal flared deep in my belly, my cock stirring. She was so fucking beautiful.

I hadn’t had the chance to see her fully naked and standing in front of me, so I admired her from behind as I got undressed, too. The way her hair cascaded down her back, stopping right at her tiny waist, made me want to dig my fingers into it. And her ass. God.

Yeah, we weren’t going to be doing much showering.

She had the water going by the time I got into the bathroom, steam starting to form in the air. The hot water spilled over her hair and body, making her glisten. I stepped in behind her and shut the glass door, water coming down on the top of my head.

She turned, wiping water out of her eyes, and looked at me. She took me in just as hungrily as I’d taken her in moments ago. I grinned.

“What, Liv?” I asked, putting my knuckle under her chin to bring her gaze up to mine. “It’s not like you haven’t seen me without a shirt on before.”



“I know.” She rested her hands on my pecs. “It’s just that I’ve never been able to touch you before.”

“Touch all you want.”

She did, her hands sliding across my skin and sending chills up and down my spine. As much lust was in her gaze, the sadness was unmistakable, too. I had to make it better for her.

I cupped her face and kissed her, fierce and hard. She melted in my arms, and I walked her backward until she was against the wall. My body covered hers, dwarfing her. My hands traveled down to her tits, tugging lightly on her nipples until she moaned against my lips.

“Your tits have been tempting me this whole damn trip,” I murmured, cupping one. “More than usual, I mean. Did you pack extra tiny bikinis just to tease us?”

“N-no,” she stammered. “I mean, not intentionally.”

“I get it.” I raked my teeth along the side of her neck, making her shiver. “A body this sexy needs something to show it off.”

“Noah.” She was a mix of aroused, a bit embarrassed, and pleased.

My hand traveled lower, cupping her center. She spread her feet unapologetically so my fingers could go where she wanted them, making me laugh.

“What, you need my fingers in your pussy, Liv?” I ran my fingers up her lips, avoiding the spot where she needed me. I felt the heat radiating from her core without even touching her directly. “You want me to make it feel better?”

“*Please.*” She rested her head on my chest.

The pleading tone of her voice made me so hard that I wanted to thrust inside of her right away, but I held myself back.

I dipped one finger inside of her, making her clench around it hard. I groaned, curling my fingers in just the right spot. She cried out, arching towards me and digging her nails

into my shoulders. I grabbed her wet hair and pulled so she was looking me in the eye. She was out of her mind, any thoughts and worries wiped away. Her tongue darted out along her bottom lip, her hips rocking.

I played with her clit, alternating between it and fingering her until her legs were trembling, her moans almost painfully loud.

“That’s it,” I said, fucking her with my fingers faster. “Let me watch you fall apart, Liv.”

Her eyes fluttered closed as she came hard, nearly falling over. It rolled on and on so long that I was shocked she didn’t pass out. I didn’t want to overwhelm her and actually knock her out, so I waited for her to come down. Her chest heaved as she tried to catch her breath.

“You want my cock, Liv?” I asked, stroking her skin to bring her down a little more. She nodded.

I turned her around so her hands were on the wall and pulled her hips back so I could slide into her. I gripped her hip with one hand and aimed at her entrance, pausing.

“Everything okay?” she asked, turning to look at me.

“Yeah. I’ve just wanted to do this for a long time.” I pressed my tip against her and slid inside, holding my breath.

I had to stop and breathe. She was tight and wet, enveloping me in such perfect heat that I nearly lost it. I swallowed, gathering myself before I pushed on. She didn’t breathe until I was all the way inside of her.

I’d never known any woman could feel this good, and I’d barely fucked her.

I pulled back, then thrust back in hard. She cried out, pushing back against me. We fell into a rhythm, with me thrusting hard and her meeting me. I cupped her tits from behind, burying my face into her damp neck.

“Baby, you feel too good,” I choked out between thrusts. “I’m going to lose it.”

“Please. I want to feel you,” she said, her voice breathy. “I can’t hold on much longer.”

I grabbed her hips again, my fingers digging into her as I pounded her. She pushed back against me, and her core tightened around me, making my hardness swell inside her. Our breathing quickened, and she cried out in ecstasy, her core clenching and unclenching at a rhythmic pace, pumping out her orgasm.

My pleasure built until it became almost unbearable. I came so hard that I didn’t breathe for what felt like an entire minute. The pleasure rippled through me, radiating from my cock outward. Coming felt so damn right, like I’d been waiting to do it my whole life.

I sagged against her, pressing her against the wall. Both of us took a few seconds to gather ourselves, our breathing synced up.

“That was...” I swallowed to clear my throat. “Wow.”

“Yeah.” Olivia chuckled, turning to look at me. “We should probably actually shower.”

“We should.” I slid out of her and kissed her neck. “I think you’ll be really excited about what we have planned for dinner.”



**D**inner was set up just as perfectly as I'd imagined—a candlelit table on a private strip of the beach, the sun barely set. The sky was streaked with pink and orange and purple, the water gleaming in the last bits of light. A clean, sea salt breeze washed over us, making the temperature absolutely perfect.

I loved it when my plans went exactly as I imagined them going.

A waiter had already supplied the wine, which would pair perfectly with our meal. Not that I knew everything about wine, but we'd paid a world-class sommelier to pick our options. Austin had already started on the wine, lounging back in his seat.

I spotted Olivia and Noah walking toward us, hand in hand. Noah was holding her high heels for her. She had changed into a sleek blue dress that hugged her body perfectly. When she got close enough, I saw how nicely it complemented her blue eyes.

I couldn't help but smile. Finally being able to look at her the way I'd always wanted to, with warmth and love and affection, was so freeing. I didn't have to stick to special surprises to show how I felt. Now I could do both.

"You look stunning," I said, taking her hand and pulling her toward me.

Noah let her go, and I kissed her. I was never going to get enough of her sweet taste. Keeping my hands off of her was already hard enough.

“This is stunning,” she said, beaming. “You arranged this?”

“Yeah.” I pulled her seat out for her. “You’re going to love the dinner. The chef used to be the executive chef at Emerald Avocado.”

She gasped at the name of her favorite vegan restaurant in Miami. “You’re kidding.”

“No. We flew him down.” I helped her scoot in and took my seat next to Austin.

A waiter appeared next to her, wine in hand. “Wine, miss?”

“I’d love some.” She pushed her glass towards him, and he filled it. “Thank you.”

“My pleasure. Your first course will be served shortly.”

He topped off our glasses next, then left us alone as Olivia took her first sip. She closed her eyes and smiled.

“This is so good.” She took another dainty sip. “We should have toasted, though.”

“We still can.” Noah raised his glass. He had the warm, satisfied look of a guy who had just gotten laid. No wonder they’d taken a long time getting down here. Had I looked even half as satisfied as he had after Olivia and I were together? “To the rest of our trip.”

We tapped our glasses together and drank. The chardonnay went down smoothly, as the sommelier had said it would. The wine was one of the most sought-after in the world for a reason.

Despite the earlier tension between Olivia and Austin, our conversation flowed like it always did. The first course—roasted cauliflower steak with pine nuts and a pomegranate sauce—was simple but incredible. Even Austin, who was always the most reluctant to have a fully vegan dinner, liked it.

Watching Olivia savor each bite and softly moan when she got a particularly good one only heightened the pleasure of my own meal. The heat in Noah’s gaze told me he was feeling the

same way. Olivia finally noticed what she was doing and gave us a cheeky grin.

“What?” she asked. “It’s good.”

“You know what you’re doing.” Noah reached over and held her hand.

“Okay, maybe a little bit.” Her grin faded, and she picked up her wine. Her eyes flicked to Austin for a moment, then to us. “Should we talk about us? And how our lives will be? We never got the chance to really talk about it with Austin.”

I glanced over at Austin, whose face was pulled into a neutral expression. I sensed the anxiety in him, even though he wasn’t moving. But we needed to talk about it with him. Our whole relationship had changed. Letting the problem sit around and fester was the worst way to go about it. We rarely ever had serious issues or conflicts in our relationships as friends, but when we did, we brought them out in the open.

“Like Noah and Jacob mentioned, we had sex, and we want to be together,” Olivia said. “We don’t really know how it’ll work, but it’ll be like me having two boyfriends. And we’ve already talked about how I’d like you to be the third. So all of us will be together. I love you too much not to have you with us.”

Austin’s posture was rigid, and the air around us was silent aside from the sound of the tides. It wasn’t that he didn’t have feelings. He might have had the most feelings of all of us. But getting him to let them out was like prying open a rusted-over lock—it was possible, but we had to work for it. And if anyone could get him to open up, it was Olivia.

We looked at him expectantly. Austin dug his hand into his hair, resting his elbows on the table. He took a while to gather himself before he spoke, as if he was piecing together the words in his head. All of us kept quiet while he did.

“I love you too, Olivia. You know I do, ever since the day we first met,” he said. Olivia’s eyes filled with hope, but his grave expression made her somber again. He opened his mouth as if he was going to speak, but he took several seconds

to get the words out. “But I’m not good enough for you because I’m too broken.”

Olivia shook her head, repeatedly blinking, as if she couldn’t believe what she’d just heard. Anger started to bubble up inside of me. I knew Austin’s past and how awful his parents were. They were supposed to make him feel safe and loved. But instead, they swung between forgetting he existed and berating him for being a “burden.” Anyone who dealt with that understandably had to have some baggage.

But I didn’t understand why he was doing this. Did he not see how good of a friend he was to Olivia? He treated her the way his family had never treated him, with love and respect. Their relationship proved every insult his parents had thrown at him wrong. He wasn’t a waste of space. Did he not see how much pain he was causing her?

I couldn’t do anything about this, and it made my chest ache.

“Too broken?” Olivia echoed. “What—”

A flash in the darkness pulled our attention away from the conversation. I searched the darkness and spotted someone in a light gray sweatshirt darting away.

“I’ll track him down,” Austin said, pushing back from the table.

He ran off. Literally running away from the problem. Toward another one, maybe, but still.

“Who was that?” Noah asked, uneasiness in his eyes. “Were they actually taking a picture of us?”

“I don’t know.” Olivia sighed, fatigued by the emotional rollercoaster. I squeezed her hand, stroking the soft skin of the back of it with my thumb.

“Give Austin time,” I said. “He loves you. He can’t magically make his feelings disappear because he thinks he’s not worthy.”

“I know. I just hate how little he thinks of himself. Throughout our entire friendship, I’ve tried convincing him



that his parents were wrong. He is worthy of love, and so much more. It doesn't matter what I say, though; it never gets through to him."

She looked ahead at nothing in particular. Austin thought he was broken, but he was breaking Olivia's heart little by little.

My emotions were a mess, too. Every relationship I'd had in the past was straightforward and easy. As natural as it felt for Noah, Olivia, and I to be together, so much was still in the air. So much I couldn't plan for. So much I didn't have the answers to, and probably wouldn't for a long time.



I ran through the sand toward the fucker with the camera. The view was still beautiful, with the moon's reflection shining on the ocean, but judging by the way he took off, he wasn't taking a picture for his Instagram.

He wasn't particularly fast, but he had a big head start from where we were sitting on the beach. I jogged around a few paths, scanning the crowds gathered around the pool and walking around the resort's path. Fuck. I'd lost him.

I scanned the area for security cameras, finding a few along the path. Whoever had placed them hadn't done a great job, leaving gaping blind spots that someone could exploit. If the guy kept his head down enough, none of the cameras would catch his face. I hoped the resort shelled out for the most top-of-the-line equipment to get a clear picture, but a surprising number of places skimped on that kind of thing.

On the upside, if they had half-assed the placement of the cameras, maybe they'd half-assed the security of them, too. Jacob was more than capable of hacking into them and getting what we needed. Maybe he'd been around the whole resort. One of them had to have caught him.

But who was he?

We were somewhat known back home, but not enough to be randomly photographed by people. I felt violated as fuck, like he'd just walked into my house and started looking around.

Why was he even interested in us, period? I thought back to everything we'd done since we'd been here and came up

empty. We'd just done normal things—getting drinks, eating food, lounging at the pool bar. The only thing that stood out was the fact that we were three men and one woman. That wasn't unusual enough to have someone try to take a photo of us.

I sighed and raked my fingers through my hair again. I wished I'd been able to get him, to focus my attention somewhere else. If I was being honest with myself, that was why I'd run in the first place. Seeing the misery on Olivia's face was like a knife to the chest. No, even worse. Like I'd destroyed everything, and I hadn't even gotten all of my feelings out yet. It was less of a conversation and more of me stammering and running away like a fucking ten-year-old boy.

Maybe a drink was what I needed.

Bars were peppered throughout the resort, and I found one we hadn't been to before. It was more upscale, so I fit in with my linen button-down and nice pants. I never dressed up like this, ever, but I was too worked up to go back to the room and change. I just needed to think and sort out the flood of emotions that was rushing through my brain.

I sank down in a seat at the end of the bar, getting the bartender's attention right away.

Ordering my usual beer didn't feel right.

"A dry martini," I said.

The bartender nodded and started making one for me.

A woman slipped into the seat next to me, accidentally brushing against my arm. "Accidentally," if I had to guess by the way she giggled.

"Sorry," she said, putting her hand on my arm to steady herself.

"It's fine."

An ornate mirror was above the bar, so I saw her face. And the interest written all over it. I sighed again, averting my gaze. She was beautiful, sure, but she didn't do it for me. No other woman ever would besides Olivia. The memory of her in

that blue dress, the dip of her tanned cleavage, her long legs. The burning lust going through me made the situation even worse. I'd never touch her the way Jacob and Noah had.

All I had were the fantasies about her that I'd been collecting for years and my hand. I had to get used to that reality. Piecing together glimpses of her bare skin. As much as I wanted her, I couldn't have her halfway, with just sex. That wasn't fair to her when she deserved the world.

The bartender slid my martini to me, and I picked it up, taking a sip. The alcohol's burn felt good. I almost never drank martinis except in moments like this, when I needed something physically uncomfortable to distract me.

"Is that martini good?" the woman asked.

"Yeah." I didn't even look at her.

"I don't know if I can handle it. They're so strong." The woman chuckled, putting on a sexy voice. It probably worked on a lot of men, but not me. "Have you been at the resort long?"

"Not really." I glanced away from the bar, scanning the crowd for the man in the gray sweatshirt.

"I just got here with my girlfriends," she said. "They're taking a million years to get dressed, so I came down here to get started on drinks."

I let out a sound of acknowledgment. When was she going to get the hint? I wasn't interested, and I wasn't going to be.

She ordered a glass of Prosecco and raised her glass to me.

"To a nice night?" Finally, some doubt laced her words.

I didn't respond. She cleared her throat and turned forward again, taking a sip. She didn't speak to me after that.

I looked around again for the mystery photographer. No one was there. The woman retreated, presumably to meet her friends, so I was alone with my thoughts once more.

I'd fucked up our nice night and all the work that we'd put in to give Olivia the best dinner of her life. But what else were

we supposed to do? Pretend that nothing different was going on? That I wasn't entirely wrong for her? No. We had to get the conversation out of the way. We were better for having it all out on the table, but how much better?

I'd hurt her. But she still seemed to want me. How did she not see that this was what I did? If we took our relationship beyond friendship, I'd manage to do it again. I wasn't sure how, but I was sure of it.

I was a good friend, yeah, but the intimacy of a relationship—the intimacy she deserved—was too much. Like literally exposing my heart for her to see. How would I even be able to do that if I could hardly stand to talk to her about something this important?

Did I even know how to have this conversation? All my life, I'd seen my parents “communicate” with each other through shouting and passive aggression. And their communication with me was just the same, with a smack to the back of the head or complete neglect when I didn't cave to their bullshit.

My friends were the only reason I was halfway functional. They showed me a way of living where people could just say what they meant or apologize and move on instead of drawing out a conflict just to get the anger out.

But just because I saw that happen didn't mean I could do the same, at least as a romantic partner should. I wasn't going to pretend that my friendship skills would magically translate into being an amazing boyfriend.

Jacob was a natural at it. He always had been. All of us offered Olivia a shoulder to cry on or a listening ear, but he always managed to talk to her. To tell her something that changed her perspective or made her feel better.

Noah was, too. He made her smile so easily and always cheered her up. He made everything more fun for all of us, honestly.

Both of them were able to actually talk about their feelings with her, too.

And then that left me. What did I even do for her besides threaten to fight every asshole who tried to mess with her? I was more suited to being her bodyguard than her boyfriend. She could always come to me, but I wasn't sure if I could ever come to her without some serious coercion. What good was I in a relationship that was heavily one-sided?

What good was I in general when she had two amazing men who deserved her already? Just because I was unhappy didn't mean Jacob and Noah had to be.

The reality was that trying to put me with Olivia was like putting a rusted part into a car and expecting it to run. I wasn't right, even if I technically fit into place.

I caught my reflection in the mirror above the bar again. I looked like my asshole father, too, at least a little. Enough for my mom to be annoyed with me just for existing. Apparently, they'd loved each other once, if what my extended family said was true. But all of them were usually just as drunk and high as my parents were.

