

HIDDEN



Omega

Knot
My Pack
Omegaverse

LIORA ROSE

Hidden Omega

KNOT MY PACK OMEGAVERSE

LIORA ROSE



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Contents

[Hidden Omega](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)

[Chapter 20](#)

[Chapter 21](#)

[Chapter 22](#)

[Chapter 23](#)

[Chapter 24](#)

[About Liora Rose](#)

[Books By Liora Rose](#)

Hidden Omega



I was in heat, and my alphas were willing to burn.

It was just supposed to be a good time at the Alpha ball, not the moment my life changed forever.

But it was.

And now danger follows me everywhere.

Every Alpha there was starved for an omega. And I was about to be the main course.

If it weren't for three strangers, I might already be dead.

Shadow, Aspen, and Viper saved me, risking their own lives and violating pack laws by taking me. I didn't want a pack. I didn't want the heat. But at least with them I'm safe for now.

Or so I think.

But these men are hiding secrets of their own, secrets that are as dangerous as the alphas who would have broken me that night.

Only, this rogue pack is all I have. I have to trust their vows to protect me, no matter the cost. Which just might be higher than any of us thought we'd pay. Because there's a killer on the loose, taking out omegas like me, and thanks to that night, I may just be the next victim...

One

2

TRINITY

The air was thick with scents, with tension, with a primal hunger that felt ready to burst.

Everything in the spacious, open ballroom was gilded—the floors, the ceiling, the furniture, even the flutes brimming with champagne. The waiters wore golden suits, their hair dyed to match their ensemble. The room glinted, screaming opulence. Of course, I shouldn't be surprised. When the most influential Alphas threw a Glass Slipper Ball, they didn't spare a cent. Not when it involved their sons finding an Omega to mate with.

That was all we females were to these monsters—a means to rut and breed with us to showcase to the world that they were prestigious enough to have claimed a rare female. I shuddered at the thought of how little we meant to them.

Thing was, Omegas were becoming scarcer and Alphas more desperate with each passing season.

Females weren't born an Omega. The change came within seven years after turning eighteen. Over the past decades, fewer and fewer females transformed into Omegas, and no one had been able to work out why. Mass panic spread among the Alphas, which led to the creation of the extravagant Glass Slipper Ball.

A complete joke! A name implied Omegas found their prince charming. I almost laughed out loud at the irony.

We all knew the truth.

Once you turned, heat controlled you, and males went feral to rut you. Yep, not exactly the epitome of a fairy tale.

My friends, Charity and Adella, crowded in, pressing so close, I could barely breathe. They stared at the groups of elite Alphas in the room, chatting, laughing, and staring like wolves at every Omega in the room.

Including us.

Shivers ran up my spine. Like us, other females stayed away from the males, sticking to the outskirts of the golden dance floor, which ensured we didn't stand out. My friends and I would be arrested for trespassing if caught. Not to mention, once it got back to Ms. Bakewell, she'd have us locked up in isolation for a month straight. She ran the Bakewell Institute for Girls with an iron fist and treated us more like prisoners than residents who lived there.

The sad part was we couldn't run away. Females at the age of turning into an Omega and without Alphas were forbidden out alone. Others who never changed had to carry an ID passport with them at all times, getting it stamped wherever they went. If we broke the rules, we'd be thrown into prison and sold as servants to Alpha families, officially stamped as an Unwanted. Bakewell held onto our ID passports to ensure we never escaped, hence we were stuck.

My muscles tensed thinking about how much I couldn't wait to hit twenty-five, hoping Bakewell didn't sell me off as a fake Omega in the meantime.

It was why we had snuck out and gone on foot to the Glass Slipper Ball, sticking to the backstreets to avoid being caught. We only had each other, and we had to find our friend, Frannie.

We'd wait for a bit in the corner of the ballroom to not draw too much attention before moving around the ballroom, surveying the area for Frannie. My throat constricted as I curled my fingers into the fabric of my gown. Rumor was she was at a retreat and having the time of her life. I doubted that. Frannie had been gone for over two weeks, and she would've sent word. Coming to the ball was the best chance we had to

find her because every Alpha would be here. I kept the fragment of hope of finding her in my chest despite my heart beating like a frightened bird.

The other girls at the ball were extravagantly dressed, gowns glinting with diamonds, fabrics only from the most expensive designers, hair pinned up, tiaras—everything to paint that fairy tale image.

My dress came from a thrift store—all I could afford—the color of a spring field, with a simple love-heart neckline. It did the job, though. Our plain dresses got us into the ball after all.

“This place is gaudy,” Charity whispered, staring around the ballroom with as much distaste as Adella and I had. “I’ve never seen so many Alphas in one place. Look at them all in their penguin suits.”

I couldn’t take my eyes off them or deny they made me curious to find out more. At the Bakewell Institute for Girls, we rarely saw them... well, only when one came to be paired up with an Omega they’d purchased. They always had that look of hunger in their eyes when they looked at us.

We stood in the shadows, watching everything, and I couldn’t ignore the men who were stealing glances our way.

The small orchestra played a waltz that might be Chopin, but the music was barely recognizable beneath the loud thunder of voices. My head boomed with the sounds, and my heart sped up each time I caught someone else staring at us. With it came an unsettling panic in my chest.

Did they know we didn’t belong here or that we weren’t Omegas yet, and we’d crashed the ball?

Could they smell the hormone pills we took to make it appear as though we’d already transformed?

I sweated bullets at being busted, except we were here for our friend, Frannie. Until we found her, we weren’t leaving.

“Even the chairs are gold,” Charity gasped when we spotted three empty gilded chairs off to the side, and we each took a seat. The rest of them were taken by the other Omegas dotted around the outside of the dance floor.

“God, I hope the mafia aren’t here. They do horrible things to Omegas,” Adella murmured and nudged me, her eyes glued to the crowds in front of us.

“For all you know they could be here,” I muttered. “They have secret members who attend such events and look like everyone else. So you never know.”

She gasped at the shock, which I guessed was spurred on by the news report we’d watched last night about another shooting downtown between the two mafia families who ruled over our city, Liberty. “Well, if I speak to an Alpha, I will be grilling him to find out if he’s from the mafia or not.”

“Look at the man over there. He’s gorgeous,” Charity blurted, not even listening to our conversation. Her eyes were filled with avid interest, her voice slightly high-pitched.

Turning my attention to look without moving my head, I noticed a giggling group of women were talking to a man who towered over his admirers. He had blond hair and dark brown eyes, with a charming smile, but I didn’t see why Charity was so enamored. He looked rather ordinary.

“He’s... alright.” Frowning, I took my eyes off him as one of the plastic pieces in the corset at the top of my ball gown poked me beneath my right armpit. I shifted uncomfortably to ease the ache without drawing unwanted attention. “Besides, we aren’t here for the men.”

“I know, I know, but he’s just so... breathtaking.” Charity sounded a little breathless. Her cheeks were flushed a dark pink, and the pupils of her hazel eyes were as big as dimes.

A side effect of the Omega hormones pills we took or something else?

I put my hand on her right elbow, leaning in closer. “Are you alright?”

“Oh yes, I’m just a little warm, that’s all.” Charity fanned herself, and I wondered if she was coming down with something. Or maybe the pills I’d bought from that back-alley dealer weren’t real after all, though I wasn’t feeling strange. Plus, we passed the guards at the entry door without a hitch.

“I wonder how big his knot is?” she murmured, her eyes locked on the man.

Gaping at her, the ludicrous question didn't shock me because of the subject matter, but we were here to find our missing friend. I glanced at Charity to study her skin, ignoring the black, floor-length mermaid dress that suited her body perfectly. Her flush ran down her neck and chest, and even her arms were a little pink.

Just what I needed, an allergic reaction when we weren't supposed to be here. Ms. Bakewell would find a way to send us to hell with punishment if she discovered we'd snuck out, faked being Omegas, and come to the ball uninvited.

“Are you sure you're okay, Charity?” I asked quietly.

Adella stared at our friend, her brows pinched together, not sure what to make of Charity's reaction. I peered around us, convinced someone was scrutinizing us and noticing that Charity was acting strange.

When an older man with dark hair peppered with white at the temples strolled toward us, panic filled my throat. A younger man marched after him, calling to him. One last look at us, the man turned away and fell into a conversation, then they took off in a different direction.

I was so high strung, I was convinced my heart would give out.

“Yeah, yeah, I'm good,” Charity said, wrenching my attention back to her. She fanned herself with her open hand again. “I'll be fine in a minute, I promise.” Her lopsided grin wasn't convincing, but my nerves made me frantic as I kept scanning the room.

“Okay,” I grumbled. My anxiety was ratcheting up, making even my palms itchy with sweat. I should have known something would go wrong with my idiotic plan, but we hadn't heard from Frannie in so long, and there'd been too many Omega mysteriously vanishing lately, only to be found dead weeks later. So, I'd do whatever I had to in order to find her—anything at all.

“We’ve been here long enough not to look too suspicious. Let’s search for Frannie while looking inconspicuous,” I muttered softly. “If anyone asks you a question, tell them your handler will be here soon, and you can only talk with them around.”

“You think that will work?” Adella asked with a pinched expression.

“For sure. Some Omegas are super guarded. Besides, if it gets to be too much, just give them an excuse that you need to go to the bathroom.”

When a waiter came by, offering golden glasses filled with champagne, Charity took one.

“Maybe we should stay away from alcohol since we’re, you know...” My suggestion was pointed, but I quietly hoped she remembered we were on pills.

Charity, coming to her senses for once, put the glass back down and asked the waiter, “Can you bring me a glass of water?”

The man, who had to be a Beta, considering his job, gave us an odd look, one golden eyebrow arched high as if Charity had insulted him by asking for water.

“On second thought, champagne will be just fine,” I said rapidly, my voice tight. All three of us took a glass, and when the waiter bowed and left us, I whispered under my breath, “For heaven’s sake, don’t drink any of this.”

Placing the glasses behind our chairs, we sat back down, and my mind raced as fast as my breaths. I needed to calm down, or this wouldn’t work.

I glanced around the ballroom, hoping, against all logic, I’d see our friend. Then we could find out where she’d been and head back before anyone suspected we’d gone missing. I wasn’t in the mood to be locked up in isolation or risk the asshole guard who paid special visits to the girls in the basement cells. I shivered. That was the reason I tried my hardest not to break the rules.

“Trinity, what if...” Adella started, but I shook my head, putting a stop to her question.

Adella was our worrier, the one who always imagined the worst scenarios. I knew part of that came from the number of times Ms. Bakewell had locked her in a small closet in our dorm, the punishment for the smallest of infractions when we were younger. I’d hated that closet and was once stuck for a full day with a rat who’d been hiding in there. I’d been unable to check my closet for days afterward.

Shivering at the memory, I shoved it to the back of my mind, along with how many times I’d cried at the Institute. I wish I knew why I’d been dumped there as a young child, but that wasn’t something to think about at that moment.

Refocusing on Adella, I reached over and took her hand in mine, and she turned to me with fearful eyes.

“Just breathe. We’ve been through worse together and always come out of it. All the punishments we’d endured, and we survived those, right?”

She nodded.

“See. We’ll live through tonight as well.”

“I know,” she murmured, her voice crackling. “It’s just... if we get caught—”

“We won’t,” I interrupted, not wanting to end up in isolation for a month, either. “Just fake it ‘til you make it. You said that, remember?” I grinned.

Her frown broke into a lopsided grin, and she sighed. She was the quiet, meek one of our peer group at the Institute.

“We’re best friends, like the four musketeers in that old book we read last year.”

She squeezed my hand with tears threatening. It was the four of us altogether, but one was missing, and I suspected why, just not how.

“Don’t be such a ball sack, Adella,” Charity said. I glared over at her with a menacing look to shut her up, but she just

laughed at me with a shrug. “What’s the worst that can happen? We get swept up by an Alpha?”

“Are you crazy?” Adella snapped. “We’re on pills to trick everyone into thinking we’re Omegas, or has your sex-brain made you forget where you are?”

Charity shrugged. “The way I see it, I’d rather a man punish me for my wicked ways than be locked up in that horrible closet for days on end. Anyway, for all we know, Frannie could have run away and left the country, and I wouldn’t blame her. I’d do the same if I got the chance to leave with an Alpha.”

“Let’s just focus on finding Frannie first.” I sighed heavily, hating that I couldn’t completely disagree with Charity. “How does that sound? Then if you want to mingle with the Alphas, go for it.”

I felt Adella’s glare, but the decision was Charity’s. We’d all grown up at the Institute, punished for the smallest things, treated like criminals. We had also spent endless nights talking about all the things we’d do once we got out, like traveling the world. We were all convinced we wouldn’t become Omegas. Once you reached twenty-five, females could get jobs and attempt to have a normal life with a Beta male.

Until Frannie’s hair started changing color almost overnight—the first clue her transformation was happening.

Then she was taken away, and we hadn’t seen her since.

Adjusting the boning poking into my armpit, I wondered how this pretty dress with embroidery could be so uncomfortable. At least it held up my full breasts without too much effort, something I’d been worried about since they normally spilled out of low-cut tops.

“I think she just found her Alpha,” Charity said matter-of-factly. “Or she’s at that retreat, and she’ll be at the ball like old Bakewell said. We get to enjoy a night out without that dragon breathing down our necks and act like normal nineteen-year-olds.” Charity shrugged again, her golden hazel eyes distant. The girl liked nothing more than having fun and took it where

she could get it, no matter what was going on. Normally, that was alright, but Frannie had been missing for two weeks. We promised to come back to see each other or at least call once we got sold to an Alpha. She hadn't done either, which wasn't like her.

An Alpha across the room paused in his conversation with a brunette to look over his shoulder at us. I lowered my head, my hands twitching on my skirt, and prayed he didn't come toward us. From beneath my lashes, I saw the woman touch his arm, and he returned to whatever they were discussing. I let out a shaky breath.

“Are you kidding me, Charity?” Adella grumbled under her breath, and I turned to her. “Bakewell sells off her Omegas. That's why she got the government to pass the law that we couldn't leave the Institute until we're twenty-five, and she's certain we aren't Omegas. We know she force-feeds the fake Omega hormones and dyes their hair when they're twenty if they haven't started changing by then, then sells them and makes money off the girls. Added to that are the stories of Omegas disappearing all the time, and what about those found dead? So, how can you be so blasé about all this?”

“I'm just saying, Frannie was showing signs of being a real Omega, so maybe she's at her real forever Alpha home.”

Tensing in my seat when I noticed more Alphas staring our way, I jolted to my feet, needing to search for Frannie. Feeling sick to my stomach about my friend, I came here to find her, not for Charity and Adella to argue.

“We have to get moving.”

Adella's glittering jade green eyes glared at our friend.

“Why are you pissed at me?” Charity pulled back, angrily narrowing her eyes at Adella as her mouth opened in disbelief. “Frannie wanted nothing more than to be an Omega, and when her hair turned blue, signaling her transformation, we knew she'd be sold off to one or more of the highest bidding Alphas.”

“Please stop arguing. We need to go look for Frannie. Come on, get up, and let’s do this so we can leave.”

Charity huffed, pushing herself to her feet.

“I’m sure Frannie is just enjoying being pampered at the retreat that old hag sends us to before she puts us in the slave markets.” She lifted an eyebrow and gave us a haughty look that set me on edge. I hated when she did that. It always meant trouble, and we’d end up paying for it one way or another. “If it was me, I’d enjoy it while I could. Then I’d enjoy getting knotted as many times as possible.”

She had always spoken her mind and had been grumpy all day, insisting Frannie was safe, so I shouldn’t be surprised she’d act so uncaring. I’d assumed she’d take tonight’s mission seriously.

“You are so gross.” Adella wrinkled her nose in disgust, her thin lips pinching as she stood from the chair. She was a pretty girl but had a face that, more often than not, looked perturbed when she wasn’t smiling.

“Getting knotted is gross? Sex is gross?” Charity asked with a superior snort that did her no favors.

Something was wrong with her, and I wondered if she was more concerned about Frannie than she was letting on, and this was her stressing. That would make sense since Charity didn’t like to appear to be weak and often tried to hide anything that worried her. She’d once told me that showing others you’re scared means you’re weak, and she never wanted to look weak.

“Keep your voices down,” I whispered, noting more men were eyeing us now. How long before they come over to us? So far, we’d kept to ourselves, as had the Omegas across the hall, but that wouldn’t last long. The Alphas wanted to find their match and would come to us soon enough to get what they wanted.

“It’s all so animalistic,” Adella continued, shuddering, her face twisted in a sour expression only I caught before she turned away from Charity. “I really hope I’m not an Omega. I

don't want that to take control of me or to be sold off to some man who will only cast me aside when word gets out that Ms. Bakewell has been selling fake Omegas. And all of that talk about slick. Surely, an Omega would need to drink gallons of water to make up for all the fluids lost with all the slick oozing out of her." She was talking fast and kept swallowing, appearing nervous.

She had a point, even if it made me cringe. "Do you two have to argue now? We're drawing attention, so let's move and search for Frannie." Nudging them away from the seats, their steps were sluggish as they glared at each other.

Adella put her hand against her black hair, checking her simple bun was still neat.

I cast my gaze around the filled room, looking for Frannie, now that my friends seemed to be calming down and moving.

"You know what's going to happen, Adella. Either way, we're not going to the good, loving homes she's supposed to send us to after careful debate. She's just going to sell us, so you might as well get used to that idea now," Charity responded, her face smug and just a bit twisted, reigniting the spat all over again.

Sometimes, Charity made it hard to like her.

Adella rolled her eyes.

Charity eyed the Alpha across the room again. He seemed to have a pack of others around him, and the sight made me shudder. They were known for being arrogant, dominant, and aggressive, and the Omegas they bought were seen as their possession.

I refused to belong to anyone.

It was bad enough to think about begging one man for sex during a heat cycle, but a whole pack of them? My whole life, I'd hoped I wasn't an Omega. I also didn't want to be sold as a fake Omega because once the Alpha found out, what would he do to me?

Omegas were rare, a precious commodity that brought high prices at slave markets. I didn't want to be a slave to an

Alpha or to my own body.

Charity might be ready to mate, but I was with Adella. The inability to say no, the primal urge to be rutted by an Alpha, to be bitten and brutalized? It was all too much for me. I wanted nothing more than to find Frannie and escape the Bakewell Institute for Girls.

“I’m going to mingle. You two old maids can stick by yourselves if you want, but I’m going over there,” Charity said, swaying her hips for the benefit of the pack. And sure enough, they were staring at her.

Their predatory looks left me trembling. Closing my eyes, I wondered what kind of trouble she was about to cause. I couldn’t stop her, though, so I leaned over to Adella.

“Let’s do this. She’ll join us once she comes to her senses.”

Adella nodded and looped her arm through mine as we walked in our gowns and short heels around the ballroom, then out to the main hall at the front of the building. Making our way toward the rear of the mansion, my gaze scanned everyone we passed—stunning women in glittery gowns and immaculate hair, wearing the most beautiful fruity and floral perfumes I’d ever smelled, and Alphas, some handsome, some not, laughing with other males and smiling when they were with the Omegas.

And still no sign of Frannie.

“I need the bathroom,” Adella whispered, and I searched the back hallway.

“There’s one over there.” I pointed to a door with a W written on a discreet sign. Adella hurried inside, and I waited for her to come out.

I studied the elaborate hall with gold-framed paintings of people I didn’t know, chandeliers dripping with gold stars, and golden vases along the walls spilling with yellow flowers. While I lingered in the hallway, I spotted a mirror on the wall to my right. Checking to make sure my corset was still in

place, I noticed a faint hue of pink at the roots of my mousy blonde hair.

Wait! What was that?

It couldn't be...

My stomach dropped, and I moved closer, but a low growl to my left caught my attention.

A group of men stared at me with the savage hunger of a pack of demons.

I froze in place as I smelled... night blooming jasmine, a smell that brought an ache to the pit of my stomach, a craving I'd never felt before. Other scents came at me—pumpkin pie and Muscadine grapes, two of my favorite things in the whole world. The grapes grew wild in this part of Georgia, deep in the Great Smoky Mountains. There was another man with them, a man with no scent at all. He must be a Beta. Panicking, my heart felt as though it was going to explode from my chest. These were scents of Alphas, scents I shouldn't be able to smell...

Unless I was a real Omega.

Oh, fuck!

Then I felt something hot and wet between my thighs and knew I was in more trouble than I could have imagined.

Two

2

ASPEN

Our Omega.

A growl rolled through my throat as a savage hunger tightened in my chest.

The moment I breathed in her perfume—the scent of orange blossoms in the night air—my cock twitched, and a feral part of me awakened. I knew she was ours, as did the rest of my pack. Pink roots contrasted against her dark blonde hair, and the aroma of her heat became stronger with every inhale.

She stared at us like a deer caught in headlights, her eyes as blue as a tropical ocean and so beautiful. Dark blonde hair fell in light curls around her round face, and her dress followed the curves I imagined tracing with my tongue. She was adorable, even if she looked scared out of her mind.

“Don’t frighten her,” Daniel, our Beta, urged, putting out his hands to hold Shadow and me back, standing between her and us. Luckily, Viper was behind us and didn’t need to be held back.

“She’s ours,” Shadow, our leader, hissed, his eyes on the girl who stood rooted to the floor. “Can you smell her? It’s so delicious. She’s on the verge of going into heat, and we found her first,” he murmured.

To be fair, we were all staring at her, starved for her. I came to my senses long enough to notice other Alphas from the ballroom had turned in her direction. Their curious expressions would change to lust once they got the full scent of her perfume blossoming. Every Alpha in the ball would lose

their mind and go berserk. They'd kill each other to get to her, to rut her. She wouldn't survive...

"We have to get her out of here. Now," I growled. Something about the fear in her eyes called me to her. I'd met other Omegas at the ball, and not one of them had every nerve ending in my body on alert or ignited a craving through my body to taste every inch of her, to protect her, to keep her all for myself.

They said when you met your Omega, you'd burn down the world to keep her safe. Your life suddenly became incomplete unless you had her beside you. I never believed the intensity of the connection until now. It throttled me, leaving me breathless in a span of only a few moments. Primal attraction and our nature worked quickly to bring us together, to ensure we found the right Omega for us.

Fury rose through me that these Alphas down the hallway believed they'd come anywhere near her.

"Get the SUV, Daniel," Shadow ordered, and I saw him move to do just that. "Let's get her out of here before the other Alphas go into a frenzy."

Nodding, I took her pale hand. She wore no jewelry nor polish on her nails, which seemed odd for an Omega at a ball, but I didn't have time to worry about that right now. Her scent grew deeper, and being this close to her, my cock ached for her.

"Come with us, little Omega. You aren't safe here. Not now."

"This can't be happening." She stared up at me with those huge blue eyes full of fright and shock and pushed against my grip. "I don't want to be an Omega. Please, just leave me alone."

"It's rare a person gets what they actually want in life," I murmured with a soft laugh, not wanting to scare the girl. "Come on, we need to go now."