That struck a new fear into me, one I hadn't even thought of. What if finally being with her changed us? Changed *me*? What if being shitty in a relationship was just my destiny, no matter how much I loved Olivia?

The woman returned to the bar stool, to my dismay. Stepping away must have bolstered her separation from reality, because she angled toward me.

I spotted a flash of blue, the same blue of Olivia's dress, out of the corner of my eye.

"I think we got off to the wrong start," the woman said.

"Did we?"

I leaned around the woman and caught Olivia's eye. She was holding Noah's hand, Jacob's hand on her lower back. Before I could connect with her any more, she quickly looked away and continued walking to her room.

It was so easy to stew in my own misery when I was alone. But seeing her and knowing that I had hurt her was

unacceptable. I had to finish what we'd started at the table, even if being honest scared the shit out of me.

I tried to think of it rationally. This was Olivia. She'd never hurt me before, so I could at least try to talk to her about everything I'd just thought about. Or apologize. The feelings were a massive weight inside of me, overwhelming to the point where even I had to get them out.

“Yeah. I'm—”

“I'm taken,” I said, pushing back from the bar.

I told the bartender to put the charge on our room and rushed upstairs to talk to her.



## CHAPTER 16

I opened the door to our room, my heart pounding out of my chest. Instead of finding Olivia in the living room, I found Jacob and Noah, lounging on the big couch in shorts and flipping through channels. Jacob raised a dark eyebrow at me, as if to ask what the fuck I was doing.

“Where’s Olivia?” I asked.

“Bedroom.” Noah nodded his head toward the closed door. “She went to take off her makeup and change.”

I went in, shutting the door behind myself before either of them could say anything. They weren’t going to be dicks about me running off, but I didn’t want them to derail me, either. My heart was already racing, and my hands were so sweaty that I had to wipe them off on my pants.

They had been back for a few minutes, and if I was remembering correctly from when we went out together back home, she never took long to wash her face and get comfortable after we got back in.

She stepped out of the bathroom, not in her favorite leggings and tank top, but naked.

My brain immediately short-circuited. Part of it knew that she was naked, but another part couldn’t handle it. She was better than every single dream I’d had. Her tits—her nipples slightly hard from walking into the cold room—begged for my touch. And fuck, her hips. Something about them told me that my hands would fit perfectly there, whether I wanted to pound her from behind or just pull her close.

My cock ached as if I'd been on edge the entire day. Maybe I had, at least in the back of my mind. I always wanted Olivia, and now I was close enough to touch her.

Her face was buried in a towel, drying herself off, so she didn't notice me at first. I made a strangled sound in my throat, and she pulled the towel down in confusion. Her eyes widened, but she didn't try to cover up.

The split second of silence was the only excuse I needed. I crossed the room in a few long steps, pressed her against the wall, and kissed her.

The kiss wasn't the sweet and delicate kind that it probably should have been, especially since it was our first one. I'd lost nearly every shred of my control. All the raw, emotional energy pent up inside of me had evolved into desire in an instant.

She couldn't have moved away from the wall, even if she'd wanted to. My other hand skimmed down the front of her neck, not squeezing, but gripping. Her neck was so delicate, my hand spanning it easily. I dug one hand into her hair, holding her to me and pressing my body against hers.

She fit against me perfectly, our hips winding together. She gasped when I nipped her bottom lip, then sucked it to soothe the ache.

"Austin," she said, her voice husky with arousal.

"Mm?" I kissed her again—now that I'd had a taste, I never wanted to go without this. How had I assumed I'd be able to resist her for the rest of my fucking life?

"Why won't you be with me?" she asked, her breath hot against my lips.

I stopped like someone had thrown some cold water onto my back. Fuck.

"I'm too broken to be with you the way you deserve. What would the point even be if I can't give myself over to you fully? There isn't one."

“Bullshit.” She pressed her hands against my shoulders, and I took a half-step back. “You’re acting like I’m this precious, unblemished doll or something. I’m broken, too. You know that. You know how many dark periods I’ve had in my life.”

I swallowed, my gaze drifting away from her intense blue one. I knew Olivia better than anyone. She’d been through some shit with her parents’ death and her uncle’s neglect, but she hadn’t let it warp her the way I’d let myself get warped. But maybe she felt it inside and never let it show.

I wished I had that same level of strength. I set that thought aside, though, and tried to take in what she had said. She also felt broken in some ways. I wasn’t the only one.

“But what if...” I struggled to put words together and say them aloud. “What if I end up like my parents? They were in love once, but you know how that turned out. They changed.”

“Everyone changes, Austin. We’ve both changed,” she said. “And you’re self-aware. We aren’t going to magically transform into something we aren’t deep down. You have a good heart.”

She cupped my cheek and turned my head back toward her. Her blue eyes were softer now. She was the same Olivia who had sat with me in her backyard all those years when we were growing up, letting me brood about whatever shitstorm my parents had unleashed on me that day. The woman who was one of the few people who could make me smile or talk me down from doing something truly fucking stupid.

Hearing her say that I had a good heart with so much sincerity made me start to believe it. I was so far from it being fully true in my head, but it was a start.

I needed her. I wasn’t perfect, but no one was. I loved her enough to try my fucking best to be the man she deserved.

“You think we can do this even if we’re broken?” I asked.

“Yes,” she said. “We can heal together.”

All I could do was nod. She kissed me this time, soft and sweet, but pushed me backward with a surprising amount of

strength. I let her guide me until the back of my legs hit the bed, forcing me to sit. She fell to her knees between mine. My cock jerked hard in anticipation.

I bit back a moan when she grabbed my belt, a flush creeping up my neck. If I was this out of control when she hadn't even touched me, how was I going to survive her doing more?

I lifted my hips so she could pull down my pants, then my boxers, my hard cock springing free. Her eyes widened in surprise when she took in my substantial length and girth. I smirked.

“Like what you see?”

“I do. But I'm wondering how it's all going to fit.” She grasped the base of me, her hand soft and small. “But I want to make it work.”

I nearly made a joke back to her, but the minute her lips pressed to the underside of my shaft, my mind was wiped clean. I leaned back on my elbows and watched her tease me. She flattened her tongue and ran it up the underside of my cock. I shuddered and resisted the urge to intervene. I wanted to see which way she took this.

She lightly sucked on that same spot underneath my tip, making me let out a sound dangerously close to a whimper. Then, she finally enveloped me in her mouth. She took her time, bobbing up and down, taking me inch by inch. Her mouth was so hot and wet. Was her pussy going to feel even better?

“Take your shirt off,” Olivia said, her hand pumping up and down my shaft.

I did as she asked, then leaned back on my elbows again. She'd seen me shirtless a lot of times over the years, but she'd never looked at me like this. Like I was absolutely perfect. She circled her tongue around my tip as her hands crept upward, exploring the V of muscle along my hips, then my abs. The combination made my heart skip.

She went back to giving my cock her full attention.

“You’re going to make me lose it, baby,” I said, my voice a pant. I tried to squirm away so I could flip the script and go down on her. But she followed me, still holding onto my cock. “Let me take care of you first.”

“Isn’t making you lose it the point?” She bobbed up and down on my cock a few times. “I need to finish what I started.”

“Not if you want me to fuck you soon after this.” I swallowed, digging my fingers into the comforter.

She wasn’t going to let up, so I gave in. She was clearly into it, and as long as she was getting pleasure one way or another, I was happy.

“I can wait for you to recover,” she said, stroking my cock up and down with a twist of her wrist. “I want to feel you come down my throat.”

“Fuck, Olivia.” I let my head fall back, my hips twitching up. “You’re going to end me.”

She let out what sounded like a giggle, the vibration of it sending a new sensation through me.

I gently thrust up into her mouth, and she gently grunted in surprise. I lifted my head again, ready to apologize. But she nodded, as if to tell me to keep going. I grinned, gathering her hair in one of my fists.

“You’re a bad girl, Olivia,” I said, my voice thick with lust. “You want me to fuck your mouth?”

She hummed around me, and I kept fucking her mouth. As much as I wanted to thrust like I was fucking her pussy, I held back, taking it slow until I was sure she could handle more. She gripped my thighs, not taking her eyes off of mine as I drove my cock into her throat over and over. Tears spilled over her cheeks, but she urged me on with her gaze.

“I’m so fucking close,” I choked out, my grip on her hair tightening. “You ready for me?”

She nodded, and seconds later, I exploded, groaning as I released down her throat. She sputtered but recovered and

swallowed it all. The pleasure was unreal, like she'd managed to ignite every single nerve end in my body. I'd never come so hard, or for as long, in my entire life.

Almost all the energy left my body in one breath, and I flopped back onto the bed. I put my hand to my chest, my heart pounding so hard that Olivia probably heard it.

She stood, licking her bottom lip, and crawled over me, cat-like. The wicked grin on her face made my heart skip. I needed to make her feel as good as she'd just made me feel.

"You're going to be the death of me, sweetheart," I said, squeezing her hips. "Come sit on my face."





“**S**it on it?” I’d heard of it being done, but I hadn’t done it myself.

Most of the sex I’d had was very straightforward, but I was looking forward to changing that. Austin already was changing that. I’d never given a blowjob like that before. One so rough and savage and hot that I wanted to do it all over again. I was soaked, my inner thighs wet with my arousal.

“Yeah. So I can finally taste you.” His eyes skimmed over my breasts. I arched my back a little bit to give him more of a show. He looped his arms around me and dragged me toward his face. “Come on. Take a seat.”

I did as he asked, crawling over until my core was over his mouth. He dragged me down, his big hands rough on my ass, and devoured me like a starving man. I gasped, my hands falling above his head. I was already soaked, so his tongue slid over me with ease.

He moaned, his fingers digging into my flesh so hard that I knew I was going to have bruises there. The idea of that made me clench around nothing. I wanted him to claim me. To make me his.

My thighs quaked around him as he dove deeper, sucking my clit into his mouth while his fingers traveled closer to my crack. I gasped as he worked a finger into my pussy, squeezing around it so hard that he chuckled. He lifted me up for a second.

“You’re dying to be filled, aren’t you,” he said, his voice muffled by my legs.

“Yes. Please.” The idea of him even fitting was intimidating, but I wanted to take him, even if it hurt a little.

“Not yet.” His finger slid out, then crept to my back entrance. I tensed as his finger circled it, pressing but not breeching it. “You want me to fill you back here someday? With my fingers or a toy? Or eventually my cock?”

“Someday” implied that there was more for us, making my heart flutter underneath the unbelievable weight of how turned on I was.

“I’ve never done that before,” I admitted.

Some exes had wanted to, but I always said no. It was a vulnerable act of intimacy, and I hadn’t wanted to let go.

“I know you’ll love it.” Austin played with my ass a little more. The stimulation was surprisingly arousing, lighting up areas of myself that I hadn’t explored before. “But we can do that later.”

I let out a whine of frustration, which turned into a keening cry when he went back to eating my pussy. I sat up, digging my fingers into his soft, short hair to make sure he didn’t move. I rolled my hips, grinding onto his face, but he didn’t care. He just got even more into it.

I had no idea how much time had passed. I was outside of reality entirely, only vaguely aware that we were ridiculously loud. He played me like an expert, switching between working my sweet spots to exploring new areas to teasing me just enough to make me squirm.

My orgasm rushed up to the surface, and I lingered on the crest. Then, his cock brushed against my lower back, hard again. I came hard, almost screaming. My thighs clamped around the sides of his head so hard that I was probably hurting him. But he didn’t react. He just dragged out my climax for as long as he could.

I was dizzy with lust, my head spinning even as I came most of the way down. Austin flipped me onto my back and settled between my thighs, disorienting me even more. His cock was hard and ready, notching against my entrance. He

looked absolutely enormous in every way from this angle. His height, his huge shoulders, his enormous arms and thighs and cock.

He looked me in the eye, slipping his tip inside of me.

“Please. Hard,” I whispered.

He drove into me fully in one hard stroke. I gasped, digging my nails into his forearms. Holy shit. I’d never been filled so much before, almost to the point where the stretch hurt. It was so, so good, hitting the spot that always lit me up.

He started to move, hardly letting me adjust at all. His pace was fast, and he slammed into me so hard that I slid up closer to the headboard. I was letting out incomprehensible sounds, writhing underneath him. He pressed his thumb to my lips, and I sucked on it, biting down just enough to make him react. He smiled, the big, brilliant one that he didn’t show many people. I loved it.

He changed the angle by pushing my legs back and having them up on one of his shoulders. I grabbed for a pillow and tried to smother my face in it to stifle my moans, but he took it and threw it across the room.

“I’ve waited a long fucking time for this,” Austin said, pounding me in rough, slow strokes that made my toes curl. “I don’t want anything between us.”

His hand came down onto my throat again, the way he’d done when he’d pinned me against the wall and kissed me. The combination of how he was fucking me and the gentle weight of his hand on my neck made me tilt my head back more. It was a rush knowing that he’d never hurt me despite his size and strength. I never thought I’d let go enough to do anything like this, and the realization only made my nipples harden more.

He flipped me over again onto my hands and knees, pushing inside me once again. Instead of taking me on all fours, he pulled me up until I was sitting on his lap, both of us kneeling. His hand was still on my throat, but his hard body was lined up behind me.

“You have no fucking idea,” he said into my ear, holding me steady while he moved his hips. My hand dipped between my legs, feeling where we were joined. “How much I’ve wanted you just like this.”

I leaned my head back against his chest as I played with myself. I was going to come again, the intensity of it so much stronger than the first orgasm he’d given me. His lips fell onto the crook of my neck, followed by his teeth.

The little bite was what I needed to come, moaning so loudly that I startled myself. Austin was right behind me with his own climax, pulling me down onto his cock, our bodies smacked together with bruising force.

We fell onto our sides, with him sliding out of me and rolling out of bed. I looked at him over my shoulder, fear shooting through me like lightning. Was he leaving me after all of that?

“I’ll be back,” he said.

I let out a breath and relaxed into the pillows. He came back moments later and cleaned me up before sliding in bed behind me, the big spoon to my little one.

“You’re so warm,” I said, snuggling up against him.

“I got a bit of a workout, in case you didn’t notice.” He chuckled, his chest vibrating against my back.

I turned around to face him, tucking myself under his chin. We lay in comfortable silence for a bit. I was too worn out to speak, anyway.

Eventually my thoughts came back online, turning back to the problem we’d had before. I lifted my head. Austin was clearly spent, his eyes fluttered closed. He was so gorgeous like this, sated and completely relaxed.

He had an edge of tension to him, his muscles always slightly bunched, so seeing him splayed out like this was something I wanted to savor. His tattoos covered his thick, muscular arms almost entirely, but the tattoos on his torso were much sparser. One was on his left pec, connecting to his

left tattoo sleeve, and two others were along his ribcage, spanning to his back.

I ran my fingers along the one on his left pec, down to the one on the left side of his ribs. Most of his tattoos didn't have any meaning to them, according to him, but I wondered if any of them actually did. Like the tree I was touching, making his abs twitch. He'd gotten it when we were in our early twenties, probably in the time between when his mother died. The tree was the same one as we had along the fence between our yards when we were younger. He sometimes climbed up it to easily get to my uncle's yard, where we'd hang out and talk for hours.

Was it to commemorate that? Or was it something else entirely? It wasn't like those trees were uncommon.

I bit my lip. I'd ask him about it later.

"Hey, Austin?"

"Mm?"

"Remember what I said about healing together?" I asked. I expected his body to tense, but he just made another sound of acknowledgment. "How do you feel about it?"

He shifted so he could look into my eyes. "I'm wondering what you meant when you said you were broken, too. The details of that, I mean."

I sat up on one elbow, taking time to gather my thoughts.

"Everything that's happened—with Clark and the others—has made me realize that I'm still dealing with some stuff. Like what you're dealing with, fearing that you're not enough for anyone. I'm feeling stronger now with how you guys have helped me, but I still have my moments where I feel like I don't deserve to be loved."

A mix of emotions flared up in his eyes. Empathy was one of them. Even though he didn't respond right away, I was glad he didn't immediately blame himself. But he had hurt me, touching a nerve I hadn't realized was so exposed. That fear of being ditched for the next best thing. Or not even the next *best* thing, just something or someone else.

“I’m sorry. I don’t want you to feel that way,” he finally murmured, kissing my forehead.

It was only two words, but they were so heavy with sincerity that I didn’t need to hear more.

“It’s okay. We can move on from it together.” I kissed him, letting my lips linger against his. “All four of us.”

“All four of us.” He held me closer. “We’ll always be together, Olivia.”

“Always.”



“**Y**ou think they’re done?” Noah asked me after a prolonged bout of silence. The entire hotel room felt eerie without the sounds of Olivia’s moans, Austin’s grunts, and the bed’s creaking. These beds were the highest quality and pretty sturdy—how had they fucked so hard that they’d shaken it?