"I have to wait for my friend," she protested, digging her heels in.

That was when I noticed she wore plain, old-fashioned, black leather boots, not the pretty heels that other Omegas wore to balls, something else odd about her, but there was no time to wonder why.

Frustration pulsed as I kept glancing behind us to where more Alphas had turned up, their noses high, getting a whiff of her perfume. Fuck!

“She’ll be fine. You, on the other hand, are about to be rutted by every male in this place. So, if you don’t want that, come with us. It’s for your own good,” I urged her soothingly.

She was terrified, but she glanced back at the door and me again, her eyes full of tears.

“So you can rut me instead?” Despite her quivering words, there was a sharpness in her tone. This girl with the most beautiful pink lips I’ve ever seen had a spine. Good, she’d need it. She tugged at my hand, where I gripped her arm, glaring at me with death.

“It’s not safe, little Omega. Please, stop fighting me.” I drew her hard to my body and groaned with pleasure when her soft body crashed into the hard planes. She felt so good, so right, this close to me. My head dropped, my lips aching to touch hers, but the sound of a fist hitting flesh behind me pulled me back to reality and the danger. Perhaps for the best. I was losing my head to her too fast.

“I’ll send Daniel back later, once you’re safe, to tell your friend where you are, Omega. Now move,” I whispered frantically, seeing a group of three coming toward us.

Wondering how long before I completely lost my senses around her, having her this close and touching her eased the tortuous craving to strip her down and fuck her.

I reared up as someone knocked into me. A large hand tried to snatch the Omega, but Viper was on him in an instant, shoving the Alpha away.

Viper’s dark red hair stuck out in a thousand directions, making him look insane, especially with that mad smile on his face, one that begged the guy to come at him. Laughing like a

lunatic, Viper was in his element, facing off the other Alphas coming our way. Blood splashed the golden walls as he made fast work of knocking two of them to the floor.

“Aspen, carry her out if you have to. Do it now,” Shadow boomed. “I’ll take care of the shitheads.” Three men, as big as our pack, stormed our way from the other end of the hall.

The Omega glanced around, her eyes wide. Finally waking up to the danger she was in, a gasp fell from her lips. At last, she moved her feet.

“Where are we going? I can’t leave my friends behind.”

“To our compound. You’ll be safer there, and your friends will be fine.” I held her tight to my side and barrelled forward. Viper and Shadow left a trail of Alphas in their wake just as the alarm sounded overhead. Guards would arrive, and we’d be in more shit than we ever imagined and lose our Omega.

One didn’t just steal these rare tiny doves. They were close to impossible to find unless you came from a mega-rich family with connections, and even then, it was a shitfight to claim one.

To connect with one as I had—the way her perfume and the scent of her slick filled my nostrils and my balls tightened—I wouldn’t let go of her. Fuck that!

My hands clasped this delicate girl closer.

Mine. She was all mine.

Fuck me, this was going to end badly. My head bellowed to rein in my shit. I was in danger of losing my head. I wanted to push her against the wall and rut her in front of everyone at the ball, but Shadow shoved me to get move faster before I got the chance.

Moving with speed, we reached the mansion’s front door, and I wrenched it open. No guards waited outside, thank hell. Daniel had our long, black SUV with the blacked-out windows at the foot of the wide front porch and frantically opened the doors.

The Omega flinched in and tugged against me once more, but I didn't have the luxury of wasting time. My muscles tensed the longer we stood still.

"I know you're scared, but you'll thank us later, I promise. Right now, we need to move fast." I swept her into my arms, coaxing a cry from those sweet lips. Racing down the steps to the SUV, I lunged inside and set her on the back seat. Crying, she reared away from me, then desperately wrenched at the passenger door on her side to escape.

"Don't touch me," she cried out.

My breaths were savage at the thought of her escaping the car. I dove to grab hold of her, snatching her around the waist, and threw her across my lap, so she landed in the middle of the back seat just as Viper leapt in on her other side.

She gave a small cry. Pinned between two mountains of men, she looked so tiny. Her gaze swung from me to Viper to Shadow, who climbed into the front passenger, then to Daniel.

"You can't just kidnap me."

"And yet it looks like it's happening," Viper snapped.

Daniel shoved the car into gear, and we took off away from the mansion, our tires skidding, throwing us back into our seats.

"Where are you taking me?" she demanded, her eyes on me, her voice shaken.

"Our compound isn't far. Don't worry." Plucking a blanket from the back compartment of the SUV, I tried to wrap it around her, but she was shaking too hard, holding her stomach. "Little Omega, I'm Aspen. The dick next to you is Viper."

He in turn deadpanned me, and I turned my attention to the front, the Omega doing the same. "In the driver's seat is Shadow, our illustrious leader, and driving is our Beta, Daniel."

She kept looking at each of us then she finally glanced up at me. "I'm worried something's wrong with me," she

groaned.

I gave her the blanket, which she hugged to her chest, and the absent look in her eyes deepened. She was fading fast.

“Why did you come to the ball if you were so close to your heat?” I asked, resisting the urge to draw her into my arms. She was spooked enough.

“What are you talking about?” She blinked up at me, her face going pale.

I ran my hand up and down her right arm to add another layer of calming.

I’d never had an Omega, but instinct kicked in and a lifetime of hearing about how to keep an Omega happy and calm served me well. I wanted her, wanted her small, delicate frame beneath me right now, but I clamped down on that urge and tried to exude calm reassurance. She was so tiny compared to the men surrounding her, including me. She could easily become even more confused and frightened if we didn’t do this right.

High on her perfume and my thoughts fogged up, it was hard to think beyond sliding into her. Clearing my throat, I shifted uncomfortably in my seat, slightly cramped, my cock hard as hell. I’d heard tales of Alphas going wild with the hunger to rut when they met an Omega going into heat, but this was ridiculously fast.

“Nothing... a question for later,” I finally murmured. “What’s your name, Omega?” She was clearly in shock, and I hoped to distract her from our scents. Even Daniel, a Beta, seemed to be exuding an unfamiliar scent around this Omega.

“I’m Trinity... Trinity Ainsley,” she mumbled loud enough for me to hear her words. Her blue eyes, so light a little while ago, were dark now. Her nostrils flared, taking in our scents.

“You’re safe with us. We’re not brutes like those other Alphas. We know how to control ourselves,” Shadow reassured her from the front seat.

I wasn’t sure Shadow could speak for all of us about controlling ourselves. I side-glanced Viper.

Leaning toward Shadow almost drunkenly, she pressed her nose against the back of his shoulder and inhaled deeply.

“You smell so good,” she murmured. Her voice was filled with thick lust, and the scent of her slick took over even the overwhelming scent of her perfume.

The thought of taking her now thumped in my veins. Having her sweet cunt on my face was all I could picture, leaving me stone hard.

“Daniel, you’d better hurry,” Viper growled, drawing my attention to where he peered out of the window. His hands were balled into tight fists. “I don’t care what the speed limit is. Get us out of this situation before I rut her on the backseat of the car like an animal.”

When Trinity whined, I threw him a glare. She curled tighter into herself, leaning more against me than Viper.

“On it,” Daniel said with a thumbs up.

I felt the SUV surge faster toward our compound, and it wasn’t long before he was hitting the switch to open the thick iron gates and driving past the lofty granite wall that surrounded the entire compound.

The three-story building came into view, a nondescript place that was little more than a box, with a few windows here and there. We’d chosen it because of its capacity, not because of the grounds or the way it looked. We didn’t want a palace. We wanted what we got when we bought it—a fortress. A place we could keep an Omega safe if we ever had one.

Looked like the day had arrived.

“We can’t keep her,” Viper griped, making my head jerk in his direction. “We have to take her back to where she belongs. They’ll come for her.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?” I could feel the heat of my anger as it flowed out of me.

“I think you’re missing the fact she’s an Omega on the brink of her heat cycle,” Shadow growled. “We have to keep

her. Those Alphas out there will tear her apart. We can keep her safe in the compound, even from us.”

“What do you mean? She has a home, isn’t that right?” Viper twisted toward Trinity, and she lifted her chin to him, her eyes glazed over. “Where do you live, Omega?” She was so lost in her transformation, I doubted she knew what was going on around her. “See, she can’t even answer. Lone Omegas are rarely seen in the wild, so someone will be searching for her,” Viper spat out, his voice bitter. He’d never really wanted an Omega and tended to be more of a loner than the rest of us.

“Shut the hell up,” I snarled. “She’s not answering because the poor thing is lost to her change. She had a friend she was worried about, but it didn’t seem she had an escort or guards around her.”

Viper shook his head, tempting me to hurl my fist into his face to wake him the hell up.

“Can’t you feel there’s something different about her?” I explained. “That she’s not just an ordinary Omega. It’s in her scent... as if she’s made for us. I would die if you took her away from us.” I realized how dramatic I sounded, but I’d never felt this bond with anyone from a single inhale of their scent. “There’s something that made her ours, that made her belong to our pack.”

I was lost why Viper couldn’t feel the connection to her, which was far more than the sensation of an Alpha needing to rut. When I looked back down at her, I desired this pretty Omega who had tears running down her cheeks. Her scent hit me once more, leaking into the air, and my cock took notice. It was harder to keep my head in the present when I couldn’t stop focusing on her. Arousal curled through me, twisting my brain, so I couldn’t think straight.

“There’s some bullshit at play here,” Viper went on, dragging me out of my thoughts. “Fuck no, Aspen, I don’t feel like she’s ours. All I feel is a need to fuck her, then throw her away.” Viper said coldly.

I knew he was lying when he looked away, his hands tensing until the knuckles were white.

“Throw her away?” I leaned over to ask. “Throw her away?”

Leaning against me, her eyes half closed, her body overheating, she didn’t know what was happening to her.

Viper’s dark eyebrows rose, and his lips pursed, sharpening the planes of his nose and cheekbones. He had a hard face that drew the eyes of others. Right now, his expression warned me I was about ten seconds from being murdered.

Bring it on.

“What the fuck else are we supposed to do with her? Build her a dream nest, devote the rest of our lives to her? I got better shit to do, man.” Viper sighed heavily and looked at the ceiling of the SUV. “Let me out of this thing before I fucking lose my shit and punch one of you.” Daniel unlocked the doors, but Viper didn’t get out.

He was trying to calm himself down, but I wasn’t sure why he was so angry. He should be happy we’d found an Omega, and she was ours. Why would he want to throw away our Omega? Okay, so he’d never wanted one, but now that we’d found her, he should be happy anyway, shouldn’t he? I’d heard the bond with Omegas was unimaginable, so his rant confused me.

“Some of the Alphas followed us, Shadow. They’re at the gate,” Daniel interrupted the argument, and we all stared out the back window.

At least half a dozen Alphas spilled out of cars behind the closed gates.

“Fuck, we have to get her inside. Daniel, switch on the electricity to the gate. Let them light themselves up,” Shadow ordered.

Daniel got out of the car to head into the house.

“Why does he hate me? I don’t even know him,” Trinity asked groggily, curling into me as she watched Viper jump out of the car, leaving the door open. He was angry, but he’d just have to stay that way. I shook my head, not sure what to tell her.

“He doesn’t, angel. It’s just a little chaotic around here at the moment. It’ll be alright,” I answered, pulling her out of the car and lifting her in my arms. She was so light, so small, and her softness against me had me close to purring. That was new.

There were questions, a thousand of them, I wanted to ask her, but now wasn’t the time. I needed to get her away from all of us to a safe room where she could calm down.

She was an Omega, so she should be completely aware of what was happening to her, yet she was close to passing out, seeming oblivious. She had been at the ball when she was about to go into heat, which means she had to know. That thought ate at me as I carried her inside to Daniel, setting her into his arms.

“Take her to the spare room with the view and let her rest,” I instructed.

Daniel smiled softly, staring down at Trinity, seemingly just as taken as I was.

“We have to get rid of her. We all know the consequences of stealing an Omega... even if you pricks think she’s ours,” Viper blurted as I joined them in the living room. He paced from the window to the fireplace, shoulders curled forward.

Shadow poured a glass of whiskey and drank the amber liquid in one shot, not showing he was just as tense as us... well, except for drinking, something he only did when shit went sideways.

“If we take her out again, other Alphas will go after her.” Shadow crashed down on the black leather couch. “So, chill the fuck out, Viper.”

“We have to keep her here. It’s the only way to keep her safe.” My gut clenched, and my hands turned into fists as I thought about all the men who would be after her if she left

our compound. I'd beat anyone to death who tried to take her from us.

"You'd risk death for a piece of ass? Or hard labor at a prison camp?" Viper sneered as his snakelike green eyes stared at me coldly.

"For her? I would," I replied, nodding to emphasize what I'd said. "Shit, man, don't you feel the connection to her... like maybe she's more than our Omega? Maybe she's our fated mate."

He scrunched up his face. "Fuck, you've always been a soft cock, a romantic, and all that bullshit."

I laughed because I knew I'd gotten to him when he threw out insults. He felt it, too, I could see it in his eyes, but the idiot was too terrified of his emotions to admit it.

"We've saved enough to buy an Omega and are working on our networking to get approval, but now we have her," Shadow's deep voice cut in. "Aspen is right. She's ours. I can feel it. She's not meant for anyone else but us. Sometimes, fate throws you a curveball."

Viper burst out laughing mockingly.

"When the authorities come to claim her and accuse us of stealing an Omega, sentencing us to life in prison, maybe even death, or whatever the fuck they decide on, you'll wish you listened to me." A growl rumbled from his chest, his lips were thin, and anger reddened his cheeks. "You two can feel what you want, but I want no part of it." Viper marched out of the room, his footfalls hitting the floor hard. "Fuck this." A loud thump of his fist striking the wall resonated from the hallway. Not the first time he'd done that.

"He's so hardheaded." Shadow sighed beside me.

"I'd call him a lot worse, but he has a point," I conceded, thinking about the punishment for stealing an Omega, a precious commodity. "We'd lose everything if we're found with her in our compound. Are we ready for that?"

"You're right, there is something special about her, and if we let her go, we'll pine for her. Considering Omegas are

close to impossible to get, I'm with you. We keep her as ours, so we'll just have to be careful. Including eliminating those fucking bastards who followed us home in case they talk," Shadow scoffed, shaking his head.

"I'll take care of them." I got to my feet.

I'd known Shadow for most of my life. He was the brother I never had, and I'd risk my life for him. He could be a bastard and scary as hell, but the man's loyalty to his family was uncompromising. Finally finding an Omega we could mark and bond with gives us the kind of family most only dream of. Females like Trinity brought out strength and abilities in Alphas, another reason they're so sought after. Not to mention, the ache to knot is an immense heaviness that keeps pressing down on you from the inside until you feel you might go insane.

"She might demand to leave once she finds out what we trade for our business," Shadow said from halfway across the room. "Even if we knot and claim her with our bites, she still might want to leave. We need to be prepared for that."

"She might, and if that's the case, we'll have to figure something else out." I sighed before inhaling deeply. That wasn't a situation I was ready to contemplate—now or ever.

Three

ℒ

TRINITY

Inhaling the slightly sweet scent I recognized as Daniel, I sidled closer to him as we sat on the edge of the bed. My mind was foggy, and I could barely make sense of what was going on, let alone whose room I was in, but his presence calmed me. I couldn't explain it, but being near him soothed my tension, even if I didn't understand what was happening.

"Why do you smell like chocolate? And why do I feel so spaced out?" I finally asked in a sleepy voice so soft, I thought he might not hear me.

"I didn't know I did." Twisting to look at me, putting his hand on my arm. Warmth spread over my skin, so serene, I knew if I closed my eyes, I'd drift right to sleep. "But my touch has the ability to soothe those I'm connected to in my pack, and it seems, with you as well."

Blinking up at him, I stared into his deep mocha eyes, long lashes that should be illegal on a guy, and high cheekbones. Everything about him was adorable in that cute, boy-next-door look that made you want to listen to him talk for hours.

"Is that why I don't feel scared, even though I know you and those Alphas kidnapped me?"

"Is that what you call it?" He tilted his head to the side. "Not us saving you?"

I waited for him to say more, but when he didn't, I shook my head, needing to clear the haze in my mind. It was a strange sensation to know I was in so much trouble yet was calm about it.

Pouting, I leaned against him and inhaled his delicious scent. He smelled like the finest piece of candy I'd ever had the good fortune to eat. Not able to help myself, I pressed closer to him, my lips on his arm—I couldn't get enough.

“That’s far enough, Trinity,” he groaned and got up, breaking away from me. “You aren’t my Omega, and I’m a Beta. Until the Alphas work out a plan, you can’t touch me like that.”

A flare of coldness swept over me, the calmness from earlier fizzling. It didn’t all vanish, but enough to remind me I was in my kidnappers’ home. With it came the terror that I might end up dying here. Omegas were stolen all the time, then killed. The gravity of my situation came at me like a freight train.

I scrambled back over the bed, needing to put distance between Daniel and me. Even as he stared at me with those huge sad puppy eyes at my reaction, fear swallowed me. My stomach trembled, releasing a growl, and I hugged my middle as a pinching ache swept through my insides.

“What are you all going to do with me? I need to leave. My friends will be worried sick.”

Everything cleared up in my mind—being stolen from the ball by three Alphas and their Beta, Daniel, the aching pain that lingered deep in my gut, not to mention how wet I’d been yesterday when they took me to their car. I had passed out the moment I hit the bed, and I now realized it had everything to do with Daniel’s calming nature. A gnawing worry started at the back of my head that he had such influence over me.

“We will not hurt you, Trinity.” He sighed and stuffed his hands into the pockets of his cargo pants. “You’re safe here, and for your own protection, you can’t leave.”

I gasped out loud. “So, I’m your prisoner?” Another shot of pain roared like a beast across my stomach, and I clutched it, unsure what was going on with me.

“I’d rather call you a guest.”

“Are you trying to be funny?” I shot, cutting a sharp stare at him. I might have laughed if I had the energy.

Daniel chuckled loudly.

“Trinity, you need to calm down, and I think some food will help. I’ll be back in twenty minutes.”

Shaking, I just stood there, watching him leave the room. The click of the door lock sounded, and I made a strangled laughing sound.

“Yeah, right, a guest locked in her room.” Rushing to the window, I peeled back the lace curtain and found it was morning. I’d slept through the night. Bruised clouds crowded the sky. A savage bolt forked across the heavens, and the first droplets of rain tapped on the window.

Below, the gravel driveway curved away from the house and through an oversized yard peppered with trees and ended at lofty iron gates. Huge stone walls surrounded the property, which looked difficult to scale. Whatever was going on with this pack, they were well guarded by the looks of the security cameras.

Drawing back from the window, the shuffle of my dress had me realizing I still wore my ballgown. It reminded me of my friends, and I wondered if they were alright. They would be worried about me vanishing, not to mention Ms. Bakewell would go ballistic and grill everyone at the Institute about my whereabouts.

I swallowed hard, knowing I got my friends in trouble, but I also wondered if Adella and Charity found Frannie at the Glass Slipper Ball. After everything I’d gone through, I hoped they at least made my pain worth it.

With my bladder squeezing, I scanned the room desperately, sighing with relief when I eyed the second door, which turned out to be a bathroom. Small with only a shower and toilet, it would do. Trying to use the bathroom in a long dress proved difficult, but I managed. The boning was digging into my ribs in a variety of places, so I wiggled my way out of it and jumped into the shower to clear my head.

The shower soothed the itching on my skin but did little to ease how hot I felt. I only noticed the fever once the water seemed to steam off my skin. Once I finished, I swiped at the mirror over the sink. When I saw that all of my hair had turned pink, I gasped and pawed at myself.

I whined, completely devastated that I had become a true Omega. Everything I'd planned—traveling, getting a job, being semi-normal—were all out of the picture now.

I suspected the severity of my sickness last night was just the beginning of what was coming my way. That part scared me because I really didn't know what to expect. I kept rubbing the goosebumps out of my arms.

Gaping at my image, I wondered if this was how Frannie had felt when her hair turned sapphire blue in a matter of hours. Frannie was sweet, funny, and always ready to laugh, but she'd been in tears that day. Nothing we'd done could soothe her, and once Ms. Bakewell found out Frannie's hair had changed, she'd rushed to take her away. The last words we heard from Frannie was that she'd call us.

I'd known something was wrong when we never heard from her.

"I've got raspberry Danishes, French Toast, and pancakes for you, Trinity," Daniel called from the bedroom, causing me to flinch. Frantically, I grabbed the white, threadbare bathrobe hanging on the back of the door and wrapped it around me before I walked out.

He placed a heavy silver platter full of food on the side table.

"Oh, I won't be able to eat all that." Going to the bed, I pulled the downy duvet around me. I looked at the orange juice and coffee, suddenly thirsty, and my heart melted. I wasn't sure why since it wasn't as if Daniel knew I was sick to death of drinking water, which was all we were permitted to drink at the Institute.

"I wasn't sure what you'd want, so I brought a few things. I'll eat what you don't want. I got you some clothes, too." He

pointed at the soft flannel pants and t-shirt on the bed. “It’s all we have that might fit you.” He’d showered and changed into fresh blue jeans and a white short-sleeved Henley. It suited him.

“That’s fine,” I blurted. When he made no move to leave the room, I grabbed the clothes and went to the bathroom to change.

“How are you feeling?” Daniel asked after I’d come back and settled down to drink a cup of coffee. There was a carafe filled with more, and I planned on having a second cup once I finished the first one.

“Tired. Stressed. Feverish. Guess how any prisoner would feel.” I moved my shoulders and my neck, feeling the ache of stiffness there.

“The soreness in your body is the onset of your heat, and you’re not a prisoner, Trinity.”

“Is that why you locked my door when you left?” I huffed.

“It’s just a small precaution until we gauge how quickly your heat is coming on.” His mouth tightened at the corners, and his breathing deepened.

“A precaution for whom?” I narrowed my gaze on this man who kept his voice calm, who showed me nothing but tenderness, yet I was crushed by my situation.

“For you and the three Alpha Lords of this mansion. When your heat flares, they won’t be able to control themselves around you, and neither will you, but they gave you their word that you’d be safe here. So for now, distance will help everyone.”

The dull thump of my heart escalated at how casually he spoke about a life-changing event. It didn’t help that I knew so little about Omegas.

Talking about going into heat had my heart pulsing faster. For so long, I prayed I wouldn’t change, and now I felt cornered, with no option but to face it with these Alphas. Looking around, the room felt like a huge cavern, and my eyes

felt as though they were bouncing around in my head. I put my hand down on the bed to steady myself.

“What’s happening?” Daniel asked.

“Just a little dizzy. Can you shut the curtains? My head’s beginning to hurt.” I blinked at the bright light, overpowered by the strong rays of sunshine beaming through.

“Sure. I think this is another phase of your heat. The room feels too big, right?” Daniel asked as he came back from closing the curtains. The sudden gloom was a physical relief to my eyes and skin.