Whatever they’d done, I was relieved. Finally. They’d sealed the deal. People who barely knew Austin assumed he was getting laid all the time and never slept with the same woman twice. I wasn’t sure why. The tattoos and bad boy energy, I guessed. But he definitely wasn’t going to be that way with Olivia. Now that they’d slept together, he would be even more in it for life than he was before.

The sound of Olivia’s laugh came from behind the door, as did Austin’s deep voice.

“Yeah, they’re done,” I said, putting my feet up on the coffee table.

“Finally. Shit.” Noah snorted, resting an arm on the back of the couch. “Then again, I completely understand why they took a while.”

“Agreed.” Hearing Olivia enjoying herself brought up memories of our time together, then with Noah. My cock stirred. We needed to get her back into bed.

A few minutes later, Austin and Olivia emerged from the bedroom. Olivia was wrapped in one of the big robes that the resort supplied, and Austin was just wearing shorts. Olivia’s cheeks were flushed, more out of embarrassment than



lingering arousal, and Austin was running his fingers through his hair the way he did when he was nervous. Noah laughed.

“What are you two acting all shy for?” he asked. “I think this whole island heard the both of you. And it’s not like we haven’t heard her before.”

“Fuck, I don’t know.” Austin flopped into the armchair next to the couch. “It just feels a little like losing my virginity all over again.”

“Really?” Olivia’s eyebrows went up, a smile spreading across her face. “Just like that?”

We all knew the story of how Austin had lost his virginity when we were in high school—a wildly awkward encounter in the backseat of his shitty car. It was so mortifying that he’d refused to elaborate for years. Now it was just hilarious.

“I mean, I would have preferred my first time to go like that.” Austin extended his hand, and Olivia took it, settling in his lap. “But then again, that would have been like starting at the top.”

“True.” Olivia snuggled into him.

The tension in Austin’s body, as if he was always ready to leap out of his chair into action, was gone. He even had a small smile on his face.

“So now that you two are together, I’m guessing you’re fine with the arrangement, Austin?” I asked.

“Of course. I can’t imagine forcing Olivia to choose,” he said, wrapping his arms around Olivia. “It’s just that none of us have ever had a relationship like this before. What will life be like?”

I shrugged. “We live together. Go on dates. Have sex. Everything we had before, plus more.”

“I like the idea of that.” Olivia rested her head on Austin’s shoulder, inhaling like she was smelling him. “It feels so natural already. Crazy, isn’t it?”

“It is.” Noah drummed his fingers on the armrest of the couch. His brow furrowed for a second, but he didn’t say

anything.

“How do you think your parents will take it?” Olivia asked.

“You know my mom’s always loved you,” I said. “And you guys, too. She’ll think it’s a peculiar arrangement, but she’ll be happy for us.”

I hadn’t texted my mom in two days, an unusual occurrence. Usually, we talked every day. Then again, we’d been caught up here. Later, I would tell her everything.

“I think I’ll have to keep this close to the vest for a while, Liv,” Noah said.

“I get it,” she said, sliding out of Austin’s lap and over to Noah’s. She kissed him on the lips. “I’m not expecting you to shout it from the rooftops.”

“Trust me, I want to.” He pressed his lips to her temple.

“I don’t get how you came from them, man,” Austin said, stretching his legs out in front of him.

Noah just sighed the way he often did when his parents came up. They were... polite. But I had the feeling that they were only that way because it was what was expected from people of their status. They were all about looking good instead of actually being good. Appearances were everything.

I’d only met a handful of times over the years. But every time Noah talked about them or talked to them, he came away looking worn out. Like they’d sucked the life out of him, somehow.

Almost as if I’d conjured a text from my mom out of thin air, my phone buzzed on the table.

“Speaking of my mom.” I checked the message. She’d had me fairly young, so she wasn’t that old. But sometimes her style of texting made her seem that way. “She says hi to everyone and wants us to send pictures when we get back.”

“Anything for her,” Olivia said. She adored my mom, too, almost as if she were her own.

“Speaking of pictures.” Noah turned toward Austin. “Did you ever catch up with that photographer?”

“No. He got away.” Austin frowned.

“Maybe it was nothing,” Olivia said with a shrug. “Just a random person who got embarrassed that their photo had flashed, and we were in it.”

“Then they went running because a gigantic man started chasing them down.” Noah’s usual smile returned. “Whatever. You guys want to relax in the room before dinner? Maybe watch a bad movie?”

“I don’t know if I can stomach one,” I said. “That’s something for you and Liv.”

Noah somehow had the patience to watch any terrible holiday movie, rom-com, or trashy reality TV show Olivia wanted to watch. I loved Olivia, but I could only tolerate the *Real Housewives of Wherever* in small doses.

“What about an action movie?” Austin asked. “There has to be something.”

“There definitely *is* something, but if it’s the garbage shit you like, I don’t know,” Noah said. “I still can’t believe you don’t like the Terminator franchise.”

“How many times can you tell the same story?” Austin shot back.

“Are we going to end up looking for a movie for two hours before deciding on one?” Olivia put her hands on her hips, a smile of amusement on her lips.

“We’ll flip a coin before it gets to that,” I said.

Unfortunately, that was how our movie nights often panned out. At least it was entertaining to hear Noah and Austin arguing over martial arts movie franchises.

We settled on a comedy, which we watched before dinner. We watched a second movie over dessert from room service, cuddled up on the couch.

The next morning, we took it easy, waking up slowly and getting ourselves together. We went for a quick swim in the ocean, spotting a few dolphins, before going straight to breakfast at the restaurant on the beach.

“Thank you,” Olivia said as I pulled her seat out. The brightness in her eyes when I did little things like that for her was addictive.

“No problem.” I kissed her on the temple and sat down next to her.

Austin sat down, too, looking at a spot past Noah’s head, in front of Olivia. “We’ve got an asshole alert.”

I peered around Noah. Clark was sitting there alone, eating and looking out onto the water. His misery was obvious to anyone around us. He noticed us and stiffened. Noah looked over at him, too, moving his seat, so we were sitting in a semi-circle, facing him. Olivia was in the middle. Noah exchanged a glance with all of us, a scheming look in his eye. He didn’t have to tell us what he was thinking for us to get it.

Austin took Olivia’s hand across the table, leaning toward her. I rested my hand on her leg, even though Clark couldn’t see it. He got the picture.

“What do you want for breakfast, Livvy?” Noah asked, handing her a menu.

“I don’t know.” She took it, scanning over it. “What about the mimosas first? What do you guys think?”

“You’ll get whatever you want.” I caught the waiter’s attention and ordered the mimosas, requesting the best champagne they had for them. Some alcohol expert out there was probably having a fit knowing we were going to mix high-quality champagne with orange juice—even if it was organic and freshly squeezed—but who cared? If Olivia wanted something, she was going to get the best.

The waiter came and made the mimosas at the table, making a big show of popping the champagne. Clark glowered a few tables away. That felt good. And we were barely getting started.

We went all out, ordering the most over-the-top dishes they had and taking turns feeding Olivia. The whole table was filled with her favorite foods. She soaked up every minute. She would have loved this even if Clark wasn't there, but knowing that he was stuck there finishing his food and waiting for servers to give him the time of day made it even better.

Clark finally paid and stormed off, leaving us to enjoy the rest of the morning before our flight home. Noah had booked us a private jet to go home, to Olivia's surprise. Noah, Austin, and I flew private all the time for business, and when we'd gone on trips together, we'd flown first class. This was her first time and definitely wasn't going to be the last.

Olivia took in every detail as we stepped onto the plane, her eyes wide. This plane was luxurious, even to me. It had huge leather seats in pairs, facing each other, and a couch that looked as comfortable as the ones we had back home. The materials of everything, from the wood details to the carpet, screamed expensive.

"Welcome," the flight attendant greeted us as we boarded. "May I get you something to drink?"

"I'd love some sparkling water," Olivia said, almost sheepishly.

She never wanted to inconvenience anyone. At least she was finally accepting this kind of treatment. We were going to treat her like a princess every chance we got now that she was letting us in.

"Same," I said, resting a hand on Olivia's lower back and guiding her to a seat.

The wait to take off was short, and soon, we were in the air. Olivia looked out the window, the sun catching the beautiful blue shade of her eyes.

"We've reached cruising altitude," the pilot said over the intercom. "Feel free to walk about the cabin."

"Finally," Noah said, unbuckling his seatbelt and reaching for Olivia.

She squealed in surprise, then laughed as he scooped her up and carried her over to the couch. Noah settled her on the couch and sat next to her. Austin and I joined them, with Austin sitting to her other side and me sitting on the ottoman in front of her.

“Would any of you like a beverage?” the flight attendant asked as she reappeared from the back.

“We’re good.” I looked at Olivia, heat building in my blood. “Some privacy would be great, thanks.”

The flight attendant nodded and disappeared again.

“Privacy?” Olivia asked, one eyebrow going up.

“Yep.” I cupped her calf and pulled off her sandal, putting her foot in my lap.

She was wearing the same casual dress as she had on the flight over, and putting her foot on my lap showed me a tantalizing expanse of inner thigh.

“Oh,” she moaned as I started massaging her foot. “That’s so nice.”

Austin ran his hand down her arm, ending up at her thigh. He inched the fabric up just a few inches, then looked at me with amusement in his eyes.

“Did you start the foot massage just to make her moan like that?” he asked.

“Well, not really. It just kind of happened.” I shrugged. “But it’s a welcome side effect.”

“A very welcome one.” Noah’s hand grazed the side of her neck, then down the top of her dress. “Mm, no bra. Do you know how absolutely crazy you drove me on the flight over here in this dress?”

“No,” she said, her voice already breathy.

“Well, you did.” Noah played with her left nipple as I pressed my thumb into a small knot in the ball of her foot. “All that bare leg and these sweet tits almost spilling out.”

“You like to tease us, don’t you, baby?” Austin said, inching her dress up even higher. Her legs parted, showing me her pink panties. “To make us want to pin you down and fuck you until you scream.”

Olivia’s cheeks flushed. “Maybe.”

Noah snorted, his hand going to her other knee. “So, yes.”

“But... what if someone sees us?” Olivia asked.

Austin’s hand was already all the way up her skirt, and she made no moves to stop him.

“Who? All the other people on this plane?” Noah kissed the side of her neck. “The flight attendant won’t come out here unless we ask her to.”

Olivia squirmed as Austin cupped her over her panties. I moved to her other foot, putting the one I’d just massaged to the side, spreading her open more.

“Pull her panties to the side,” I told Noah. “I want to see how wet she is.”

Noah did, pushing up her dress even more. She was glistening, her clit already hard. I palmed myself through my jeans. Just because we weren’t going to be interrupted didn’t mean I could full on fuck her on the plane. I couldn’t wait until we were home.

Austin groaned, plunging a finger inside of her. She gasped, kicking a little before regaining control. Austin already knew exactly what she wanted, making her hips squirm. Noah grabbed one of her legs, opening her to me more, and settled it across his lap. Seeing Austin’s fingers go in and out of her, the wet sound of it, made me want to put my mouth on her.

But Noah dipped his hand into her panties instead, playing with her clit. It was like they were putting her on display for me, every dream I’d had come to life. I couldn’t stand to just touch her legs anymore. I stood, bracing my hand on the wall of the plane, and kissed her. The kiss was hot and intense, and I took her mouth the way I wanted to take her pussy when we got home.

“I’m close,” she said against my lips, her whole body trembling.

I released her and sat back down to watch it happen, my hand on her ankle. Austin bit the spot between her neck and shoulder, and she detonated. Seeing her flutter around Austin’s fingers, biting back moans, almost made me leak from my tip. I needed to be inside of her. And judging on the heated looks the others were giving her, they needed her, too.

I hoped she was ready for us.

Austin pulled his fingers out of her and sucked them clean, while Noah put her panties back into place and offered his fingers to Olivia. She cleaned them, making the same kind of sound she did when she was tasting one of our many delicious meals at the resort.

“I’m about to bust into the cockpit and land this plane myself, just to get home faster,” Noah said, checking the time.

“We should be landing soon.” I looked out the window, then back at Olivia. She was eager for more. “I hope our driver is ready to speed home.”





I didn't have to take over for the pilot and land the plane to get us home faster. We landed not long after getting Olivia off, and our driver sensed the urgency radiating from all of us and sped back to our place.

As much as I wanted to jump her as soon as the door closed, I had to be patient just a little longer.

"Hold on, Liv," I said, putting a hand on her waist to stop her from kissing me. She gave me a playful pout that made me smile. "I promise, the wait will be worth it. We have some stuff to show you."

"Oh?" Olivia glanced over her shoulder at Jacob, who came up behind her and covered her eyes.

Austin took her other hand. "Just follow us."

We guided her through the house, making sure she didn't trip and fall. Finally, we reached her bedroom. Just as our assistant had texted us, everything was ready.

"Okay." We stopped at her closet. It was a walk-in, though it was much smaller than the ones inside our individual bedrooms. Still, it was more than big enough for the surprise we'd arranged. "Open your eyes."

Jacob took his hands off her eyes, and she looked around, blinking. We'd filled her closet with brand-new clothes from the best designers in the world, all in the colors she loved and looked incredible in.

"Guys." Olivia wandered further into the closet, running her fingers over the sweat-wicking fabric of the long-sleeved

shirts hanging directly to her left. Sometimes it got chilly in the yoga rooms before she got warmed up, so we'd made sure the personal shopper got plenty of those. "These are all brand-new clothes."

"They are." Austin rested his hands on the island in the middle of the closet. He pulled open one of the drawers and stacked some leggings on it. "And so are these."

"Don't worry, we didn't throw out your old clothes, just in case you wanted to hang onto them." I showed her the section of her old clothes. Her wardrobe had almost tripled.

Olivia's mouth hung open, shock coloring her face.

"Guys," she said again, looking around the closet. In addition to her regular athleisure clothes, we'd gotten her dresses, tops, jeans, shorts, and everything in between. We'd known her long enough to understand what she liked, but we snuck in a few extra sexy pieces and an unreasonable amount of lingerie. "This is insane."

"We're not done yet," Jacob said, taking her hand. "Come on."

We walked her over to her bathroom. The counter was filled with new, high-end skincare products, makeup, and other toiletries. Her breath hitched, and she wandered forward, almost as if she didn't believe this was real.

"This face cream is four-hundred dollars. Or at least it was when I saw it online," she said, holding up a tub. "I don't even want to know how much the other stuff is."

"Does it matter?" Austin asked, leaning against the wall. "We could spend this amount of money on you every day for a year, and it would hardly make a dent in our bank accounts."

"I love it. Thank you." She put the cream down, pressing a hand to her chest and absently rubbing her breastbone. "But I don't understand why you're doing this for me."

"Because you're ours," I said. "We've always wanted to spoil you, but you've never accepted anything. But now that we're all together, you have to start living like us. Let us pamper you, Liv."

She blinked, then smiled. “Okay. I’ll let you guys pamper me all the time.”

“Finally,” Jacob said, kissing her forehead.

“There’s even more, by the way,” I said, holding open the bathroom door.

“More?” Olivia laughed in disbelief. “What, did you build a whole new house for me or something?”

“No, but kind of close.” I extended my hand, and she took it. “Come on.”

I led her through the house to the wing where our offices were. We’d always had a spare room there that sat untouched, so it was perfect for her next surprise. Jacob opened the door for us, and I nudged Olivia inside.

Olivia eagerly stepped forward, toward the white oak desk in the middle of the room. A new computer was on it, and every office supply she’d ever need was inside her drawers. Shelves lined the walls, and mirrors and some art pieces she’d loved were up, too. The color palette was soothing, with light wood, white, and sage green. Overall, it was a brightly lit, calm space.

“This is your office,” I said. “What do you think?”

“What do I think?” She turned, beaming. My heart expanded seeing the delight on her face. “I love it. I’ve never even thought about what my office would look like, but you’ve made it perfect. Thank you.”

Austin gave her one of his rare, big smiles. “Whenever you’re ready, you can start on your plant-based supplement company. We can help you hire a team to make it happen.”

Olivia threw her arms around him since he was closest, kissing him. Then, she did the same to Jacob, then me.

“I can’t thank you guys enough,” she said. “I love all of it.”

“I feel like a game show host—but wait, there’s more,” I said with a grin. “I think you’ll love this one the most.”

“Seriously?” Olivia asked. “How did you guys make all of this happen? We weren’t even gone all that long.”

“We can make anything happen with our resources,” Jacob said.

We wound through the halls of the house until we reached my bedroom. Since I was technically the owner of the house, I’d taken the master bedroom. It was more than big enough for the bed that we’d had delivered.

“This bed could have its own zip code,” Olivia said, stopping in the doorway. “This is for us?”

“Yeah. We needed something big enough for all of us to fit.” I gently pushed her forward. That was all the encouragement she needed to take a flying leap onto it, bouncing on the mattress and laughing.

The movement made the back of her dress fly up, exposing her ass. She rolled over onto her back, her dress hiking up even more until I saw a flash of her panties. The lust that I’d had to put away temporarily fought its way to the surface. Olivia sensed the shift in our energy and propped herself up on her elbows.