“Yes, way too big.” I looked at the food, not wanting him to know my head hurt so much, I felt ill. The ache waned, so I picked up a Danish. “I know nothing about being an Omega,” I murmured, feeling stupid for not even knowing what I was.

“Pardon?” Daniel asked, his fork full of pancake paused between his plate and his mouth.

“I know nothing about being an Omega,” I repeated, not sure what else to say. “I wasn’t raised in a place where you could learn about it. We were kept in the dark.”

Daniel frowned. “Where were you raised?”

I looked at him, suddenly worried he’d take me back to the Bakewell Institute for Girls. Part of me wanted to escape this room and those Alphas downstairs who wanted to ravage me, but another part of me didn’t want to leave. That part was afraid of Ms. Bakewell’s wrath when she figured out I’d disappeared and afraid of going through a heat without a male. I’d heard that was hell, and the only relief to be found was mating with an Alpha.

So, if I returned, was I exchanging one devil for another? So far, these Alphas hadn’t hurt me.

The voice at the back of my head oddly sounded like Charity when she spoke about knotting back at the Glass Slipper Ball. It sounded like something she’d be quick to point out. That made me smile.

“What are you thinking about that makes you smile?” Daniel let his first question go, and I was glad he did.

“Just about a friend of mine,” I hedged, a little nervous around him. “Did you check up on if they were alright at the ball?”

He gave a weak nod, his eyes lowering to his plate. “I returned to the ball, but I couldn’t find your friends.”

My gut twisted. “Maybe I can use your phone to call them?”

Something flared over his face... a panicked expression. He took another mouthful of pancake and shook his head. Right, I was a stolen Omega, so they’d be worried about being caught. I clenched my jaw.

“So, how long will I be locked up for? Am I staying here until I pass my heat? I mean, I may not know much about Omegas, but I know they’re rare, and stealing is heavily punished.”

I watched his face for any reaction. I didn’t know these men, didn’t know if they’d use me and throw me away as Viper had suggested. We all knew the penalties for stealing Omegas, even Ms. Bakewell had allowed us that knowledge, but I wasn’t worried about that, either. What I was worried about was what would happen to me if they knew I was supposed to end up in the slave market. Would they sell me after they got what they wanted?

“I’ll be honest with you, Trinity. We weren’t planning to bring home an Omega last night. And you probably already have a family looking for you, ready to match you with another Alpha.” His soft stare hardened, almost turning to pain. It made me realize he wasn’t telling me everything. And how the hell was he so calm when they were in huge shit if busted. I worried more about my situation... and how I’d get out.

I started shaking again, like a trapped animal. I got up to pace, scared I wouldn’t be able to escape if I was going into heat. My fever spiked as I walked, leaving me in a cold sweat.

Daniel finished his breakfast as he watched me. When he saw the sweat on my skin, he walked over to me.

“You’re burning up. Get back in bed. Do you want me to bring the Alphas to you? They could help, but you must also be prepared for what your connection with them might result in.”

Sex.

He didn’t need to say the word, but it hung in the air between us.

Fire burned across me, spreading from my cheeks to my chest and lower. I wanted to ask for the Alphas to see if that would indeed put out the flames, but the words froze, locked so tight in my throat, I could barely breathe.

So, I shook my head. Thinking about Viper in the car, the venom in his voice when he demanded that they get rid of me left me whining internally. Was I safe around him? My eyes pricked from fear, the fire inside me, and the throbbing emotions that were going unexplainably haywire.

“What the fuck is wrong with me?” I blurted.

“It’s just the heat cycle, Trinity. It’ll be okay. I swear. Let me get you some painkillers. I won’t be long.”

Tears streamed down my face. I shook with sobs as my body kicked into overdrive. It wanted the men desperately, wanted Daniel as well, but that wasn’t what I wanted. I needed this all to stop—yearned for the shivering cold deep inside of me to end, to stop thinking about stripping the Alphas down to their bare skin and licking every inch of them. I wanted to stop imagining what it would be like to climb onto them and press myself against them. I definitely didn’t want thoughts of that growly jerk, Viper, spanking me before he licked me in places no man had ever touched. A scream pressed on the back of my throat, and a pitiful confusion battled in my head.

Returning, Daniel drew me into his arms and handed me the painkillers. “These will help.”

Instantly, his presence soothed me. Clutching the pills, I lifted my neck to his lips, wanting something but unsure of

what it was. I just wanted it all to end... no matter what it took to make that happen.

Daniel's delicious scent brought urges to life I didn't know Omegas could have for Betas. But then, what did I actually know about being an Omega? Ms. Bakewell had educated us in the basics—math, reading, science, and housekeeping to keep us in the dark while she controlled us as slaves. I didn't know a lot outside of rumors about the heat cycle or about anything, really.

"I can't do that, Trinity. It's forbidden and I'm already spoken for." His voice was breathy. Even if he pushed me away, his flushed face and the tenting in his pants told me a different story. "Let me get Thelma, Shadow's grandma. She'll know what to do." Daniel retreated quickly, leaving me alone once more.

Collapsing on the bed, I curled in on myself.

New images assailed me, flooding my mind with sexual pictures I couldn't quite figure out. Writhing on the bed as slick ran between my thighs, I screamed as the next phase of hell began.

Four

ℒ

SHADOW

“**W**here’s the merch?” I growled, my knuckles red and bleeding.

The man tied to the chair, a thief who stole a truckload of our shipment while it was on the way to our buyer, stared up at me. Both of his eyes were bruised, bleeding, and nearly swollen shut. His busted lips bled down his chin, joining the pool that ran from his nose. He was a mess, but he still shook his head no. Asshole.

I slammed another fist into his face because he pissed me off that much. His head flinched back, blood splashing up my arm, and he groaned like a fucking pussy.

“Put him in the cell,” I roared at Viper and left the basement. Not many people knew our home was four floors, not three. Most people didn’t even know the house was occupied. We worked hard to leave it looking abandoned and empty the majority of the time. Well, not really hard. It was kind of easy when we were always busy with our business.

I’d started my morning, grilling this guy to find out where our truck of Omega hormones, suppressants, and enhancers were taken, but he wouldn’t talk. A few days with my fists would change his mind. I’d let him stew in this dank basement while I had a beer and something to eat.

The underground market for these pills was blowing up as fewer real Omegas appeared. There was always someone looking to make a profit in a market with too many Alphas and

not enough Omegas. It was how we made our first million dollars, and the business hadn't stopped growing.

In many cases, men who took females using the pills were well aware they weren't getting the real deal and were fine with it. They made do because it was either that or being alone, and their primal instinct to knot drove them to madness. Many of the enhancers we sold on the market emulated heat almost identical to the real thing.

At the end of the day, if there was demand, I'd supply. We each dealt with our own demons, be it starving for a female Omega or making money to give a pack a home and a future they would never have otherwise.

Stock arrived offshore and was packed locally, which was why our compound wasn't far from the docks. I'd put everything into this business, so when a fucking weasel thought it was okay to steal from me, I would destroy him. There were enough fuckers ready to take a slice of my business, dozens of rats out there peddling inferior pills that made the females sick. I only sold quality stock, which was why I paid top dollar.

As I emerged from the basement, shutting the door behind me with a bang, Daniel rushed past me with Thelma in tow, I stopped the man. Panic rippled over his face, and my stomach knotted.

"What's wrong?" I demanded.

"It's the Omega. She's screaming her head off. I got Thelma to see if there's anything she can do, but I don't think it's a woman she needs. She needs an Alpha. Maybe we should send Aspen up there. Let him deal with her needs or Viper." Daniel looked up at me with fear in his deep-brown eyes, biting his bottom lip in a way he knew drove me crazy for him, but he couldn't help it. He did it naturally, without thinking, when he was worried, which happened a lot. I had it hot for the guy since we were young. He was mine, but our dynamics had shifted with the addition of an Omega, which was bound to come with complications.

I could see beyond his stoic face that he was worried for when the Omega would need me.

“We’ve always wanted an Omega, Daniel, you know that, but I’ve told you, she won’t change what’s between the rest of us. It won’t change how I feel about you or what we have together.” Leaning in closer, my lips grazed his. “You are the world to me, handsome. Don’t ever doubt how much you mean to me.”

He nodded quickly, but the ache behind his gaze never left, and he pulled his chin away.

“I know. She’s wonderful, but you’re my Alpha,” he whispered.

I probably hurt him over the years by keeping him as mine with the knowledge that one day an Omega would claim my attention as well. I had to find a way to fix that.

“We need an Omega in our lives because of biology, Daniel. Without her to knot, to create a mating bond with, we’d end up in pain. But I want you in my life too. There’s a difference.” Running the back of my knuckles across his cheek, he leaned into my touch, giving me a faint smile, and I grinned, seeing him happy. That was the only way I ever wanted him. I’d give him the world, and it would ruin me to see him heartbroken.

“I guess there is, but she’s special, Shadow. So special,” he murmured, his eyes warm and calm again but full of something new. Adoration? I wasn’t expecting that.

“How so?” I leaned into my Beta, letting him feel how much I wanted him. Some of it was because of the Omega’s perfume on him. I craved to roll in her scent, but I’d longed for Daniel too. We’d missed our morning together so he could be with the Omega.

“Shane, your Omega needs you,” Thelma, my grandma and the only one who got away with calling me by my real name, barged into the conversation. “You should go to her.”

Daniel bristled against me.

“I know,” I raised my voice, frustrated, and pulled away from my Beta. I didn’t want Daniel to worry, but I was concerned about the Omega. I understood enough about their heat cycle to know it came in waves, and once she hit the peak, she’d want to be fucked—knotted, given everything she craved—for days... weeks. For now, she had to be kept comfortable because at this stage of her cycle, no matter how many times an Alpha rutted her, it would never be enough... not until she reached her heat crescendo.

“Then give her what she asks for.” My grandma’s outburst ripped me from my thoughts, and I refocused on Daniel’s beautiful face. “She demands an Alpha. She’s going into heat. Isn’t it obvious, son?” my grandma chided, her gray eyes on fire as she glowered at me. “What is wrong with you, boy? You bring an Omega here who’s clearly going into heat for the first time, with no clue of what’s happening to her, and you don’t have a nest or anything ready for her?”

I frowned, my chest hurting at her words, but it wasn’t anger. She was right. I had fucked up by not having a place ready for an Omega in preparation for us finally having one join our family.

“When she’s in full heat, I’ll be there for her, but for now, she has to be kept safe.”

She rolled her eyes at me, huffing. My grandma had always been a woman who drew my respect and fear. The woman was tough as nails and always had been.

“I wanted to give her time,” I continued. “For hell’s sake, we just snatched her from a party and dragged her here, so let the girl catch her damn breath.”

“Shane, you watch your tone with me, boy. She needs to be rutted,” she reaffirmed, straightening her posture.

“I’ll get the other guys,” Daniel said.

“No, I’ll handle it,” I barked, the pressure from them both getting on my nerves.

“Build her a nest,” Grandma spat at me, her arms crossed over her rather mountainous bosom. “Get her a room small

enough for her to be comfortable.”

“What else?” I growled. My grandma was an Omega and would know what Trinity required. Although Grandma hadn’t been with a man since my grandfather died, long before I was born, she’d been through it all.

“She’s going to beg you all for sex, but her body needs to connect with an Alpha,” Grandma continued.

Daniel cleared his throat, his face slightly ashen at her words.

“Even before she hits the full-blown heat, you can soothe her. It will calm her for a while. You don’t have to have sex with her at the beginning if you care about her mental state, but I warn you now, one of you will have to have sex with her soon if you keep her. There are consequences to not knotting an Omega when she’s around Alphas during her heat cycle,” Thelma warned, her steely gaze piercing into my brain.

“Fine. Hopefully, we’ll have this sorted out before we have to hear any dire warnings.” I held my hands out as if to hold off on any more of her words.

Thelma gave me a displeased glare and left my presence, Daniel on her heels, as I stalked upstairs to the Omega’s room.

“Alpha?” I heard a shaky voice ask from beneath the duvet.

Her perfume filled the room, thick and overwhelming. My dick grew hard, raging to be inside of the woman whose delicious slick I could smell from the doorway. She was so ready to be rutted, it was ridiculous, but she hadn’t even fully entered her cycle yet. What would it be like to be near her then?

“It’s me, Trinity,” I called out, then realized I hadn’t properly introduced myself. “Um, Shadow. It’s me, Shadow.”

Her head bravely poked out from under the covers—huge blue eyes, dazed with lust and pain, pink hair framing a gorgeous face that was more beautiful than she might ever know. She left me breathless when she stared at me, her sugary perfume lacing every breath.

My cock throbbed while my heart pounded with my growing desire.

She reached out a small hand, and I walked toward her, my insides screaming to lunge for her and rip the blanket off her body. My balls were so fucking tight, they ached, just as they had in the SUV when we brought her home from the ball. My savage appetite for her was a primal urge and part of the reason I'd kept my distance from her since yesterday. I wasn't sure how much I could control my instincts.

I paused at her side, taking the tiny hand in my large paw, and sat on the edge bed. At least, it felt like a paw when I clasped her hand in mine. She was soft, so fragile, so vulnerable at that moment.

“Why do I feel so bad?” she whined.

“It's your cycle,” I explained, her sweet essence sticking to the back of my throat. “Something you will go through as your body prepares itself, like all Omegas.”

“We all know what will make it better.” Moaning, she pushed the blanket down her body, revealing the oversized t-shirt that followed the curves of her breasts. Her pebbled nipples pressed against the fabric, telling me she wore nothing underneath other than the flannel pants.

The sight of this petite Omega had my heart hammering. I wanted to trace my mouth across every inch of her body and buzzed with the urgency to touch her, to rip her pants and lap up the slick driving me wild. I'd never been with an Omega in heat, but I had dated other girls and the last few years I'd been dedicated only to Daniel. Females appealed to him as well, though he was a very content Beta, happy me giving him all the attention, which was why I worried about how he'd react with Trinity.

My Omega wriggled closer, placing her head in my lap, her neck bared to me, a plea to be bitten, to be scent-marked. Despite her blushing cheeks, she lay there, making tiny purring sounds that drove me insane. She was hypnotic, and the longer I breathed in her perfume, the deeper I fell for her.

“Please, Alpha, make it better.”

“Fuck,” I hissed, my groin pulsing. “Trinity, do you understand what you’re asking for?”

Her cheeks flushed as her chest rose and fell rapidly.

“Of course I do,” she responded adamantly, but was it her or the ache that would make her do anything to bring relief?

I brushed the pink strands out of her face, and she pushed herself up in bed, her sensual lips parted, which had me thinking of how perfect that rosy mouth would look wrapped around my cock.

“Do you understand what I’m asking for, Alpha?” she asked blatantly, a sign she wasn’t a pushover but a strong female making the most of being caught in a bad situation. “I have a choice to suffer or ask for your help.”

She climbed over my lap in a brazen move that hardened my cock, and I laughed at her bravery. Grabbing her hips, I wrenched her closer so our chests were pressed flush. Her honeyed pussy pressed against my cock, and the obstacle of my clothes between us didn’t hide the slick coating my Omega. Her eyes grew wide with shock.

It wouldn’t hurt to remind her who the Alpha was.

“You’re going to get into a lot of trouble, Omega.”

Her cheeks burned as brightly as her pink hair. I ran my fingertips across her jawline as she thrust her breasts out, pushing them against me. Her nipples were so tight, I felt them through the material of our shirts.

Everything about her was enticing.

“Alpha, will you fuck me?” Reaching between us, her hand clasped my cock over my pants, barely curling around my girth, and she gasped.

The buzz from her touch zapped all the way down my shaft, coaxing a guttural growl. My hips instinctively rocked against her as she ground against me.

“Does it turn you on to think of me fucking you?” I growled, drawing her closer. My face in her hair, I drew in a heavy breath, and her sugary scent ripped a purr out of me. “Me ramming balls deep into your cunt?”

She shuddered in my arms, her moans escalating, and my body was in agony to strip her bare and sink into her. Smelling and feeling the dampness of her slick, it took all my strength not to claim her, but I wasn't a fucking bastard. How could I fuck her when I knew she'd hate me later for taking her when she wasn't in her right state of mind?

“I'm not going to fuck you today, Omega,” I snarled, the words going against everything I craved. Her body arched against mine, but I cradled her hips over my lap.

“Why not?” she cried, close to tears as a low moan rumbled from her throat.

“Once I start, I won't be able to stop until I knot you, until I mark you as mine.”

An ache deepened in my chest to see her in such a state. The connection between us was so much stronger than I could have ever imagined, and we hadn't even claimed her yet. Daniel was right... There was something very special about Trinity.

“I want everything... please!” She pushed herself against me, her hands all over me, dry humping me as she straddled my lap. “Don't you want me?”

Frustration flared. She had no idea what she was asking for.

“So fucking much that it's killing me.”

“Then do it,” she pressed.

My primal need ripped through me. Letting go of all thoughts, I clasped the sides of her face, and our mouths clashed. I moaned against her with a harsh, possessive snarl. Whining, she ripped her legs around my hips, driving my arousal through the roof.

“Fuck, Omega.” I was on my feet in seconds, pressing her up against the wall. Our lips mashed, and our tongues tangled. I kissed her with hunger, her honeyed taste more delicious than I could have imagined.

My cock pulsed with pain as her scent gripped me. Absolutely beautiful. With zero control, I slid a hand between us, and my fingers slipped under the elastic of her pants. She was so drenched, so deliciously starved for me, I gave her what she craved. My fingers slid over her slick pussy lips, and the sounds she made, the way her body shuddered, had every inch of my body on fire.

I drew her tongue against mine, sucking on it as I slipped two fingers into her. Not deep, just enough to stretch her, to give her relief. Her gorgeous hips rocked against my hand, and I broke our kiss, staring at her blushing face. Her lips were puffy and red from how hard I’d kissed her, and I loved that I’d left my mark on her for all to see.

“Beg me for more,” I teased her.

“More. I want you to thrust inside me faster.”

As I pushed in and out faster, her scent was so potent, it left me dizzy. She lost herself to me as her thighs shivered, and a scream was torn from her throat, flooding the room. Her orgasm was spectacular. Her entire body shuddered as I held her right, my lips on her neck.

“That’s it, my Omega. Cum all over my hand. Show me how much you need this.”

Arousal dove into my spine, curling around my cock so hard, the more she rocked against me, the more my desire grew until it burst. I roared like a bear, one hand pitched to the wall, the other cupped her pussy as my Omega clung to me, both of us coming apart.

“Fuck, Omega,” I purred once more, something that I’d never done before.

Once she settled down, she lifted her gaze to me, chewing on the corner of her lower lip. Breathing heavily, she looked

dazed but elated. She collapsed against my chest, and I held her against me.

“That was incredible,” she whispered in my ear, the corners of those pretty lips pulling upward.

Smiling, warmth spread through me, and a heavy dose of possessiveness flared over. I craved to protect her from the world.

When I lowered her onto her back on the bed, her eyes were already shut, her breaths heavy. With the onset of heat, Omegas used up all their energy to satisfy their primal needs, completely wiping them out.

Tucking her into bed, I stared at her for a long moment, tracing every soft curve of her face with my mind—her petite nose, full lips, sharp cheekbones. The girl was a beauty unlike any I’d seen. Once more, a low purr bled through the air... from me, a sure sign there was no way I would ever give up my Omega girl.

I just had to work out how to keep her when those who owned her came to collect her.

Five

∞

SHADOW

“Listen, guys, it’s not just her physical pain that’s a problem,” Daniel lectured the other two Alphas as I came down the hallway. “If you don’t mark her, every Alpha in town will break down the walls to have her. Until she’s claimed, it will be open season on her.”

“Fuck,” Viper snarled. “We’re going to have a war on our doorsteps, along with whoever owns her.”

“So, one of us marks her. What’s the big deal?” Aspen asked.

I smiled at the naivete that came from his easy-going nature.

“If we rut her without marking her, she can still go,” I answered him, stepping into the room. “Whether she’s our Omega, meant for us or not, she can be taken by another Alpha if we don’t mark her. But we take that choice away from her when she’s marked. If we mark her, she will never want to leave our sides.”

“Oh,” Aspen said with a raised eyebrow as the weight settled on his shoulders, his messy blond hair framing his confused expression.

“She’ll be stuck with us until the day she dies... or we die.” I scanned the room, my gaze meeting Daniel’s. I grinned, giving him an approving nod. I appreciated him taking the lead on this and that he seemed accepting of our situation with the Omega, even though I knew he still struggled with the notion of sharing me.

Viper's nostrils flared, his vivid green wide as he watched me with a narrowing gaze. Aspen didn't take long to catch on.

"You fucked her?" Viper sneered with a growl that surprised me since he'd made it clear he wasn't interested in keeping our Omega. "Tell me you didn't mark her as well?"

"If I did, what would you do?" I challenged, my anger bristling at his aggressiveness.

"Fuck me, all I can smell now is her slick." His nose sniffing the air, Aspen was on his feet, prowling toward me in his jeans and tight tee. "It's like sugar, and I'm salivating." He circled me, the eagerness in his quickened breaths telling me he was ready to claim her this very moment if I gave him the go-ahead. He growled under his breath, the savage hunger rippling in the air around him.

Strengthening my stance, I stepped deeper into the room.

Viper was on his feet in seconds, fighting the wildness behind his gaze. Much as he tried, he couldn't resist the raw nature of our attraction to Omegas. It was programmed in us from birth, something he'd have to get his fucking head around.

"I have no intention of sending this Omega back to wherever she came—"

"Fuck sending her anywhere," Aspen interrupted.

I wanted her, had to have her in my life, and had to protect her at all costs. More than her perfume or her slick was impacting my thought process. I'd been around Omegas going into their cycles before, but that was different. The overwhelming need to keep her safe was one of the things that told me she was made for our pack and only our pack.

"So, I guess you're taking the honors?" Viper's voice vibrated with darkness. "Because this is happening, no matter if I want it." He speared his hand through his dark red hair, driving the wild strands off his brow.

"Technically, any of you three can do the honors, not just Shadow," Daniel piped up, his suggestion on soft words.

“She’s made for us,” I reassured Viper.

He shrugged and turned his head away.

“She’ll beg all of you to mark her... she can’t help it,” Daniel said. “But do you think that’s what she’ll really want? To be marked and stuck with us?”

I couldn’t ignore the darker undertone in his voice that we might not want us to keep Trinity forever, that we’d help her through this, then she could leave. Of course, I intended to give her a choice, but the longer we didn’t mark her, the greater the risk of someone sniffing her scent, discovering she hadn’t been truly claimed, and bringing danger to our doors. Problem was, while she remained in the heat cycle, her decisions about anything related to her and us would be skewed by her desperation to bond.

I squared my shoulders.

“It’s not ideal, but we’ll need to talk to her about the mark. In the meantime, we’ll do our best to keep her calm and out of pain, protected and away from anyone outside the compound. We’ll also beef up security. Viper, I’ll leave that to you for the perimeter outside. Aspen, you get guards set up in the house. Daniel—”

Viper snarled under his breath and marched out of the room. I heaved a deep inhale, knowing I had to deal with him. Aspen, in the meantime, walked toward me.