“Why don’t we test this out?” she asked, her voice a purr.

She didn’t have to tell me twice. I ripped my shirt off, then my shorts, and was on the bed before the others even moved. I met her lips in a bruising kiss, pinning her to the bed. She dug her fingers into my hair and threw a leg over my hip, kissing me as hungrily as I’d kissed her.

I had to remind myself to slow down, at least a little. We had forever now, and I didn’t have to do absolutely everything I wanted to do with her right this second.

But still. She was impossible to resist. Every single thing about her made my blood sing.

“Shit, Noah, leave a little of her for the rest of us,” Austin said. The bed was so huge that I didn’t even feel him or Jacob crawl onto it as well.

“There’s more than enough Olivia to go around,” I said, peeling down the straps of her dress.

“It’s just a matter of where we start.” Austin stripped down to his boxers, his cock already straining against the fabric.

“How do you want us, sweetheart?” Jacob asked. He’d stripped down as well.

Olivia sat up and helped me take her dress off the rest of the way. All of us stared down at her as she wiggled her panties off, tossing them off to the far edge of the bed. She kept her knees together, the scent of her pussy tantalizing us. My mouth watered. That tiny taste of her that I’d gotten on the jet wasn’t enough.

“Lie down, Noah,” she said, gesturing for me to lay down across the bed instead of how I would have if we were going to bed.

I did as she asked. Was she going to ride me?

No, she did something that was almost as good—she straddled my face and lowered herself, her wet heat surrounding me. I ran my tongue up her slit, making her gasp and grip the sheets so hard that I heard her nails scratch down the cotton.

“B-behind me, Austin,” she said, her voice muffled because her thighs were almost squishing my head.

“Just a second.” Austin retreated.

I knew exactly where he was going. We’d stocked up on some additional supplies, too.

I went back to licking her pussy, taking my time. Having her over me, covering most of my face, made the act even more intense. More intimate. I loved it.

Olivia let out a squeak of surprise, jerking forward.

“That’s super cold,” she said with a laugh. The scent of lube mingled with her arousal.

“Sorry, baby,” Austin said. “Relax for me. It’s just one finger right now.”

Fuck. I'd thought about fucking her in the ass before, but now it was a very real possibility with Austin warming her up. My cock hardened to an almost painful degree. If I touched myself for more than a second, I'd lose it. I tried to focus on unsexy thoughts, but having a face full of pussy wasn't the best way to calm down.

Olivia changed her angle again, leaning forward and rolling her hips. Then, I heard the unmistakable sound of her sucking cock. Jacob's. He let out a low moan.

"Adding another finger," Austin said to her.

"Shit," she murmured, wiggling on me again. "That feels so good."

I dipped my tongue inside of her, feeling her tighten up around the small intrusion. "Come on my face, Liv," I said as well as I could.

"It's gonna feel so good to come with something in your ass," Austin said. "Show Noah how good it is to come on his face."

I flicked my tongue back and forth across her clit until she lost it, moaning around Jacob's cock and her thighs squeezing my head. A bead of arousal gathered on my tip, just from that alone. She always came so beautifully, and experiencing it from underneath her was so new and hot.

Olivia slumped, her breathing hard. She lifted off of me and crawled forward toward Jacob.

My face was completely soaked with her, and I was hard as granite. And we'd barely begun.

## CHAPTER 20



Noah was right—coming with something in my ass felt unbelievable. And that was just Austin’s finger. How was it going to feel when one of them fucked me back there? My whole body shivered as I continued sucking Jacob off.

“Slow down, sweetheart,” Jacob said, sliding away from me. “I don’t want to come too soon.”

I lifted my head. “Even though I love swallowing?”

Jacob took in a deep breath, closing his eyes. His cock twitched. “You’re being a tease.”

“It’s fun.” I grinned. “I love the way you all look when I bring you to the edge.”

Seriously. Each of them were a little different when they were blissed out of their minds. Noah’s face always had a hint of a smile on it, even as his eyes were squeezed shut in pleasure. Austin was intense, like the pleasure was almost painful. And Jacob lost the composure that always steadied me and was wild-eyed.

“You know what happens to teases?” Austin asked, grabbing me and yanking me over his lap. His hand came down on my ass, not hard enough to hurt but enough to sting. “They get punished.”

“Austin,” I moaned, biting back a cry when he picked up the pace and intensity.

“Spanking? Really?” Noah asked, a laugh in his voice. “I think a better punishment would be edging her the way she’s

done to us. Or making her come over and over again without a break.”

“Why not all three?” Jacob asked, sliding off the bed. “She’s teased all three of us, after all.”

“Good point.” Austin smoothed his hand up and down my ass, soothing the burn. “Which toy are you getting?”

“A few of them.”

“Toys?” I lifted my head, biting my lip as Austin’s fingers traveled to my back entrance again. I was still slick with a mixture of lube and my own juices.

“Oh, yeah.” Noah took a few brightly colored toys as Jacob handed them to me. “We’re going to have a lot of fun with these.”

I clenched the blankets as Austin slapped my ass a few more times. Jacob laid out the toys in a row in front of me. I had a vibrator of my own, but it was like my car compared to theirs—functional, but not at all high end.

“Which one do you want?” Austin asked, picking up a wand and turning it on. It vibrated wildly but managed to be quiet.

“I don’t even know what some of these do.” I pointed to a hot pink one shaped like a U with buttons on it. Each end was more bulbous than the middle. “Whatever this one does, I want to try it.”

“Perfect option for your punishment.” Austin took the toy and pressed one end against my ass. “Take a deep breath and push out for me.”

I did as he said, and he pushed it inside. It burned at first, but when it popped inside, the fullness was pleasant. Then, he worked the other end inside of my pussy. I bit the inside of my cheek. I was stretched and stuffed. It took a moment to get used to, but I liked it.

“Let’s see...” Jacob sat down with his legs parted, his cock jutting upward. I wanted to finish him off with my mouth, but this game they’d decided to play was even more fun.

The toy came alive inside of me, and I shrieked in surprise. The vibration was right against my g-spot, and with the other end in my ass, I was quaking with pleasure. Then, he turned it off.

“You like that, huh?” Jacob said as Austin slid me off his lap.

“Definitely.” I sat down, my thighs parted. “How is this punishment?”

Jacob’s grin was delicious and wicked. “Because you can’t come until we say you can.”

He turned it on again with the little remote in his hands, and I moaned. The toy had more than one mode, the vibration switching between both ends. He pressed a few more buttons, and the pattern changed again, with long pulsing vibrations mixed with tapping ones.

I fell onto my back, my hands coming up to play with my nipples. This was far from a punishment. I loved having all three of them with their hands on me, but this was different in a good way. Deep and surprising.

Until Jacob stopped the toy.

I scrambled up to look at the three of them, huge grins on all of their faces. *Oh.*

“See?” Austin slid off the bed. “Let’s see how you do with my cock in your throat. Come down here. On your back.”

I did as he said, even though I didn’t get why I’d be on my back to suck him off. Jacob and Noah followed us to the end of the bed. It was high up, so Austin’s cock was right in line with my mouth when my head was slightly off the bed.

“You liked the way I fucked your face before. Can you handle me fucking it this way?” Austin asked. His tone had a flirty undercurrent to it, but his eyes were serious.

“I can handle it,” I said.

“Are you sure *you* can handle it?” Noah asked him. He was kneeling between my legs, a hand on my thigh.

“Yeah.” Austin looked at Jacob. “Start her off easy. I don’t think I’ll take long, anyway.”

Jacob turned the toy on a low setting, just enough to stimulate me and make me squirm.

“Open your mouth, baby,” Austin said. “If you need me to back off, hold up one finger. If you need me to stop, hold up two. Okay?”

“Okay.”

I opened my mouth, and he slowly slid his cock inside, inch by inch, letting me get used to it. Giving head from this angle was weird, but it allowed me to open my throat more and take him deeper. Jacob inched the vibrations on the toy up, and I held onto Austin’s thigh so I wouldn’t accidentally hurt him.

He looked down at me as he slowly fucked my face, his eyes filled with adoration. Seeing how much he was loving this made it easier to let him in, to do my best to suck and lick his cock until he was spent. My eyes watered, and I was having to use a lot of brain power to focus on not choking, but the combination of being taken in such a vulnerable way while the toy buzzed away in my pussy and ass was going to push me over the edge.

“You look so damn beautiful with my cock down your throat, baby,” Austin said, resting one hand on my neck. “I’m going to come so fucking hard.”

The vibration of the toy lowered, just in time for him to start thrusting a bit harder. He grunted something that sounded like he was close. Just seconds after I braced myself for his release, he climaxed, his face twisted in ecstasy.

He pulled back, leaving my mouth with a pop, and I sat up to swallow. Now that I wasn’t focused on sucking off Austin, my attention shifted to how achy and wet I was between my legs. My orgasm was far away, but still—the pleasure wasn’t far from overwhelming me.

Austin sat on the bed on the opposite side from Jacob, his body lax. He ran his hand up my torso to my breasts, palming

one with his big hand.

“Your punishment game is weak,” I said, my voice raspy.

“That was the trailer for the real deal,” Noah said, yanking me down, so he was on his stomach between my legs.

Jacob cranked up the toy, making my hips buck. Noah held me down, his hand sliding up my inner thigh. I was completely at Jacob’s mercy, rolling with the intense dips and lifts of the toy’s vibrations. He watched my face intently as he teased me, pulling off when I got too close.

Austin leaned over and sucked one of my nipples into his mouth, right as Jacob changed the toy to only vibrate in my ass. The sudden shift was like being whipped around on a rollercoaster, flipping upside down.

And then, Noah had to put his mouth on me. I cried out and tried to writhe around, but it was no use.

“I need...” I couldn’t even say it. I was going to die if I didn’t come.

“You don’t have permission to come yet, Olivia,” Jacob said. The command in his voice was new, but god, it was not helping me avoid coming.

He took my hand and placed it around his cock. The tip was leaking already, so I spread some of the moisture around.

I had no idea how long they would tease me, Noah’s mouth on my clit, Austin’s tongue on my nipples, and Jacob controlling the toy, but I was shaking from head to toe, soaking the bed with my arousal and the sweat of trying so hard not to come.

“You think she’s had enough?” Austin asked, looking down at my face.

“Yeah, I’d say so.” Jacob put his hand around mine, jerking him off more firmly. “Come for us, sweetheart.”

He cranked the toy up to the max, and I came. Actually, I didn’t have a word for what I’d experienced. It was like they’d shaken the very core of me, wringing out every potential ounce of pleasure out of me. The climax kept going and going,

the toy's vibrations still changing... and changing. The pleasure dipped, then rose again, but I was so blissed out that it almost felt like one long orgasm.

“Jacob,” I whined. “Please. I can't. I can't keep going.”

Finally, he turned off the toy, and I went limp, like a rag doll. Holy shit. I was in great shape, but that had tested my body in ways that I didn't even know were possible.

“We need to do that again some time,” Noah said, sitting up and wiping his face clean.

“Easy for you to say,” I mumbled, still limp.

He laughed and pulled the toy from me, putting it aside. I managed to sit up on my elbows a few moments later. The three of them were looking at me with such hungry glances that, somehow, I felt a pulse of arousal between my legs.

“You ready for more?” Jacob asked, pushing my hair out of my face.

I glanced at his cock, which was jutting out and pulsing with every heartbeat. “I'd say you are. And I want to feel you inside of me again.”

“You want to take her ass?” Noah asked Austin.

“Nah, not this time,” he said. “I'm happy to play with her in other ways.”

None of them would coerce me into doing anything I didn't want to do, but a wave of relief went over me, anyway. Austin was a tight fit already. I couldn't imagine having him back there.

“I'll take your ass, Liv,” Noah said. “Get on top of Jacob.”

We rearranged ourselves, with me straddling Jacob. I slid down on his cock, my tissues still a little oversensitive. I paused, breathing and getting used to him again. Soon, the oversensitivity faded, and I tilted my ass up to expose it more. Noah lubed me up and pressed his cock to my ass.

“Breathe for me,” he said, pressing against me.

I'd just had the toy inside of my ass, but he was much bigger. I bit my lip as he inched forward, the stretch stinging so much that I sucked in a breath. Noah paused, then kept going, finally pushing past the tight ring inside of me. I was so damn full. Finally, he was all the way inside of me. All three of us stayed still, just for me to get used to the sensation.

It was unbelievable. I was so connected to both of them, so close. Austin leaned over and kissed me, our tongues skimming against each other, making me feel all complete.

"I need to move, sweetheart," Jacob said, his hips twitching.

"Go ahead." I rested my hands on his shoulders to balance, even as Noah wrapped his arms around my middle.

Jacob and Noah started to move in sync, Jacob thrusting in as Noah pulled out. Having Noah going in and out of my ass lit up so many nerve endings I didn't know were there. I felt so filled that I almost couldn't breathe.

And then Austin pressed the wand vibrator to my clit, and I nearly spasmed off of both of them.

"Austin," I whimpered. "Oh, my god."

"Shit, she's even tighter," Noah said, his voice hoarse. "I don't know how long I'll last like this."

"I'm going to—" I couldn't get the rest of the words out.

The combination of being filled in every way and my clit being stimulated shook my entire world. I thought I'd come hard before, but this was so new, so much deeper. Like it was building from the very center of myself and rapidly expanding.

I came so hard that tears fell down my cheeks. Noah and Jacob moaned along with me, my body clenching around their cocks.

"I can't hold back," Noah said, his body pressed against my back. "I can't."

He dug his hands into my hips as he fucked me almost too hard for my almost-virgin ass, but the pain was mixed with so much pleasure that I hardly felt it. Noah came with a tremble,

his forehead against my back. Jacob was lasting longer, but not much. His breath stuttered and hitched before he spilled inside of me, the look on his face so gorgeous that I wanted to remember it forever.

The moment was so intense that all of us were boneless and limp. Austin helped me off Noah's and Jacob's cocks and laid me down next to Jacob. Every last bit of my energy had been wrung out, and I'd never been happier.





**M**y mom wasn't a scary woman. She was maybe about five feet, two inches, with the same curly dark hair as me and the same dark eyes. She was the mom that Noah, Austin, and Olivia wished they'd had. I was still amazed at how she'd managed to raise me on her own and build her career simultaneously, all without losing her temper.

But telling her about me, Olivia, Austin, and Noah? I wasn't sure, and I hated being unsure.

We'd been back from our vacation for two weeks now, and it had been even better than I'd hoped.

We fell into a rhythm in just a day or two. Olivia always woke up early, starting the day with yoga out on the patio, and the rest of us joined her for coffee and a little breakfast. Eventually, we went our separate ways to start our workdays. Each of us had our own office space, so we sometimes passed each other during the day.

And sometimes, that led to a quickie in one of our offices or even the hallway. I used the fact that I was almost always behind the computer in my office next door to hers to my advantage often. Not that the middle of the day was the only time we were all over each other. Sleeping in one big bed led to a lot of sex. It was almost impossible to keep our hands off of her now that we'd started.

It was perfect. I was the happiest I'd ever been in my life. And knowing that my mom was happy when I was happy, I wanted to tell her sooner rather than later. Plus, how was I going to keep this from her?

But everything inside me protested not having control over the outcome of this. How was I supposed to plan ahead when the future was so hazy?

“You all right?” Olivia asked, appearing in the doorway between our offices. She was in a tank top and leggings, her skin still glowing with the light tan from our trip. We’d fucked this morning, but just seeing her standing there made me want her all over again.

“Yeah,” I said, reaching out my hand so she’d come to me. “I was thinking about how to tell my mom about us since I wanted to call her to catch up. It’s a big deal, and she might not fully get it, so telling her over a phone call doesn’t seem like the right move.”

Once Olivia was close enough, I threaded my arm around her waist, and she rested her head on my shoulder.

“How about we have her over for dinner?” she asked. “I can cook for all of us, or we could bring a chef in. Telling her in person with all of us here is probably the best plan.”

I saw my mom somewhat regularly since she lived thirty minutes away, in Fort Lauderdale, but I hadn’t seen her since before our vacation. I’d been too backed up with work. Now that we’d caught up from what we’d missed while we were away, and the four of us had settled in, it was a good time to see her.

Olivia made it sound so easy and simple, which eased my anxiety. I had to take the first step.

“You’re right,” I said, kissing her forehead. “Let me tell the others what the plan is, and I’ll invite her over.”

I messaged Austin and Noah about what Olivia and I had just talked about. They were just as supportive of the idea, so I called my mom and asked her over for dinner tomorrow. Of course, she said yes.

I threw myself into my work all day to make sure I didn’t have any lingering tasks to worry about during dinner. I rearranged my schedule for the next day, too, so we could

prepare for the meal. Usually, I hated doing that, but I'd overhaul my whole calendar for Olivia.

Our cleaning service came for an extra visit, scrubbing the house from top to bottom while we piled into Austin's Range Rover to go shopping.

Olivia was the only one of us who was a great cook—the rest of us just made food to survive. But we were capable of helping her chop vegetables and do whatever she needed us to do, so we went with her to Whole Foods.

“Okay.” Olivia looked at a list on her phone. “I'm making some spicy food, since it's your mom's favorite. Sound good to you guys?”

“Sounds good to me.” Olivia's vegan Italian dishes were always delicious when she shared them with us. “We'll follow your lead.”

She grabbed a cart and pushed it toward Austin. He took it and followed her. We trailed behind her and pulled whatever items she told us to. She split us up and had us gather ingredients.

“Why haven't we done this before?” Olivia asked, putting a bottle of wine into the cart. “I could have gotten the shopping done quickly while choosing the perfect veggies.”

“I don't know. Probably because us plus shopping is generally a no,” Austin said, putting an arm around her. “But I'm glad to help, and all of this stuff in the cart looks delicious.”

Noah appeared from behind us and carefully tucked some pints of ice cream into the cart, like he was sneaking them in. Olivia laughed.

“We can see you, you know,” she said. “And we know you eat a ton of ice cream already.”

“I know, but look at this cart.” He gestured vaguely to the cart. “It feels like I'm tainting all this fresh food with my bottom-of-the-barrel ice cream choices.”

“This is Whole Foods. There’s only so low the ice cream goes.” I tucked my hand into the back pocket of Olivia’s cut-off shorts. “And I guarantee that my mom will bring some dessert. She’s been sending me photos of all the stuff she’s been trying to bake since she started watching *The Great British Baking Show*.”

“Is she going to bring her brownies?” Austin asked, stepping in front of the cart and pulling us along. Mom’s brownies were a favorite among all of us. She’d make them every once in a while when we were younger, and we’d devour the entire tray the second they were cool enough to touch.

“Maybe. She might bring something kind of out there. Her experiments are of things I haven’t even heard of before.” I caught the eyes of a middle-aged couple, who were staring at us. They didn’t have to say a word. They were judging the hell out of us.

I kept my hand in Olivia’s back pocket, and Noah kept his hand around her waist. I wasn’t embarrassed about us whatsoever, but feeling so judged was a shock. I forgot how unusual our situation was until we were out here.

Nothing was going to stop us from showing affection in public, though.

But now that the judgmental couple had caught my eye, I noticed more and more people looking at us. Maybe even taking a photo. We weren’t famous, but some people in the area knew of us because of the charity work we did in the area and our billionaire status. Maybe that plus our arrangement was drawing attention?

The memory of the man who had snapped a photo of us on the beach came back. None of us had seen him again after that evening. Then again, we hadn’t gotten a good look at him. My stomach tensed. It was probably nothing. And people were probably just taking photos of other things around us.

We paid for the groceries and went home. The house was pristine, and the largest guest room had been set up in case my

mom wanted to have a few drinks. She always fell asleep after a few glasses of wine.

“Okay.” Olivia put on her apron and tied it. “Let’s get started. Austin, can you get some herbs from the planters on that windowsill? And Jacob, can you get a big pot of water ready to go and salt it a bunch? Noah, you want to help me wash all the veggies?”

“Sure thing,” Noah said, kissing her cheek. “Let me put on some music first, and we’ll get started.”

He put on an upbeat playlist, and we started on dinner. After Noah washed the loads of vegetables Olivia had bought to make the dishes, she started chopping them up.

“I don’t get how you don’t chop a finger off,” I said, watching her knife slide into the vegetables.

“Don’t speak so soon.” Noah leaned a hip against the counter. “She’s still chopping.”

“Wow, thanks for the vote of confidence.” She snorted and picked up a thin slice of zucchini. She popped it into her mouth. “My knife skills are amazing, thank you.”

“I don’t doubt you,” I said. “What’s this dish going to be, anyway?”

“It’s a twist on a curry? Maybe?” She grabbed the bag of chili peppers, then reached into the drawer for some nitrile gloves and a fresh cutting board. “I don’t know, really. It’ll all come together. I think I want to make this a sauce.”

She gave us orders, and we executed them, handing her ingredients like she was a surgeon and we were her assistants. Eventually, she had managed to fill the massive kitchen island with bowls, a mortar and pestle, and what felt like every single spice in our pantry.

“Okay.” Olivia dipped a spoon into the dish of eggplant dip that she’d made. “I need a taste tester.”

Noah stepped right up. He’d always been the most adventurous eater, aside from Olivia. She held the spoon up to

his mouth and fed him. The heat crackling between their gazes made me wish I'd volunteered first.

"What, you aren't going to feed us anything?" I asked, putting my hands on her hips from behind.

"Mm, well, you weren't volunteering." She turned and picked up a thin slice of carrot. "Open."

I did as she asked, and she popped the carrot in, her fingers lingering on my bottom lip. I grabbed her hips and ground her front against mine, pressing a kiss to the crook of her neck.

"We're not going to get anything cooked in time if you keep looking at us like that," I said into her ear.

I locked eyes with Austin over her shoulder, and he stepped up behind her, sandwiching her between us. With Noah on our other side, she was completely boxed in.

"Guys." Her voice was husky and warm. "You're right—we need to actually cook."

"You're sure we don't have time?" I asked, momentarily pulling away from her to check my phone. My mom had sent a message. "Oh, shit. She'll be here in twenty minutes."

"I can make Liv come in four minutes flat," Noah said.

"Later!" Olivia laughed, shooing us off. "We need to be ready. We have a lot to talk about."

I'd been so distracted by Olivia that I'd forgotten about the real reason behind the dinner. I took a deep breath. Nerves bubbled through me. It wasn't a choice between my mother and Olivia—the only reality was how life would be like with Olivia and how my mom reacted to that. My mom not approving of us would drive a wedge in our relationship. We'd always been close. I couldn't imagine not having my mother in my life, but I needed her to support my happiness. And I'd never been happier.

"You're right. We should hurry," I said.

We finished up the meal, which smelled delicious, just in time for Mom to come through the security gate of the neighborhood. Noah went to the wine cellar to grab a few

bottles to pair with the meal, and I waited by the door for Mom.

Eventually, she knocked on the door, and I opened it a moment later. Mom had a pan covered in foil in one hand and her tiny rescue dog, Princess, in the other.

“Hi, sweetheart,” Mom said with a smile, motioning with Princess to lean down for her to kiss me on the cheek. I did. I’d been taller than her since I was eleven. “How are you?”

“Good!” Did I sound as nervous as I felt? I petted Princess to distract her. “Olivia cooked something spicy for you.”

“Oh, perfect!” Mom held up the foil-covered pan, and I took it from her. “I made a vegan *tres leches* kind of thing. It turned out a little wonky, but I’m just proud that I was able to make something that literally means three milks without any milk.”

“I’m sure it’ll be great.” I stepped aside so she could come inside.

She trailed behind me, telling me about traffic and what she’d been up to. Finally, we reached the kitchen.

“Hey, Maya,” Noah said when we arrived in the kitchen.

Mom’s face lit up even more. “Noah! You look just as handsome as always.”

He kissed each of my mom’s cheeks, and she flushed like a schoolgirl. She’d always found Noah wildly charming.

“And you feel taller and taller each time I see you, Austin.” Mom gave Austin a hug, still holding onto Princess. The dog was just along for the ride. Austin gave her one of his rare smiles. “And Olivia. It feels like it’s been so long!”

Olivia wrapped my mom in a big hug, as if she were her own. The sight usually made me feel good, but this time, my stomach flipped inside of me. Olivia and my mom had always gotten along, but now Mom was like Olivia’s mother-in-law. And that was very different.

“Want some wine?” I asked. I really, really wanted some.



“I’d love some.” Mom put Princess down, and the dog toddled over to the window to stare at birds.

I poured Mom some wine, then some for everyone else. Noah, Austin, and Olivia caught Mom up while we finished up the food. The conversation continued to flow between the three of them, but I was too wound up to relax and enjoy myself.

Before we moved over to the table to eat, my mom gently squeezed my elbow.

“Let’s take a quick walk with Princess, so she’ll be too tired to pester us for food,” she said. Before I could protest, she peered past me and called, “We’ll be back in a second!”

Mom scooped up the dog and grabbed her leash from her purse. We went outside, Princess walking slowly ahead of us.

“What’s on your mind?” Mom asked. “You’re stressed.”

I let a sigh out of my nose. The storm of feelings rushing around me was impossible to stuff down. I didn’t regret being with Olivia, but not knowing exactly what our future held was a constant, nagging buzz in the back of my head. Usually, I was able to gather all the “what ifs” I had and write out all the possible outcomes. But this wasn’t like our business, where I held the vast majority of the reins.

“It’s just that there’s a lot going on. And I don’t know how it’s going to pan out,” I said. I didn’t want to tell her about everything without the others. “It’s stressful.”

“Ah.” She nodded, stopping to let Princess sniff some flowers. “Something you can’t plan for.”

“Exactly.” She knew me too well.

“So you know what I’m going to suggest.” She gently pulled Princess away from the plant.

I sighed again, running my fingers through my hair. We’d had this talk over and over again when I was growing up. I wasn’t sure why I was this way, but I had been since I was small. I just liked order. Maybe because, as hard as my mom

tried, there was a lot of disorder with just her to take care of me.

But she always said the same thing: just let it happen. Worrying about the things you couldn't control or schedule or plan was a waste of time.

"I know what you're going to tell me. But this isn't like anything else I've ever dealt with before," I said. "It's life changing. Something high stakes."

She raised an eyebrow at me. "The advice is the same. Fussing over the details and things you can't control is a waste of time. Think about how good it felt on vacation. You can always feel like that. It won't happen overnight, but you can work on it. It's a lifelong project."

Princess stopped, completely over the short walk. Mom picked her up and tucked her under her arm.

"Okay," I finally said. It was so much easier said than done, especially since we hadn't told her what was so life changing.

By the time we got back to the house, the others were in the dining room, ready to sit. We brought out the final dishes and sat down around the table.

We dug into the food, which was so spicy that my eyes watered. It took me a minute to adjust, but when I did, I caught all the subtle flavors in the spices.

"This is so good, hon," Mom told Olivia with a smile. "Thank you."

Olivia's cheeks flushed. "Of course."

"So." Mom took a long sip of wine. The pause pulled at me, making the spice burn inside of my chest. "What's going on with all of you?"

Of course she noticed it was something with all of us, not just me. She'd dealt with all of us together since we were kids—she had to have noticed a change in the dynamic.

I looked over at Olivia, then Noah, then Austin. They must have wanted to come out with it, too.

“So, we have something to tell you,” I said, taking a deep breath. “We’re together.”

Mom blinked. “Of course you are. You live together.”

“No, I mean...” I reached for Olivia’s hand and threaded my fingers through hers. “We’re all with Olivia. In a romantic way.”

Mom blinked, not even flinching when Princess barked at something outside. She just got up and pulled a chair out, placing the dog on it.

“Together with Olivia. In a romantic sense.” Mom’s brows furrowed. “So you’re with Noah and Austin also?”

“No,” I said. “It’s just like each of us are Olivia’s boyfriend, but we’re all fine with it.”

“So...” Mom didn’t seem upset, necessarily, just incredibly confused. The tightness in my chest eased, but not entirely. “You... switch around? Take shifts? I don’t understand.”

Noah laughed. “No. It’s just what Jacob said. The three of us are best friends with the same girlfriend.”

Mom blinked several times in a row, as if she wasn’t sure what she was seeing. “Okay...”

“What do you think?” I asked. My emotions kept lurching forward and back like a shitty old car switching gears.

“I think I need time to understand, but it seems like you’re all happy,” she said. “And you’ve always cared about each other. So I’m supportive of it, even if I don’t get it.”

I let go of the tension in my shoulders. “Thank you, Mom. That means a lot to us.”

“Of course, sweetheart.” She helped Princess down from the ground so she wouldn’t jump down and hurt herself. The dog went diving for dropped food but came up short. “I love all of you, and I just want the best.”

The relief that flooded me was overwhelming—somehow making our relationship more real in my mind’s eye. Our

relationship was unique, to say the least, but the fact that we had support from my biggest supporter meant the world to me. My mother had been my rock since childhood.

My mom was always going to be there for all of us. And yes, I couldn't control what was going to happen, but having my family around was going to steady me. I just hoped the beginning of our relationship was going to go smoothly.



I was going to pull my fucking hair out.

I was used to the stress of running a company like ours. I was in charge of the security staff, which meant dealing with a lot of people who thought they were hot shit for being strong.

But they were my employees, and some of them really needed to act like it.

I'd spent half the morning talking to a team of bodyguards who hadn't followed our protocol, and I couldn't get it through their thick skulls that rules existed for a reason.

I nearly laughed. *I* was saying that? As a teenager, I had been the biggest asshole, breaking every possible rule that the adults in my life—besides Maya—set out for me. I thought I was the hottest shit, and that I was too good for rules.

Maybe this was karma, then, for all the shit I'd put everyone through. For being such a terrible, hard-headed kid and young adult.

I pressed the heels of my hands into my closed eyes, trying to rub the ache out of them. I was in an all-around shitty mood. I knew why I was, deep down, but acknowledging that was too fucking hard.

I checked the time. If we were closer to the end of the day, I would have had a beer in the hot tub and shoved my feelings down somewhere. But it wasn't even noon yet, and I had too much to do to quit.

I trudged through my work, keeping my mind's attention away from the dark spot that was gradually growing inside my thoughts. Finally, lunch rolled around. I stepped into the hallway right as Olivia did, holding her big mug of coffee.

Seeing her brightened my mood instantly. She was finally mine. All of ours. She smiled back at me.

“Lunch time?” she asked.

“Yeah.” I reached for her and yanked her into a kiss. “I need a break.”

We walked hand in hand toward the kitchen. Her hand was warm and soft. I'd woken up with her pressed against my front, tucked under my chin, and all I wanted was to be back there, not dealing with shit.

Olivia pulled out a bunch of veggies from the fridge while I grabbed one of the meal prep meals that a private chef had made for me. It was perfectly balanced to fit my macronutrient needs, and I didn't have to do shit to it besides throw it in the microwave. Perfect.

I heated up my food and watched Olivia put together a salad. She even whipped together a dressing, tasting it over and over until it was just right. Instead of wearing her usual leggings and top, she was in a dress made of stretchy fabric. It was snug around her breasts and waist but flared out loosely around her thighs.

Her body looked delicious in it. I was glad my office wasn't directly joined to hers the way Jacob's was, or I'd be in there all the fucking time. She wouldn't be able to get a damn thing done with my face between her legs.

I opened the fridge, just to cool down for a second. I didn't have time for all the things I wanted to do to her. They'd have to wait until tonight, with the others.

We sat down outside on the patio, our feet brushing against each other. She smiled and dug into her salad.

Neither of us spoke—we didn't need to, to feel comfortable. But something was stirring in Olivia's head from the way she was glancing up at me from time to time.

“What is it?” I finally asked.

“I was about to ask you the same thing.” Her eyes drifted to my shoulders. “You’re super tense.”

I relaxed my shoulders. They’d been bunched up around my ears. Judging from the tightness there, they’d been like that all morning without me noticing.

“Been a tense morning.” I shrugged and stabbed a piece of broccoli. “It’ll be a tense afternoon, too.”

“Mm.” She kept eating her salad.

“How’s your day been?” I asked to deflect her. But again, she knew me way too fucking well.

“Good. But I’m more concerned about you.” She put her fork down and took a sip of her water. “You seem sad.”

My knee-jerk reaction was to tell her I was just fine, thanks. But the feeling I’d been trying to avoid all morning was just that—sadness. Or self-loathing, maybe, if I wanted to get specific. Now that I’d dragged the thought out of the depths of my brain, it was easy to understand. But Olivia was looking at me expectantly, and I wasn’t sure how to say it.

But I owed it to her to try to be open.

“It’s just... the day’s been bringing up a lot of old shit.” I put my fork down and sat back in my seat, looking out onto the water. If someone had told me I’d be living like this as an adult, I wouldn’t have believed it.

“Old shit like what?”

“Like old feelings. Feeling like I’m shitty.” I said the words fast, and it felt like I’d grabbed onto a bowl that was just a little too hot, but I was able to pull it out of the microwave, anyway. “Like I deserve the bad day because I was difficult in the past.”

“Austin.” Olivia’s blue eyes were soft and soothing. She stood up and went behind me, resting her hands on my shoulders. She started to massage me, her hands surprisingly strong for their size. “You don’t deserve bad days. Maybe you had your difficult moments, but so do many people growing



up. You were just made to believe that you were permanently flawed.”

I let my head fall back, against her chest. Talking about it—plus the massage—was seriously helping me feel less dread about the afternoon.

Her hands traveled over my shoulders to my chest, wrapping around me in a hug. She smelled like lemongrass mixed with the clean breeze coming off the water.

“Thank you for telling me about it,” she said, kissing the side of my neck. Chills ran up and down my arms to that spot. “Do you feel better?”

“Yeah, I do.” I turned my head, and she kissed me.

I’d intended it to be a cute, affectionate thing, but my girl turned it filthy. I moaned into her mouth, turning more to kiss her firmly.