“So, you’re telling me we’re to soothe her anyway she needs?”

“Aspen, you know what I mean. Don’t take advantage of her.”

His shoulders reared.

“Fuck you for even implying that. I just needed to understand what you meant, but fine, I get it. Do what we can without sex if we can help it.” He pushed past me, mumbling under his breath, “Unlike you.”

Clenching my fists, I gritted my teeth, threads of fury tugging at my chest.

Daniel remained in the living room with me. My nerves were on edge as the fireplace spit embers. He wore all black today, his Hensley top following every curve of his ripped chest and eight-pack stomach. He was gorgeous, and sometimes, just the way he looked at me got me off.

Staring at me seductively, his lips tugged into a grin. I knew he wanted me to show him he meant the world to me—slamming him against the wall face first, pulling back the dark strands of hair, and wrenching his head around to face me as I plunged into his ass until I made him whimper and cry out for more, until I flooded him with my cum.

Stepping closer, he placed a hand on my chest, and a wave of peace rippled through me, stealing the anger, the frustration, the tension. I inhaled calmly as my arousal rose.

“Are you okay?” he asked, something I should have directed at him. “Let me help you relax.”

Tilting his face up, he leaned in and smothered me with a scorching kiss. He moaned as his hand fell to my cock and gripped my shaft, finding me still hard. Growling, I pushed his hand away. The kiss did little to relieve my savage need. He broke away, licking his lower lip, hurt lacing across his expression.

“Not today, Daniel. I’m not in the right headspace.”

“I better go get some work done then. It’s clear it’s not me you crave,” he dared mutter under his breath.

Grabbing his chin, I forced him to face me as I stroked a thumb along its length.

“She’s for all of us. She doesn’t replace you.”

Then I left the room, my pulse thumping and my emotions roaring. A brutal ache settled beneath my ribcage at how torn our once united pack had become. I had to leave Daniel in the room because if I’d stayed, I’d have fucked him, which wouldn’t be fair to him when my head was still drowning in the Omega’s scent and my unbearable hunger to rut her.

Trinity

“Get in there,” Ms. Bakewell sneered. Her hand smacked the middle of my back, shoving me into the isolation cell. “You’ll think twice next time you decide to steal from the kitchen.”

I stumbled forward, my bare feet slapping the concrete floor as I lurched on my feet.

“Please, no, not in there. I’m sorry, I was just hungry,” I cried, twisting back around as the metal door banged shut. The click of the lock snapping into place resonated through the prison room.

Shivers ran down my spine. I hated this place. Hated the dread that crawled through me. Hated that down here, no one upstairs could hear you scream. My pulse raced, and I rushed to the door, banging my fists.

“I didn’t even take anything. I put the bread back. Please, I’ll do anything else, just don’t leave me down here. Please.”

The thud of her boots echoed in the distance before completely vanishing.

I whimpered, my mind flaring with fear, which spread over my body like tiny bites. No one wanted to end up here because it wasn’t just the isolation that drove you crazy. There were far scarier things down here.

The faint fluorescent light flickered overhead, and I cried out once more. Curling my fingers around the hem of my shirt, I fisted it. My arms shook as I turned back to the tiny room that was closing in around me. Pressing my back to the cold door, I slid down to my ass and hugged my knees.

“I’ll get out of here soon. She won’t keep me long. Not for almost stealing bread from the kitchen. A night. Maybe two at most... right?” I mumbled, mostly to stop the panic sweeping through my thoughts.

Swallowing hard, I lowered my cheek to my knees, trying to still the tremble, and waited. There wasn’t much else to do. I didn’t want to wallow in self-pity, yet the memory of my parents were faint and something I learned to forget a long

time ago, only remembering the Bakewell Institute for Girls as my home, which was pathetic and sad. I'd been controlled most of my life, told what to eat, to drink, where to sleep.

I craved freedom. I wanted to stop fearing I'd go to sleep hungry, so Ms. Bakewell could keep us on the slimmer side for prospective Alphas.

Rocking on the spot, I realized the twelve years I'd spent in this hellhole since being dumped here at the age of four had left me dreaming more of escaping and praying I'd never become an Omega. On the flip side, so many more things now scared me—loneliness, being left alone in this world, becoming an Alpha's sex slave.

I glanced at the metal-spring bed that had only a flimsy foam mattress. With no cover or blanket, it got terrifying cold down here at night. Lowering my head, I closed my eyes, my stomach growling for food, and tried to think about the meadow behind the Institute, the only place I enjoyed escaping to when we were permitted outside time.

An explosive scream rang out, piercing my ears so abruptly, I jolted to my feet. Darkness encased the room, and my ass was cold and numb. I must have fallen asleep. When the shrill sound came out, I flinched and peered out the small window in the door. My heart thumped louder, faster. Dim light illuminated the hallway, and while I couldn't see anything, I knew it was him.

He was out there.

Jack.

A whimper spilled past my throat.

Warmth left me, and I shuddered. Pressing myself into the corner near the bed, I didn't make a sound, too scared to breathe.

The girl screamed once more, then sobbed.

I tensed, wishing I had the courage to shout at him to stop hurting her, to leave her the fuck alone, but that would call the monster to my cell.

Jack was the local psychopath who was a guard at the Institute on the night shift. When he got bored, he entered the cells. Each time I'd been down here, I was lucky he never selected me, but those he chose never came out the same. He did things to them, filthy things that never left them with marks. He didn't take their virginity, so it could never be tracked back to him. That didn't mean the asshole didn't find a way to torture them and force them to do things to him. He also used electricity on his victims to humiliate them.

My heart surged in my chest as iciness clawed at my arms.

As the girl's sobs continued, I shivered and curled in on myself.

He won't see me. He won't see me. Please...

The thump of steps had me lifting my gaze to the shadow of someone standing in front of my door. I winced and held myself still, too afraid to breathe.

"Knock knock," Jack cooed. "You've been such a good girl for so long, Trinity. I'm surprised to see you down here again."

I didn't move but kept my eyes on the door. Desperation bloomed, clenching my throat. Screaming didn't help, so I remained frozen as the door opened, the hinges squealing.

A large figure stood in the doorway, the light behind him concealing his features. I didn't need to see them to know his lips peeled back over perfect white teeth as his eyes greedily roamed over my body.

His belt dangled from his fist as he stepped into my cell.

A small whimper spilled past my lips. The stone wall scratched my back when I shoved myself against it.

"Now, be a good girl. It's been too long since I've enjoyed whipping someone new."

I blinked at him, shuddering. "No, you can't," I cried. He never left a mark, never.

Closing the distance between us, he crouched in front of me. As tears streamed down my face, the monster grinned with

that perfect smile that left me terrified.

“You’re not going to show or tell anyone about the marks on your body, are you?”

I shook my head as he gripped my chin, his fingernails digging into the flesh. My breaths sped up as adrenaline thumped in my veins, and I knew I was hyperventilating. At that moment, I prayed that I’d faint and disappear.

“Good. I would hate to pay you a visit at night in your room, especially when I was angry.”

All the terror that had bubbled inside me burst free.

I screamed, and the monster laughed in my face.

Six

Six

TRINITY

I woke up with a cry in my throat, the incident as ripe on my mind as the night it happened. Reaching around to my back, I slid my hand under my shirt and grazed my fingertips over the belt marks from Ms. Bakewell I'd concealed my entire life. Adella, Charity, and Frannie were the only ones I'd told since they patched up the wounds. I'd heard horror stories of Jack slipping into girls' rooms, and most of the time, they had to leave the Institute afterward because it was found they'd lost their virginity. Of course, Bakewell blamed them. It made me wonder if she knew what Jack did and turned a blind eye.

Throwing off the duvet, I climbed out of bed, the terror from that night still lingering. The way he forced me to remove my clothes before he beat me for no reason other than his own amusement ate at my thoughts.

Fucking lunatic.

Trembling, I made my way to the bathroom, grabbing the pile of folded new clothes on my dressing table, and hopped into the shower.

The thought of Shadow quickly replaced memories of Jack. His visit to my room played on my mind—how I practically threw myself at him and groaned for more, arching against him as our bodies clashed.

I'd never been with a man, and never in my wildest dreams did I imagine it would be so erotic, so magical.

Tingles ran down my spine and spread between my thighs from my first orgasm. It wasn't from a lack of trying on my own, but sharing a room with other girls and rarely having time alone, even in the shower, such things weren't possible. Besides, seeing how quickly Shadow had me climaxing with just his fingers, it was obvious I hadn't known what I was doing.

A delicious shiver raced over my clit as slick dripped down the inside of my legs, and I exhaled loudly. The smallest jolt of arousal made me into a ravaging beast.

Was this the new me, or only something that happened during my heat cycle? Surely, there was a way to turn the slick off. That reminded me of the conversation I'd had with Adella and Charity at the ball about slick. Charity hadn't been exaggerating in the slightest.

The sound of the door to the bedroom creaking open had me freezing beneath the hot shower stream, and a sense of vulnerability rippled over me.

Shadow? Had he returned for more?

The idea sent a zap of lust through me, and I might have moaned under my breath.

I was squeezing my thighs together, which went to show how badly I'd lost control. I barely knew the Alpha, yet when he'd pinned me against the wall, it ignited something within me.

Combined with my ragged breathing and exhaustion, I had become a complete mess.

Quickly washing, I turned off the shower, grabbed the towel to dry off, then dragged on the new clothes. The cornflower yellow dress sat off my shoulders and had short sleeves, an elastic ruched top, and a high slit on the long dress that cascaded to my ankles. It was gorgeous. I'd never owned anything like it. Quickly pulling on the panties that had been left, it didn't bother me that there wasn't a bra. The tight fabric across my chest held everything in place.

Heading out of the bathroom, I planned to get some answers and not fall victim to my urges again. Well, at least I'd try my best.

"Daniel?" I spoke quietly, a little confused seeing him in my room, pushing open the curtains to a sunny day. He faced me with a small grin on his face.

"Morning. I came in to check in on you to see how you're doing."

While a disappointing ache clawed into me that it wasn't Shadow, I was relieved. I shouldn't crave him or any of these Alphas. I should be focused on getting away from them.

Walking into the bedroom, I felt calmer than I'd been since the night of the ball.

He eyed me from head to toe, then smiled, leaving me slightly giddy at his reaction.

"You look gorgeous in that dress. I knew you would."

Fire washed across my cheeks at his, and I wasn't sure how to respond. I wasn't used to compliments.

"Did you pick it?"

He nodded.

"Something's different with me today."

"How's that?" Daniel moved to sit on the edge of the bed, crossed his legs, and stared at me.

His deep brown hair was combed off his face as if he'd just stepped out of the shower, and for the first time, I really looked at the Beta. How incredibly beautiful he was. His soft deep eyes held my gaze, but something made stare at his mouth for too long, at his large biceps. He was a Beta, not someone I should be attracted to, but he was growing on me.

"The fever's gone, and I don't feel as if I'm losing my mind anymore. Is it over?" Crossing the room, I settled on the bed a few feet from him. I didn't feel a deep need to throw myself at him, and the outside light no longer made me want

to claw my own eyes out. “I think it’s finished, so maybe I can call my friends to let them know I’m okay.”

“I wish I could say that was the case.” He sighed heavily, shaking his head, and my stomach dropped. “Cycles ebb and wane at first, but it will come back, then go again, until you finally break into full heat.” He ran his broad left hand through his messy hair. “This isn’t the end, Trinity. It’s just the beginning.”