“Fucking hell, Olivia,” I said, grabbing her by the hips and yanking her into my lap. She straddled me, her dress voluminous enough to cover us both. “You’re going to make it really hard to work this afternoon.”

“Not if we get the tension out.”

She kissed me again, nipping my bottom lip and sliding her hands under my shirt. The cries of birds flying by us reminded me that we were outside, but I didn’t fucking care. This side of the patio was facing the water, and the closest people were way out on boats.

I put my hands under her dress and found her center, slipping my fingers under the waistband of her panties. I finger-fucked her, moving my fingers just right. She wiggled her hips, trying to get me to go even faster. I did as she wanted, the wet sound of her pussy filling the air.

“Need your cock,” she whispered in my ear.

I made her get up for a second so I could pull down my sweats. She climbed back onto me, covering us with the bottom of her dress. Both of us took in a breath when she slid

onto me. Being outside during all of this was surreal—fucking outside in the middle of the workday.

I'd fooled around once or twice outside, but usually, it was at night, tucked away. No one could see us now, but we were exposed to the world. The slight fear of maybe getting caught only made it hotter, even if the only people who'd catch us were Jacob and Noah.

Olivia rode me, not as hard as she would have if we were inside, but enough for me to hold back my grunts of pleasure. I pulled her close, wrapping my arms around her so we were hugging as I fucked her. Just like all the sex we'd had with just the two of us, it was hard, fast, and filthy.

I dipped a hand underneath her dress again to reach her clit. She was so wet that my fingers slid over her smooth nub with ease. I circled it, varying my pressure until her inner walls fluttered around me. She came with a gasp, clutching me. I tried to enjoy watching her, but she was so tight that I nearly came undone before she finished. But I held on and came not long after.

We slumped against each other, Olivia's head against my shoulder. Her shoulders started to shake with laughter.

"What?" I asked, my lips curling into a smile.

"It's just that none of us can keep our hands off each other." She lifted her head. "I can't believe we're getting things done."

I chuckled. "Well, think of it as recharging our batteries."

"Sure," she said. "Recharging our batteries."

"Speaking of batteries, we should probably recharge the ones for your favorite vibrator before tonight." I helped her off of me.

"Already thinking about later?" she teased, straightening her clothes.

"Oh, always." I stood up, kissing her forehead. "I should get back to work, so we can have as much time as we need tonight."

“Looking forward to it.”

We went back to our offices, and I gave her one last kiss before we parted ways. I knew I loved Olivia before, but the more moments like that we had—both the conversation and the sex—the deeper I fell in love with her.



### **Two Months Later**

“Hey, Mom. Give me a second.” I popped in my earbuds so I could continue talking to her while I arranged the table for dinner. “What’s up?”

“Not much. Just wanted to check on all of you.” I heard her puttering around the house, as she always did when we talked in the evenings. I bought her one the minute I could. She was a single mom without much help, so growing up, we’d mostly lived in tiny apartments. Giving her a house was the least I could do after she’d sacrificed so much. “What are you up to?”

“Just getting some stuff ready for dinner.” I glanced over my shoulder to see if Olivia was there. I was alone. “We’re celebrating Olivia’s company. She hit some pretty big milestones.”

“Oh, did she?” Mom had a smile in her voice. “That’s amazing. How long has it been since she started, like two months?”

“Yeah. She’s worked out the formulas of her first five shakes, and she’s going to hire her first part-time employee.” I set out one of the flower arrangements we’d had delivered through the back door.

“That’s great. I’m so happy for her.” Princess barked in the background, and Mom soothed her. “How is everything with... everyone?”

She was still just as supportive as she had been the night we told her about our relationship, but she still had no idea what to call it. To be honest, I wasn't sure if she even fully got what we had going on, even though we'd explained it.

And I'd worked on trying to let go and not clinging to a set plan. It was slow going, but I was making progress.

"It's still really good. Amazing, actually. It's been like we were before, but closer," I said. I stepped back and looked at the table.

A chef was coming in a bit to actually cook for us, but I wanted to make everything look nice and comfortable. I could have hired someone to do it, but I liked to do little things for Olivia myself. Especially buying her flowers. I always went to the florist myself and had them make an arrangement based on whatever I said. If she was having a tough day, I asked for something brighter. If she was stressed, I asked them to make something with more greenery.

The flowers I'd gotten for today were her favorites: peonies, along with some other flowers I still couldn't identify.

"I'm so happy for all of you," Mom said. "I always knew she was special."

"Yeah, she is." I smiled. "Do you want to come over to spend time with us, maybe have dinner here? When are you free?"

She told me about her schedule, which was mostly her hanging out with her friends, knitting, and drinking wine. I was glad I could give her the retirement she deserved.

We chatted a bit longer, until Noah came into the room. He raised his eyebrows, as if to ask who I was talking to, and I mouthed *Mom* to him. He grinned.

"Hey, Maya," Noah said loudly enough for her to hear.

"Hi, hon," Mom said, a smile in her voice. "I'll let you guys go. I'm meeting my friends for a wine and stitch. Love you."

“Love you, too.” I ended the call and put my earbuds back in their case. “Is Austin still stalling Olivia?”

“I heard her moaning like crazy, so yeah, he’s stalling her.” He snorted, checking his phone. “Security just called—the chef just passed through the gates.”

“Good timing.”

I went to let the chef in, and Noah went to the wine cellar to pull a few options. The chef got started right away, taking some items he’d prepared in his kitchen to put them together. Austin stalled Olivia just long enough for her to come to the dining room. She stopped in the doorway, blinking and holding onto Austin’s hand.

“What’s all this?” she asked, looking between the three of us. “And is that a man cooking in our kitchen?”

“We wanted to surprise you,” I said, coming over to kiss her. “To celebrate the fact that your business is starting to take off.”

“Really?” Olivia’s eyes brightened after I kissed her. “I know if I say you didn’t have to, you’ll say you did, so I’ll just say thank you.”

“Good girl.” Noah kissed her next. I didn’t miss the flare of heat in her eyes at the praise. “Now, sit. I got some wines you might like, and the appetizer will be done soon.”

“Oh.” Olivia’s shoulders dipped, a dusting of pink appearing on her cheeks. “I kind of have a bit of a headache right now, and I wanted to go for a run tomorrow morning, so do you mind if I skip the wine?”

“Yeah, no worries.” He kissed her cheek. “I’ll get you a seltzer instead.”

After we sat down, we toasted to Olivia and her future success, then dug into dinner. The chef made all of Olivia’s favorites, like miso tofu and roasted cauliflower with tahini dressing, plus a few of ours like roasted chicken.

The conversation was easy, but I held back and observed. My wine had given me a gentle buzz, and combined with the

low lights of the room and the warmth radiating from all of us, I relaxed into my seat. Our company had been busier than ever, but the stress wasn't killing me nearly as much because of moments like this.

The chef started to bring out the dishes when my phone buzzed in my pocket. I checked it, just in case it was a client calling, but it was a number I didn't recognize.

"Who is it?" Austin asked.

"Not sure. I'll send it to voicemail and see if they leave a message." I rejected the call and put my phone back into my pocket. Moments later, the phone rang again. I sighed. "Fine, sorry. Let me answer this."

I answered, stepping outside.

"Is this Jacob Miller?" the man on the other end of the line asked. The tone of his voice was grave, making my stomach turn.

"Yes, it is."

"There's a problem that you should be aware of."





Jacob was on the phone for a while. We couldn't hear what he was saying, but something about his expression told me it wasn't good.

The delicious meal that we'd been enjoying turned in my stomach. I caught a glimpse of Jacob as he paced past the entrance to the dining room, his brows furrowed in a mix of concentration and distress. Finally, he ended the call and came back into the room, pushing his fingers through his curls. His skin was deathly pale.

"So, a story came out about us and how we're all dating Olivia," he said, blowing out a breath and letting his hand fall to his side. "I guess we're notable enough to end up in gossip magazines. That guy who took a photo of us on our trip must have been one of them, though there are a lot of photos of us just around."

"You have a link?" Austin asked.

"Yeah. I'll text it to all of you."

Our phones pinged a few moments later, and I checked the link. Well, links, really. One person had written an article, and some other publications had picked it up. I had no idea that the broader world would care this much about us, but I forgot how much people speculated about the guys' lives. Rumors about them being attached to whatever model had moved to the area popped up frequently, and usually, we just laughed at them. The mystique of three hot, young billionaires drew a lot of attention.

And now it was all on us.

“How do you guys feel about this?” I asked.

“I don’t care.” Austin put his phone down and leaned back in his seat. “I love our family, and we have the most perfect girl in the world. Who gives a fuck if it’s not normal by their standards?”

“I feel the same way. I’m proud of all of this.” Jacob sat back down. “I’m just shocked that it came out of left field.”

“I love what we have, too.” Noah’s brow was uncharacteristically tense. “But I haven’t told my parents yet. You know how they are.”

“Tell your parents to get fucked already,” Austin said with an exasperated sigh. “You’re a grown man making your own money, so why do they matter?”

Noah poured himself more wine, his frown deepening. “It’s not them—it’s about how all of this looks. They could badmouth us and kill our future business. And maybe even our current business, if the client doesn’t agree with our lifestyle. They know everyone. Word could get around, and we’d be screwed.”

The guys exchanged looks, a somber energy suppressing the room again. Their company was everything. What would we even do if Noah’s parents burned it to the ground?

## CHAPTER 25

The moment Jacob said that our relationship was plastered all over the news, a knot formed in my throat. It wasn't going away any time soon.

Yes, we made our own money—loads of it, too. But to be honest, a lot of it was because of the money my parents had at the beginning. The lump sum of money from my trust fund, plus some connections from the few people in my parents' social circle who didn't make me want to jump out of a moving car.

The rest had been us. We'd done good work, and our company had spread through word of mouth.

But just because my parents didn't know every single one of our clients didn't mean we were safe.

I took a deep breath and downed my substantial glass of wine. Maybe they wouldn't see the articles. Sometimes they were wildly out of touch. But I wouldn't have been surprised if they had some alert out on me.

I hated how this looked, and I hated that I cared so much. But appearances *were* important. Our whole business depended on it.

"We should finish dinner," Olivia said. "We can't really do much about it right now, can we?"

I held back a sigh. She was right. We'd planned this nice dinner for her, and I didn't want to ruin it. She deserved to celebrate her success without the specter of my parents lingering.

“You’re right,” I said. I glanced over at the kitchen. “Ready for dessert?”

The chef made a dark chocolate torte, which Olivia devoured. Watching her enjoy it made me happy, but it also made me want to take her to bed and get some of the stress out of my system. I’d never had more sex in my life, not that I was complaining. Sometimes we shared her, sometimes she was with us one on one. At the end of the day, we made it work.

“Want to watch something? Or sit out on the patio?” I asked once the chef started to clear the dishes. I wanted any distraction possible.

“Maybe we could watch something in bed?” Olivia asked, yawning. “I’m super tired.”

“Have you been sleeping okay lately?” Jacob frowned. “You’ve been tired a lot in the past week or two.”

“Of course you’d notice,” she said with a smile. “Actually —”

The sharp trill of my phone cut into Olivia’s words and into my chest. The only people who had an actual ringtone were my parents, so I knew to avoid the call. They rarely ever reached out to me unless something was wrong.

I got up and left the room to answer before I lost the nerve. No use in waiting for the issue to fester.

“Hello,” I said, stepping out onto the patio.

“Noah,” my mother said, her voice grim. “I’m here with your father. We’re here to talk to you about this... situation.”

I held in a snort at her use of “situation.” Saying what it actually was would have sent her into an asthma attack.

“You can’t be serious,” my father said. “You can’t be... *with* a woman who’s with other men. Two other men. Your business partners! How long has this been going on for? This is all over the news. The family PR team notified us.”

“I’m dead serious.” I sank down onto one of the patio chairs. The sun had set, and our view was still stunning, the

moon shining down on the water. “It’s been about two months.”

Mom made a strangled sound. “Two *months*? Noah!”

I ran my hand over my face. I refused to feel ashamed about this. I was in love with Olivia, and this arrangement had been the best thing to ever happen to me. But my parents were trying their hardest to make me feel like I’d done the equivalent of stealing from an orphanage filled with children.

“Who is this girl, anyway?” Father demanded, spitting out the word *girl* like it was dirty.

“Olivia.”

“Who?”

It didn’t matter that I’d been friends with Olivia since we were kids. I’d told them about her numerous times. Hell, they’d even met her several times. But they didn’t remember her at all. Or, more accurately, they chose not to remember her because she wasn’t like them. She was just a regular woman who hadn’t been born with a silver spoon in her mouth.

They had no idea how much she meant to me and how much she’d been a safe haven growing up, when I had to escape the uptight world they’d brought me into. The one I never quite fit into.

I pushed down the anger building up inside of me. Blowing up was a good excuse for them to both call me irrational and use that “fact” in their favor.

“An old friend. She’s known all of us for a long time.” I stared out at the water again.

“However long you’ve known her doesn’t matter,” Mom said. “I didn’t know you associated with low-life types of women like that. Sexually immoral and—”

“Do *not* insult her,” I hissed, clenching my fist on the table so I wouldn’t rip the umbrella from it and throw it just to ease my rage. “You have no idea who she is. How much we love her.”

“Son.” My dad’s voice dripped with condescension. “A woman can’t love more than one man at a time. She’s duping all of you.”

“I’m not a—” I paused before I started cussing him out. “I’m not an idiot. I know her, and I know she wouldn’t *dupe* us. She doesn’t even accept half the stuff we give her. She’s independent and strong-willed.”

My dad scoffed. “Well, you say you’re not an idiot, but obviously, you are. You can’t seriously think that this arrangement won’t affect your life.”

His tone made me feel like a teenager again, small and worthless. As soon as I’d turned eighteen, I’d left home and tried my hardest to shake that feeling, even if they had still pulled some of the strings on my finances through my tuition and spending money. But he was able to wipe away a decade of work in an instant.

“My relationship has nothing to do with security,” I said. “We have a great reputation, and our work speaks for itself.”

My parents went silent for so long that I thought the call had dropped.

“Do you ever think about your family name, Noah?” my dad asked. “And how this might reflect on us?”

I gripped my hair at the roots, resting my elbow on the table. This lecture again. He cared about the family name, not the actual members of said family. When I’d refused to go to his alma mater, choosing to go to Harvard along with Jacob? A lecture about how I’d let down generations of Andersons. When I went into security instead of finance, like he had? Same thing. Now this.

It was like picking at a wound that was almost healed, every time. It still hurt, and I wanted to ignore it. But it was still bleeding, just a little bit.

“You don’t,” Mom said before I could answer. “Do you understand how mortifying this is? That my son would be in such a devious relationship? Everyone at the club is going to tear us to shreds.”



God forbid anyone at the club step out of the box. Most of my mother's actions were dictated by what those people thought. I almost felt sorry for her.

"What people say about me doesn't matter," I said, the knot in my throat getting bigger. "It just matters that I love Olivia, as do my other best friends."

Honestly, the two sides lived together in my mind. I did love Olivia, but I still gave a shit about how I looked to others. It had been engrained in me like sand in a carpet. Little grains still remained, as hard as I tried to get rid of them, especially in high-pressure moments like this.

"What are you talking about? What people say about you *does* matter." My father said this as if he'd just had to explain that rain was wet. "You should break up with this girl now, Noah. She's going to drag down our family."

"No."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean my relationships—and my life—are my business. My choices are my own." I stood up, starting to pace along the patio.

"You still get payments from your trust fund every month. We can make that stop with just a quick phone call." My father's voice was even colder than it had just been. "Don't test us."

My heart jerked in my chest. We made more than enough money to survive and live extremely comfortably, so I used the monthly payments from my fund to donate to various charities and put money into investments sometimes. If that stopped, a lot of those charities would take a big hit until I reconfigured my spending. And the investments had plenty of money to continue growing, if not slower than I'd anticipated.

"I can survive without that," I said, swallowing. My voice was steady and strong. "You know the business is doing well."

"Fine, then." I could practically see my mother straightening up like she was getting ready for battle. "We can

make a few phone calls and have a few influential people say a few things to their friends. Your business wouldn't survive."

I stopped dead. I'd thrown out that possibility to the others, but I hadn't sincerely thought they'd take it there. It was more of an absolute worst-case scenario. But now it was happening.

"Our business means everything to me," I said. "Dad, you'd understand."

"Of course I do. And that's why I know you'll do the right thing and end it with that girl," he said, as if they hadn't just threatened the livelihood of my chosen family.

"It's not just me. It's Jacob and Austin, too. They're not a part of this. You can't just tank the business for all of them! They don't have trust funds to keep them afloat." I hated the desperation in my tone. "Our employees definitely don't, either."

"That's not our problem." My father cleared his throat. "Our problem is that our son is associating with a loose woman, and that's going to taint our entire reputation. Either you end it, or we take away your fund and tank your entire business. Understood?"

I didn't respond. I sank down into a different chair, my throat tight.

"We'll follow up with you in a day or so. I'm assuming she'll need time to pack her things and whatnot," Mom said, almost absently.

"Bye, son."

They ended the call. I let my phone clatter on the table and rested my head in my hands. My parents didn't bluff. It was what made my dad a ruthless businessman and politician, and my mom the queen bee of her extensive social group. I didn't doubt they'd do something this low. They'd wrecked their enemies in the past. And now they were going to wreck all of us.

My heart cracked, then started to break. If I stayed with Olivia, we'd all lose everything. It had taken us years to build up a positive reputation in the security world, but my parents

could tear that down and burn it to ash. We'd have investments and the money we currently had, but starting a new company overnight wasn't possible.

But if I left Olivia...

Just the thought made the lump in my throat grow, making it impossible for me to breathe. I loved her so much. But this situation was more than just that. It was about all of us and everyone who worked for us. I didn't give a single fuck about my parents' good name, but I did care about everyone else. I wouldn't do something that hurt our image to the point of destruction.

"Hey," Olivia said, sliding the glass door open. She was alone. "Is everything okay?"

I looked down at my feet. I couldn't just ignore her. I needed to rip off the Band-Aid.

"No, it's not," I said, my voice hoarse. "We need to talk."

She came around behind me and sat down next to me. "What's going on?"

I took a deep breath, my eyes stinging. I blinked back tears, keeping my eyes cast down.

"Olivia, I can't do this anymore," I said in one breath. "It was great while it lasted, but it can't last."

Olivia went completely still. "What do you... Do you mean that you're leaving us?"

"In the romantic sense, yes." I reached for her hand, but she yanked it away. "Liv, you know how shitty my parents are. They told me that they'd write me out of their wills, take away my trust payments, and destroy the entire company through their contacts. It's not a decision I'm taking lightly."

Olivia's breath sped up. "But you're choosing that over me. Over all of us."

My frustrated sigh escaped before I could stop it. "No, it's more like I have to choose everyone's livelihoods. We can't let the company's reputation get run into the ground because I'm

a part of this relationship. That would affect all of you and every last one of our employees.”

Olivia stood up, sniffing, and bolted back inside.

“Olivia, please, wait,” I said, jogging after her. I came back inside and shut the door behind me, following her back to the dining room. The chef had already finished and left, so it was just us. “Baby.”

“What’s going on?” Jacob asked, standing up and going toward Olivia.

“I have to end this. Too much is at stake. My parents aren’t happy with the fact that all four of us are together, and they’re threatening to torpedo our entire company with a few choice phone calls. You know how important our reputation is.”

I reached toward Olivia again, just to take her hand, and she jerked away into Jacob’s arms.

“What the fuck, Noah?” Austin asked, more disappointed than angry. Him being angry would have been so much easier to deal with. “You can’t be serious.”

“I have to. For all of us,” I said. I sounded so damn unsure because while my brain knew that I had to do this, my heart wasn’t on board. “Liv. Please.”

She looked up at the ceiling and shook her head, tears coming down her face.

“I can’t understand this,” she said. Jacob stepped behind her and held onto her shoulders, like he was keeping her pieces together. “I don’t want to. I just... I wanted to celebrate.”

“I know. And we can still celebrate your company, can’t we?” I said. What would our life look like now that she was with Jacob and Austin, but not me?

“Not just that.” She swallowed, turning to look at Jacob and Austin. “I wanted to wait a little longer, but I might as well come out with it. I’m pregnant.”

The stunned silence blanketed the room. It all made so much sense—our normally energetic Olivia being so tired and

turning down the wine.

I'd always wanted to be a father. In any other circumstance, I would have been ecstatic.

But now, I just felt sick. How had everything fallen into shambles so quickly?



**O**livia was pregnant. Holy fuck.

I knew we hadn't exactly been cautious with her just being on the pill and us not using anything else, but I was still surprised. And so thrilled and terrified at the same time.

But I couldn't even focus on that when the family we'd just put together was getting slashed to pieces. I'd somehow cycled past rage at Noah for choosing this to disappointment. We all knew his parents were pieces of shit and that they were more than capable of wrecking our reputation so badly that our firm would go under faster than we'd ever thought.

But I thought Noah had more backbone than that. There were four of us. We just needed to sit down and figure out how to fix the problem together. Our family meant so much to all of us. Now a baby was involved, and Olivia was devastated.

I didn't know anything about pregnant women, but obviously being exposed to the world then dumped wasn't going to make her feel good. I followed Olivia through the house. Instead of going to our bedroom, she went to her old one, which was still the way it had been before.

Her room used to feel like her space—comfortable with a comforting energy. But now that we'd all been in one room together and put our mark on that, this room was foreign and wrong.

She was inside, curled up on her bed in a little ball, crying. I sat down.

“Baby,” I said. “Come here.”

I pulled her into an upright position and put my arms around her, rubbing her back up and down. She'd cried in my arms like this more than once in our lives. Before, holding her led to a mixture of desire and anxiety that I'd never be able to help her. Now that I'd let go, every fiber of my being knew I could help her—I just had to figure out how.

I let Olivia sob into my shirt for a long time, her body shaking with every hiccup and breath she took. I pressed my lips to her hairline and let her get it all out. As strongly as I felt, I wasn't sure what to say yet. I hated seeing her like this, and I hated that Noah had done this to her. To all of us.

"Even if Noah leaves, I never will," I finally said. "Ever. And I know Jacob won't, either. You'll never be abandoned."

Olivia's sobs slowed, and I kissed her forehead again, cradling her head.

Jacob appeared in the doorway and stepped inside. His expression was stormier than usual. He had probably been talking to Noah. I wasn't sure. I just knew that Olivia was glad that he was there. She looked up at him, and he softened, joining us on the bed.

"Hey," Jacob said, wiping a tear off her face. "We'll figure this out, okay? Even if Noah leaves, we still own the security firm. We'll still have money, both to live and to fund your business. And even if we have to leave the house or something, we'll find an even better home. I'll handle all the details."

Olivia nodded, sniffing and wiping her eyes. Then, they spilled over again. "But what if the baby is his?"

"We're not going to test the baby and find out who the father is. The baby is all of ours," I said. "If Noah doesn't want to be a part of our family, then the baby will have two dads and an amazing mom who'll do anything for them."

"True." Olivia let out a shaky breath and sniffed again. "But I love him so much, and I don't want him to leave. I need to talk to him. Where did he go, Jacob?"

Jacob's gaze darkened. "I don't know. He's gone."





I drove aimlessly at first, my mind filled with static. What the fuck was I doing? What was even going on in my life?

Earlier, I had everything—a woman I loved, great best friends, a thriving business, no family drama. Now I only had family drama, and I didn't have the woman I desperately wanted.

The longer I drove, the more the ache of knowing I'd fucked up grew inside of me. Olivia was pregnant, for fuck's sake. She needed to be resting, and I had stressed her out more than ever.

I eventually realized I was driving straight to the middle of the state, far away from home, so I turned back. We had unoccupied rental properties that I could stay in for a while, at least until I got my head on straight.

I arrived at the property late at night, exhausted as fuck. But not even face-planting into bed was enough to help me nod off.

After tossing and turning for twenty minutes, I got up and threw on my running shoes. I'd tossed whatever I could grab when I was packing, but I'd intentionally put in those shoes. Running sometimes gave me the mental clarity to sort myself out.

I jogged to a nearby park that still had its lights on and kicked into high gear. My chest was burning, and sweat dripped down my back, but the exertion hurt just the way I needed it to. Enough to set me right.

I couldn't do this. I couldn't run away from Olivia and the guys. But I also couldn't let the business tank.

I pushed myself into a sprint despite my lungs being on fire. The longer I went, the more my thoughts organized themselves. Olivia. The baby. The business. Our image.

The more I thought about it, the more stupid I felt. I had my priorities wrong. Yeah, being in an unusual relationship might push away clients, and my parents might do everything to keep me away from Olivia.

But we'd started and sustained a multi-billion-dollar business. It wasn't the end of the world if we had a setback. All of us had the skills to build something new, no matter what.

I ran back home and showered, biding my time until my parents were awake. Luckily, they had always been early risers, so I called them as soon as the clock said five a.m. I had to get this done. I wasn't going to let them hem and haw about it, or try to talk me out of it. I knew exactly what I wanted.

"Noah?" My dad sounded confused.

"I'm not leaving Olivia," I blurted. "I don't care if you take away everything, and I don't care how this looks."

I heard shuffling on the line, like he was getting out of bed or turning it on speaker.

"What do you mean?" Mom asked. So, he had put her on speakerphone. "You can't lose everything."

"I can, and I'm willing to." I stood up straighter and paced toward the small window above the rental's kitchen sink. "I've spent my whole life feeling like I'm not right or enough, and it's made me give way too many fucks about how things look. I'm tired of it. It's not making my life better, and I don't need shit like that to weigh me down."

"Language, Noah," my father said. As if that mattered. "You're making a huge mistake. You don't understand how reputations work."

“I’m nearly thirty. I understand how reputations work.” I scoffed. “But more importantly, I know that loving someone isn’t something I should throw away because I’m afraid of what other small-minded people will think. I’m going to stay with Olivia and raise our baby with Jacob and Austin. I’d regret picking money over them until the day I died.”

“Noah, please.” Mom sounded genuinely desperate. “What do you mean, raising a baby? You can’t be serious!”

“You’re the ones choosing not to be a part of my life. This is on you. Goodbye.” I hung up, tossing my phone onto the counter.

The weight was off my shoulders, but a new one settled onto them. How was I supposed to go back to them and apologize to Olivia for being so damn stupid? What if I’d fucked things up permanently?

## CHAPTER 28

**T**he rapid swing between a great night to an awful one, to one with a mix of both, had taken out all of our energy.

Austin and I tucked Olivia into bed, since she needed as much rest as possible, and fell asleep with her sprawled out across us both. I tossed and turned, waking up a few times in the middle of the night, but finally, I settled down.

I woke up spooned behind her, my hand resting on her stomach. I smiled into her hair and pulled her closer. We were having a baby. I'd wanted children, but I hadn't thought of it as something to plan for immediately. Now, it was all I could think about. Whether it was a boy or girl. What the baby would look like. How we'd be as parents.

My own father had left my mom before I'd even formed any memories of him, so I had no idea what it was like to have a good dad. Then again, none of us did. I was nervous about it, but we'd figure it out. We'd figure all of this out, even without Noah.

My excitement dimmed, thinking back to the conversation we'd had before he left. He'd been just as gutted as Olivia had been. But getting through to him was impossible. He was leaving "for us." How was it "for us" when the baby wasn't going to have him around? He balanced us all out, brightening up our days and making everything fun.

I doubted our business relationship would change all that much—we were a well-oiled machine in that regard. And, according to him, he was saving the business by doing this. I still had no idea where he'd gone. He'd just said he needed space.

I lifted my head. Austin was gone, probably to the home gym. He liked to work out before he started his workday, while I liked to do it once I was done. Olivia usually woke up when he did, but she was still fast asleep.

I kissed her shoulder and slid out of bed, double checking that her alarm was on. It was, so I started my day. After I made coffee, I went to my office, which was next door to Olivia's. When I checked my email, I had a few messages from Noah. So he was working, wherever he was. Very late at night. He couldn't sleep, either.

Usually, I was able to focus right away, but everything that had happened was leaking into my consciousness. Noah leaving. Olivia being pregnant. And us being plastered all over the news. I jumped between tabs and browser windows, entirely unfocused.

I drummed my fingers on my desk. Yeah, I wasn't going to get anything done. Noah being gone was out of my control—pestering him wasn't going to bring him back any sooner—and I'd already bought a few pregnancy and parenting books, since I didn't know a single thing about that, either. That left figuring out who'd broken the story on us.

I looked up the name of the journalist who had written the earliest article that exposed our private lives. His name was Alex Rivera, and he was based in the area. Had we ever met him before? I looked up his picture, and his face didn't ring a bell. His other articles were run-of-the-mill, local stories. Nothing as “scandalous” as three men dating one woman.

I dug back through his tweets and his other social media. None of it suggested that I had to look deeper. He was just the messenger. So who'd given him the message?

Then, it clicked. I threw myself into the research, ignoring a few pings on my phone and email. I wasn't sure how much time passed before someone tapped on the door.

“Come in,” I said, not turning around.

Light footsteps told me it was Olivia. I turned and saw her coming toward me, looking tired but beautiful in one of

Austin's old gym tanks and leggings. She was holding a big mug of steaming liquid.

"Morning," she said with a yawn.

"Morning." I extended my hand to her, and she took it, smiling. "How are you feeling?"

"Tired." She smiled. "But could be worse."

She put her mug down on the corner of my desk and sat in my lap, facing me. I leaned up and kissed her, a soft peck that quickly turned into more. I hardened almost instantly. Her leggings were so thin that I felt the heat from her core through my sweatpants. We made out as my hips rocked against hers, her grinding down on me until we were both panting against each other's lips.

If last night had gone off the way we'd intended, we would have shared her all night. But since we hadn't had the chance to take the edge off, we were almost frantic. I tugged down her leggings and pushed my pants down to my knees.

"Woah, Liv," I said as she aimed my cock at her entrance and slid down on me. She was already soaked and ready. "Fuck, you feel so good."

She smiled, taking my hands and lacing her fingers between mine to balance. I just sat back and let her use me, her beautiful face tense with pleasure. I thrust up to meet her, ratcheting up my pleasure and hers. The shift of her hips changed our angle, making me hit her g-spot. She came suddenly, taking me off guard and forcing me into an orgasm, too.

She rested her forehead on my shoulder, catching her breath.

"I needed that," she said, laughing.

"Same."

I helped her off of me, and she went to the bathroom that joined our offices for a moment. When she returned, she flopped down into the seat near my desk that I'd set up just for her.



“What have you been up to this morning?” she asked, picking up her mug and touching the side to test the temperature.

“Not much. Just looking into who might have broken the story on us. And I think I figured it out.” I clicked to a different tab that showed what I’d dug up.

She scooted closer. “Who?”

“Clark.”

She sat back again in her seat, frowning and cupping her mug. “How do you know?”

“Ah.” I rubbed the back of my neck, my skin warm under my hand. “Well, when you first started dating him, we all got a strange vibe from him. And honestly, we were a little jealous. So I decided to track his phone’s location, just so we always knew you’d be safe.”

Her eyebrow cocked, but she didn’t say more.

“Anyway, tracking him gave me a back entrance into his phone. I was able to download his texts, emails, and browsing history.” He had a lot of bullshit and a startling amount of porn. I had no idea how he had the time to even watch all of that. Maybe that was why he sucked at his job—he had a lot of emails about that, too.

I wished that I had pushed my revenge a lot further back after we learned that Clark had cheated on Olivia. Maybe we wouldn’t have been here now if I had.

“Oh, my god. Can I see?” Olivia asked.

“Let me find the emails.” I didn’t want her to see a lot of this stuff. I sifted through the nonsense and the shit that made me want to kick Clark’s ass and found the sections of conversation where Clark asked the journalist to write the story.

Olivia’s jaw clenched, her eyes narrowing until she sat back.

“Wow.” She shook her head. “I can’t believe this. But I kind of can.”

“Hey.” I rested my hand on her thigh. “We have all of this information, okay? We can deal with this.”

“What’s happening?” Austin asked from the doorway.

“I found out that Clark was the one who broke the story on us,” I said. “He paid off a journalist to do it.”

“What?” Austin’s eyes flared with anger. “That fucker did *what?*”

I debated whether to show Austin the full extent of it. It was so bad that I almost needed him to know. He would want to leap into action, just as I did. And a lot of the stuff Clark had said suggested that he wanted to keep “getting back” at Olivia in any way he could.

I refused to let that happen.

“How do you want to play this?” I asked Austin.

“Let’s pay him a visit.”

He looked like he was already ready to go. If Noah were here, he’d be the same way. Nothing got him worked up like someone threatening Olivia. I grabbed my phone, pulling up my texts to Noah.

“I’ll text Noah,” I said. “But I’m not expecting anything.”

## CHAPTER 29

Jacob's ability to get into almost any computer was a little creepy, but I was grateful for it now. He had absolutely everything on Clark, from his browsing history all the way to his banking records. I was excited to exploit it eventually, but right now, I needed to take care of him face to face for my own sanity.

I'd only skimmed the information that Jacob had dug up, but I'd seen everything I needed to see.

I accelerated, my Maserati blowing past all the other cars on the highway. Jacob's face was on his tablet screen, a frown on his face.

"Anything else wrong?" I asked, glancing over at him.

"No, I'm just wondering how much dirt we have on him and how much we want to tell him." Jacob turned off his screen. "Do we want to threaten him with the specifics? Or do we want him to just be vaguely afraid of everything?"

"Vaguely afraid of everything, definitely." That way, he couldn't ever rest.

"Okay, good. Because we have a lot."

"I saw some of the stuff about his gambling habit, but what else do we have?" I cut in front of a slow truck, so we could pull off the highway.

"We have all the texts from the women he was sleeping with while he was with Olivia," Jacob said. "Including the wife of one of the partners at the law firm where he works."

“Oh, shit.” I was torn between being pleased that we had something of that magnitude and disgusted that this piece of garbage had been with more than one woman while he’d claimed to love Olivia.

“Yeah. Their sexts are incredibly cringey.” Jacob winced. “To the point where they’re embarrassing on their own, much less because they’re between one of his colleague’s wife and him.”

“I don’t know if I can stand seeing them.”

“Trust me, you don’t want to see. There’s photographic evidence, too.” Jacob shuddered. “And we have all the embarrassing porn and stuff he buys on top of that. Emails where he’s a dick. If you think it might be mortifying, he’s got it.”

“Good. So he’ll keep hurting even after I kick his ass.”

“We should be careful about that. In one of his texts to his friend, he said he wanted to sue us, but he was too embarrassed to. He might build up some courage if you kick his ass too hard.”

I snorted. “Of course he was too embarrassed to sue us. And don’t worry, I’ll make sure he hits me first. We can use self-defense as an excuse.”

I slowed and turned toward Clark’s apartment. In front of the building was a familiar black G-Wagon.

“Is that...?” Jacob leaned forward, trying to get a better look and rolling down the window.

I knew he’d show. He loved Olivia too much not to, regardless of whether they were in a relationship or not.

Noah got out of the car, looking down at his phone. I pulled up in front of him, and he looked up, relief on his face. I rarely ever noticed what was going on with Jacob’s and Noah’s faces, but Noah looked *rough*. He hadn’t shaved, and his eyes had dark circles underneath them. His clothes were a bit ruffled, though with how expensive they were, they still looked good.

“You came,” I said through the open window.

“I had to. I just...” He sighed and let his hand fall limp to his side. “I need to do this for Olivia.”

“So let’s do it.” I parked, blocking Clark’s car in.

We went upstairs to his apartment, and I pounded on the door so hard that Jacob raised an eyebrow at me. The apartment complex was classy, the kind of place where disturbances were rare, but I didn’t give a fuck about making noise.

“What?” I asked. “He needs to come to the door.”

A few moments later, the door opened. Clark was on his phone, distracted.

“Finally. I’m starving, and you took forever. You can say goodbye to an extra tip,” he said, still looking down but putting his hand out.

I shoved him back into his apartment before he could even look up and say anything. He stumbled back with a yelp.

“What the fuck?” Clark blurted, his eyes wide. “Get out of my apartment. This is trespassing.”

I leaped forward and snatched his phone out of his hand. I handed it over to Jacob, who was a step behind me.

“It’s not. You sort of let us in. And it’s a bit redundant to have this phone,” Jacob said. “I already have all the information on it.”

Clark’s face went pale. “What’s going on?”

“We know you pulled that stunt by leaking the photos of us with Olivia,” Noah said, stepping up next to me. “And it’s caused some problems.”

“Good. It was supposed to.” Clark recovered, the familiar smug expression coming back onto his face. “I can’t believe all three of you are with her. Fucking terrible. If I’d known she was such a whore, I wouldn’t have bothered dating her at all.”

I saw red, but Noah held me back, just barely. Thank god. I was more than strong enough to knock him out, and if I did

that now, we wouldn't be able to toy with his emotions.

"That's really funny of you to say, considering that you were sleeping with..." Jacob checked his tablet. "At least six different women when you were dating Olivia."

Clark laughed, shaking his head. He was definitely trying to sound confident, but the way his Adam's apple bobbed, he was anything but.

"You don't know that," he said.

"The names Marisol, Kelly, Bella, Sherry, Madison, and Yana don't ring a bell?" Jacob asked.

Clark's nostrils flared. "No."

"Liar," I said.

"So you don't remember saying, 'baby, I wanna motorboat those melons' to Bella nine weeks ago?" Jacob winced as he read the words.

"Holy fuck." Had Olivia had to deal with that kind of sexting? I'd throw my phone out of a moving car if I got some bullshit like that. "I can't even believe you got with six women with game like that."

"Fuck you," Clark said. "Why are you even here, anyway?"

"Because we want you to leave Olivia the fuck alone and stay out of our business," Noah said. "We know you had plans to keep fucking her over, and we can't let that happen."

"Oh, you can't?" Clark scoffed. "I can if I want to. And I want to."

"And we can tell all of the partners at your firm that you've been fucking one of their wives and sent her several dick pics." Jacob's brow wrinkled as he pulled up a photo and showed it to Clark. Clark slowly leaned on the wall behind him, as if he'd lost the ability to stand on his own. "We also have receipts for lingerie that you bought for her, along with photo evidence of her wearing it."

“Guys, listen.” Clark held up a hand, his skin almost tinged with green. “Can’t we just put this behind us?”

“Says the guy who was just saying he wouldn’t stop hurting Olivia for no fucking reason.” I wanted to punch him so damn bad that I was nearly jumping out of my skin. “You’re the one who cheated on her, asshole. What did she ever do to you?”

“She rubbed you in my face!” Clark said, a vein starting to pop out in his forehead. “Being such a slut so openly—”

“I’ll go ahead and send information on your mountains of gambling debt to your father. I’m sure he’ll be glad to know that the fifty thousand dollars he loaned you went straight into the trash,” Jacob said, as if he was going to send Clark’s dad a fruit basket. “If you call Olivia anything else again, I’ll send out more.”

“Fuck, wait!” Clark lunged toward Jacob, but Jacob moved out the way. I caught Clark by the back of his shirt and slammed him against the wall again. “I won’t say anything. I’ll just forget you guys even exist. I swear.”

“You’re absolutely sure about that?” I asked, pressing him harder to the wall.

“I’ve never been more sure of anything in my life.” Clark swallowed hard. “I’ll even apologize again to Olivia—”

“You’re never going to talk to our girl again, understood?” I asked. “Not even to apologize, not that you could ever say anything to make up for what you did.”

“I promise.” Clark looked me in the eye, his body trembling. I kept eye contact with him, just to intimidate him a few more seconds, then pushed off of him.

“Good.”

The front doorbell buzzed, but Clark stayed locked to the wall.

“C-Can I get that?” he asked.

“Go ahead. We’re done here,” Noah said, clapping Clark on the shoulder slightly harder than he had to.



Clark winced.

He opened the door for the delivery guy, who looked at all of us in confusion.

“Uh, delivery for Clark?” he said.

“That’s him.” I nodded toward Clark, who was standing in his doorway, still shellshocked. “Wait, before we go—he’s a shitbag who doesn’t tip, so take this.”

I pulled a hundred-dollar bill out of my wallet and handed it to him.

The delivery guy’s eyes widened. “Thanks?”

We left, taking the stairs out of the building.

“I’m surprised you didn’t punch Clark out,” Noah said.

“If I did, he wouldn’t have been able to talk.” I shrugged. “Plus, seeing how he nearly shit his pants when we threatened him was more than enough to satisfy me. Anyway, his cheating made it possible for us to be with Olivia. I’ll show him a little mercy for that.”

“Those fucking sexts, though.” Jacob shuddered again. “I wish I could erase them from my mind.”

“I only heard one, and I wish I could delete that minute from my memory.” Noah snorted and opened the door to his car. The happiness in his eyes faded to apprehension. “See you guys back home?”

“Yeah.” I smiled. “See you there.”

## CHAPTER 30

**T**hreatening Clark into silence forever had felt good, but now I wasn't sure what would come next. How would I apologize to Olivia for doing what I had? I hadn't been away long, but I shouldn't have been away at all.

I arrived home soon after Jacob and Austin pulled into the garage. I took a second to gather myself before following them in.

Olivia was kissing Austin when I came inside, her smile bright. She was so beautiful, so happy. She kissed Jacob next, giving him a long hug. Jacob made eye contact with me over Olivia's shoulder as he hugged her.

Olivia finally noticed me when she broke from her hug with Jacob, her expression falling.

"Jacob said that you helped them get back at Clark," she said, playing with the thin bracelet she wore on her right wrist.

"Yeah, I did. Jacob texted me, and I just needed to be there." I stepped closer to her.

"Um." She moved her hands around like she wasn't sure where to put them. Then, she extended one. "Thank you."

I took her hand, but I used it to pull her toward me. She let out a sound of surprise before I smothered the sound with a kiss. I put everything into it, every regret about what I'd done to every bit of excitement for our future, assuming she took me back. She was stiff in surprise at first, but then she sagged against me. I smiled against her lips as she threaded her fingers through my hair.

We finally broke the kiss, and I cupped her face.

“I’m sorry, Olivia,” I said. “I can’t say that enough. I shouldn’t have walked out on you and chosen the company over us. I told my parents to fuck off, basically, and it felt so good. They can keep all of my trust fund and pull whatever schemes they want to against us, but I don’t care. I just care about you and our family. And our baby. Nothing else on earth matters more.”

“Noah.” She pressed her hand to mine on my cheek. “I’m just glad you’re here with us.”

“So you forgive me?” I asked, my voice soft.

“Of course I do. I love you so, so much.” She kissed me again and put her arms around me, holding me tight in a hug. “I can’t imagine our family without you.”

“It’s going to be so exciting.” I squeezed her lightly, then let my hand skim down to her stomach. It was still flat, but it wasn’t going to be for long. “Being a father. I’ve always wanted to be a dad.”

“Our baby is going to have a great life,” Jacob said, a smile in his eyes.

“They will.” I cupped the side of Olivia’s neck and pressed a kiss to her forehead. “We’ll be able to support them. No one will have a say in our happiness but us.”

## *Epilogue*

### One Year Later

Our dining room was bustling with activity. Jacob was talking with Austin and Noah's father, and Noah was talking with his mother nearby. Dinner was nearly ready, and all of us were more than ready for it. After our daughter, Josephine, was born, Jacob's mother practically moved in to help.

And to all of our surprise, Noah's mother Sandra had shown up a week after Josephine's birth with armfuls of expensive baby gear. A peace offering. After Noah sent them a photo of their granddaughter, they broke their silence.

As it turned out, they hadn't followed through with their threats. After Noah told them how he felt about them and how they'd treated him his entire life, they had seriously reconsidered their choices. Life was too short for them to be estranged from their son and granddaughter. Even if they were confused about how our relationship worked, they could be there for us.

Even without them talking about us, we lost a few clients who had seen us in the media. But our reputation for doing good work brought in more than enough business to cover those small losses.

Maya had made all of us dinner that Sunday that Sandra had first shown up on our doorstep, which had morphed into this: Sunday dinner with all of us. Even Noah's father, Nigel. He had taken much longer to come around than she had, but he'd met Josie once and melted. I didn't blame him

whatsoever. I never knew I could love anyone the way I loved her.

“Here, let me hold her next,” Maya said, taking our baby girl from me. She beamed down at her granddaughter, who looked up at her in wonder. “Look at this beautiful girl.”

She was a beautiful baby. I didn’t have many pictures of myself when I was young, but the few I did have of me as an infant looked just like Josie: tufts of brown hair, big blue eyes, and round cheeks. We still didn’t know who her father was, but it didn’t matter. All the guys were her father.

I glanced over at Austin, who was sipping a beer and nodding along with whatever Nigel was saying. He noticed me looking and gave me a small smile. He’d been the most nervous of the three about being a father, but he was a natural. He was able to soothe Josie in a minute flat.

Having the three of them, plus Maya, had made the months after the baby’s birth so much easier. I’d rested up and was able to work on my company sooner than I’d thought. It was taking off already, being stocked in gyms and fitness boutiques around Miami.

Ironically, the gym where I used to work was one of them.

I hoped Clark saw it. He had stayed quiet, and we hadn’t heard a peep since my guys had threatened him. I was beyond over him, but I still couldn’t help but feel good that I’d moved on.

Josephine started to squirm the way she did when she needed to be put back to bed.

“Already sleepy again?” Noah asked, appearing next to Maya. “I can put her in bed.”

“You sure?” She handed him the baby. “I’m happy to. Dinner’s almost done, and I know you four have been busy.”

“No, it’s fine. I’ve got her.” Noah cradled Josie and kissed the top of her head. “Be back in a bit.”

I kissed the baby, too, as did Jacob and Noah’s parents. I laughed. She was surrounded by love all the time. It was so

different from how my three guys and I had all grown up.

Noah disappeared to her nursery. The chef we'd hired for the evening popped into the room with a few dishes of appetizers in her hands.

Starting my company had introduced me to so many different people in the food world. Just because my shakes were functional didn't mean they had to taste bad. I'd worked with a few local health influencers to create recipes using my shakes, and they'd been a huge hit, too, expanding my network.

The guys had been behind me the whole way, helping me out and introducing me to everyone they could. It was hectic, especially with the baby, but my team had been handling everything without me being there all the time.

I sat down and glanced around the table. If someone had asked me two years ago what I'd be doing, it wouldn't have been this. I wouldn't have ever dreamed that I'd be with all three of my best friends, running the company I'd always wanted to build. I definitely hadn't thought I'd have a beautiful daughter and supportive family around us, either.

"You all right?" Jacob asked, sitting down next to me and resting a hand on my leg. He'd been just as supportive throughout all of this, even when I was a little bit nuts from hormones. He was always there to help when I was overwhelmed, holding Josie in a sling while he stood at his standing desk during the workday or taking diaper duty whenever he could.

"Yeah. I'm just really happy." I threaded my fingers in his.

"I am, too." He leaned in and kissed my temple.

Noah rejoined the table, putting the baby monitor on the table between him and his father, giving me a smile.

We had various chefs come in, but this chef was one of my favorites. Her food was always so fresh and approachable to non-vegans. She cooked animal protein for those who wanted it, but her vegan dishes were more in demand. Even with Austin, who had always been the most resistant.



The conversation flowed with ease, drifting from the baby to our plans for the near future, to our businesses. I savored every moment.

Jacob's phone buzzed in his pocket as we approached dessert. Normally, he just let it go, but he frowned and excused himself.

What was it? All of our family was here, so it had to be business. I looked between Noah and Austin, who shrugged.

We kept eating while Jacob talked on the phone out on the patio. From the look on his face, he wasn't distressed. Just... curious.

He came back inside right as the chef cleared the remains of dinner.

"Everything okay?" I asked.

"Yeah. That was just my friend Troy. I haven't talked to him in a while," Jacob said. I searched my memory for Troy, then remembered. He and Jacob had been friends in college. He was a sweetheart. "His uncle just passed away, and now he's worried about his cousin, Taylor."

"I'm sorry for his loss." I searched his face to see if he was going to explain more. "But why did he call you about his cousin?"

"She's only twenty-four, and she's now worth billions. Plus, she has money from being an influencer on top of that, so she's rich, famous, and young. Someone's been bothering her." Jacob pulled his phone out again. "And Troy wants to hire her some bodyguards."

"They're in New York?" Austin grabbed his phone, too. "I know the right team."

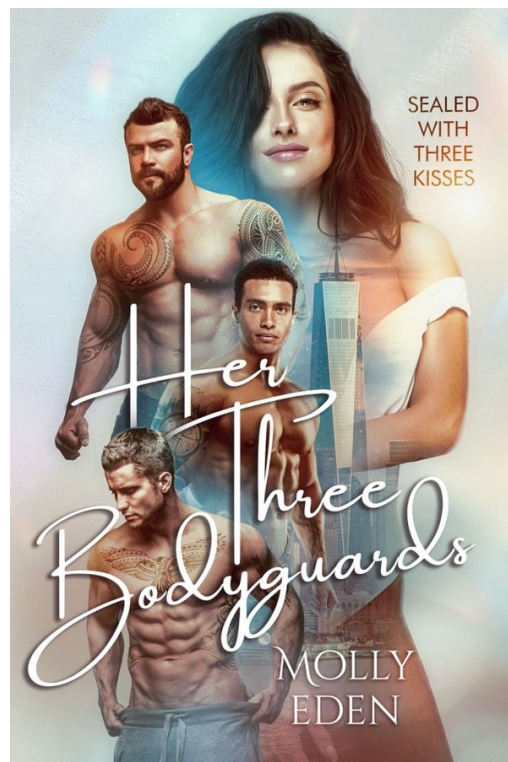
"Harrison, Cody, and Ethan?" Jacob asked. Austin and Noah nodded. "I think they'll be perfect. She needs some guys like them to keep her safe. No one will mess with her with them near her."

"Well, no one with any sense." Austin smirked, turning his phone screen off.

I smiled. The guys were great at what they did, so I didn't have any doubts that Taylor would be in safe hands. Especially with three bodyguards by her side.

\* \* \*

Read the next book in the series to find out more about Taylor in [Her Three Bodyguards](#).



[Download on Amazon](#)

## *Molly Eden Books*

To keep up with all of my new releases, visit my website and sign up for my mailing list:

[MollyEdenAuthor.com](http://MollyEdenAuthor.com)

The newsletter features information on upcoming books and special offers.

*Other Reverse Harem/ Why  
Choose Romances You'll Love*

**Her Three Bodyguards**

Nothing will stop these three bodyguards from protecting her  
at all costs.

**Her Three Bosses**

She hits the jackpot with her three new bosses.