The news struck me hard, and I curled in on myself. Disappointment weighed heavily on my chest. I thought I might have reached the end of the pain and the starving arousal.

“I really don’t like hearing that.” Offering him a lopsided grin only made me feel slightly better.

“Do you want to get some fresh air?” he asked suddenly.

I perked up, though confused.

“I can leave the room? You know, I might try to escape if you’re not careful,” I teased sarcastically.

He laughed, though it sounded pitiful. Was that how he saw me? As a sorrowful Omega who had no idea what was going on with her body? An opportunity to leave the room meant I could survey the mansion for a potential way out. The pack treated me kindly, but what were their true intentions? Rut me, then what? I didn’t want to hang around to be sold off.

The girls at the Institute had talked about a secretive place that took in Omegas, helping them escape abusive Alphas or parents. Finding them could be a lifesaver. That brought back heavy thoughts of my friends, hoping they made it out of the ball okay.

Daniel stood and offered me his hand, and when I accepted, a soothing calmness raced up my arm. Standing, I moved to shove my feet into the boots.

“Why are you so nice to me?” As we left the bedroom, I was struck by how plain it was—white walls with a lack of decorations or photos, the timber floorboards polished and bare. The hallway was lit by brass sconces that ran the length

of the walls. Wooden beams ran along the ceiling, giving the place an old-time vibe or of a barn that had been converted into a huge, elaborate multi-story mansion.

There were no sounds in the home, which didn't resemble what I'd imagine an Alpha's home should be like. I always imagined opulence, and after attending the Glass Slipper Ball, I assumed every Alpha lived in homes made of gold.

"I have no reason to dislike you, Trinity." He almost sang my name as his thumb traced the back of my palm. "You are more beautiful than I think you realize. The Alphas are losing their minds over you."

I was breathless that he'd made such a confession.

"Oh." I felt hot and stupid, not to mention blushing. "No one has ever said that to me."

"I guess few people have complimented you, either?"

I half snorted, then regretted making the sound. "Try never."

His hand slightly squeezed mine. I caught him studying me as we walked. He smiled when he got busted. What was going on with this Beta? He treated me so kindly, admired me, but I'd always assumed Betas never connected with Omegas because they couldn't knot.

We went down a flight of stairs, and I saw there was another floor above the staircase. The extravagant staircase, made of dark cherry wood with carved banisters, led us to the first floor and a set of dark double doors, but he led me to the back door.

"We'll go out here. It's nicer than the front."

The yard opened up before us and spread out like an ocean. Not far from the back porch was a small, inviting swimming pool, big enough to do laps, while not taking up all of the backyard. A sprawling lawn was behind the pool, lit by hanging lamps on black iron posts, and benches were spread around the area. There was a variety of plants and flowers, and tall box hedges surrounded it all. Beyond the hedges, the grass

was uncut, and the trees hadn't been trimmed. Further still sat the lofty stone walls that surrounded the mansion.

"We are a bit behind on yard work," Daniel explained as he guided me to a pergola covered by wild vines. Two wooden benches faced each other with a steel fire pit in the middle that wasn't lit. Around us were more trees and an unkempt yard, and beyond them, I caught glimpses of the lofty stone walls encasing the compound.

"Would you like to sit for a while?"

Nodding, I sat down, and Daniel sat next to me. For a moment, he didn't say anything, then he shifted to face me.

"How old are you, Trinity? Sixteen? Seventeen?" He looked closely at me, and I frowned, pulling away.

"I'm nineteen! I'm not a child." I glared at him, perturbed he thought I looked so young.

"Oh, that's good then. A relief, actually." Daniel visibly relaxed, sagging against the bench. "Where did you live before you came here?"

"What's with all the questions?" My defenses rose. I thought Daniel was just being nice to me, but he was the inquisitor. "Am I being interviewed to see if I'm good enough for these Alphas?" I tried my best to sound sarcastic, but my words came out bitter.

"I didn't mean to be abrupt." He blinked rapidly, and his head tilted to the left. "My Alphas are worried about having an Omega in their home illegally and want to understand what family you are from."

"Because I'm a prisoner?" I challenged.

"Trinity, it's complicated and not my place to explain Shadow's reason, but you need to know our intention was to save and protect you. Is where you came from a safe place?" His mocha eyes stared at me, and in their depths was hope.

He wanted me to say I was in danger, but in truth, was any Omega really safe?

After a long pause, I countered his question.

“What do the Alphas want with me?”

His shoulders pulled back, and the morning breeze blew his silky hair away from his forehead. “To aid you with your heat.” His voice hung in the air as though he intended to say more but remained silent.

“And after that?” I pressed.

“That depends on where you’re from and what you want.”

We seemed to have reached a stalemate, so I offered him enough for him to understand I wasn’t ready to mention where I had come from. Not until I knew the Alphas’ real intentions.

“I don’t want to be chased all over town, raped, then thrown away, over and over. I don’t want to be sold on the slave markets and become someone’s slave.”

“Shadow can offer you protection, but only so much if your family comes for you.”

I gnawed on my lower lip, hating how fast my heart pulsed. I feared telling them where I came from would make it easy to send me back to the Institute if they got tired of me, if things got too complicated. I’d been vulnerable my entire life, and for once, I held onto the power until I could make the right decision.

“Then I guess I need to remain here a bit longer,” I suggested sarcastically.

“You aren’t going anywhere while you’re close to your heat. It’s too dangerous for you out there. You know that, right?”

When I thought about how quickly Ms. Bakewell would sell me off to the highest bidder, I almost choked on my breath. He had no idea that being here was a blessing in disguise, but that didn’t mean I was safe here. I had the sense the Alphas were panicking about my presence. So, if they discovered I came from a powerful place like the Bakewell Institute for Girls, would they find a way to get rid of me before the authorities came down hard on them?

“You still smell like chocolate,” I said without thinking, turning the conversation away from me.

His eyes changed, tensing at the corners, and his lips parted, but the hard edges on his face quickly morphed into a soft smile.

“None of the Alphas can smell it, but you can detect a scent on me. Perhaps it’s because one of my grandfathers was an Alpha. Maybe some of his DNA lingers in me. I think he’s also why I have the rare ability of soothing touch since he carried the same ability.”

I enjoyed listening to him speak about anything but my heat and how I wasn’t going anywhere.

“So, how did you and Shadow meet?”

He shrugged, staring out into the yard and over the pool.

“We’ve been friends since we were kids. My mother, who never became an Omega, worked at his parents’ home as their housemaid. I’d often go with her, so I wasn’t left home alone, and most of the time, I ended up hanging out with Shadow. We got along instantly and have been inseparable ever since.” A smile curled his lips, and a sparkle glinted in his eyes.

I couldn’t miss the admiration for the Alpha when he said his name, but it was so much more. Everyone knew Alphas took Betas as partners before they met their Omega, but it always made me sad to think such relationships might be broken when the Beta could remain with the group, right?

“You really like him, don’t you?”

“That’s an understatement.” His grin was contagious. “I adore him to bits.”

He didn’t need to say it, but I guessed it was a lot more than adoration. He was completely lost to Shadow, maybe in love, and if this was a perfect world where Shadow and his pack were mine without any danger, I would love to have Daniel remain with us.

When I finally responded, words I hadn’t intended to say slipped past my lips. “Is it hard for you to watch him drawn to

me...” I shrugged, feeling stupid. “Don’t worry about it. That’s a dumb question and—”

Daniel leaned over to me, and his hand came up to touch the right side of my cheek, and I stared into his eyes.

“Not a silly question at all. It’s not easy, but the more time I spend with you, the more I like you.” His grin made me blush. “Maybe this can work.” Despite his words, the corners of his mouth dipped, and I heard the anguish in his voice. He struggled with me being here.

“I’m incredibly hot all of a sudden.” I fanned my face with my hand, embarrassed about raising the topic in truth.

“Let’s get you back to your room. Maybe a cold shower will help. I’ll have to do more research on the heat cycles to help you.” Daniel took my weight once I got to my feet as I leaned into him on the way to the mansion. The scent of the Alphas blended with the euphoric smell of warm chocolate from Daniel, making my knees weak.

This heat garbage was going to kill me. I just knew it.

Seven

S

TRINITY

After my conversation with Daniel, I was convinced the pack would sell me once they got their kicks during my heat. Especially if Daniel had anything to do with it.

My head hurt with confusion. My friends had told me once you went into heat, the Alphas would go crazy and do anything just to be next to you. Shadow was the only one who'd visited me, so why did they keep sending the Beta to spend time with me? I could only imagine it meant one thing. They didn't want the connection with me because they were going to sell me off.

My stomach churned, but I also wasn't going to play the victim. There was a reason everyone said Alphas were assholes, and I would not let them use me. I'd rather take my chances on my own. I knew every Tuesday, the Bakewell Institute for Girls sent the students off-site for community work at retirement homes, and tomorrow was Tuesday. All I had to do was get there, grab my friends' attention, then make my next plan. Maybe they'd escape with me, the three of us seeking the refuge we'd talked about.

Heart racing, I attempted to unlock the door to my room with hair pins I'd found in the bathroom drawers. Jiggling them, I clenched my teeth and prayed to the universe that this worked. When the door gave a dull click, I could have yelled for joy.

My heat cycle had remained at bay all day, even after the small incident outside with Daniel, and I felt like my old self. If I was going to make a run for it, it had to be now.

On my feet, I emerged into the quiet hallway and made a mad dash for the stairs, heading for the back door. The lights on the walls and in the iron chandeliers flickered, stealing any shadows, and my pulse was on fire that I'd get caught. Still in my dress, since all my other clothes had been taken, I wore my boots, figuring I might have to scale the stone wall.

Speeding down a corridor to the backdoor, a stream of voices found me. Shuddering, panic slammed into me as I backpedaled. Back flat against the wall, I froze, unsure which way to run. Taking deep breaths, I tried to calm down and work out where the sounds were coming from.

When no one ran out after me, I took it as a sign I hadn't been detected. I headed toward the backdoor, which happened to be where the loud voices had come from, only to discover a side corridor lit up by golden torches. At the end were black double doors, with more voices streaming out. I darted right past the doors toward the rear exit, hoping their gathering would be the distraction I needed. Though I wouldn't deny curiosity burned inside me about who was in that room and what was going on.

My insides churned as I slipped outside and scanned the grounds. They were dead empty, but the sky shimmered from the sickle moon while a stream of light poured from the windows.

Of course, I shouldn't have cared, yet I darted over there, keeping to the shadows, my heart hammering in my chest. I peered through the window into a lush room with crystal chandeliers and a wall adorned with paintings in golden frames of women in flowing dresses, all looking sorrowful. Shelves filled with bottles of alcohol covered one wall, and in the middle of the room, the Alphas and two strange men were sitting on brown leather couches, facing each other, talking, drinking, and smoking fat cigars.

Daniel stood near the drinks, preparing them, dressed in a black suit, complete with a bow tie. Viper got up to join Daniel, talking secretly.

My gaze narrowed on Shadow and Aspen, laughing with their visitors, and I couldn't help thinking whatever they were discussing couldn't be good. Were they talking about selling me? Anxiety skittered across my mind, and I stiffened, more than ever convinced leaving was the best decision.

Speeding away from the window, when I was clearly out of view, I turned on my heels and ran into the darkened yard. The night concealed me, and hopefully, no one saw me.

I swallowed hard and fought the panic, the heavy boom of my heart filling my head. This would work... it had to. Once I left the compound, I'd stick to the shadows since most people would be at home during the night. I'd faced my fair share of tragedy, and it was about time the universe sprinkled some good luck my way. I wished for a miracle

My boots smacking the ground rapidly, I slid amid the few blossoming trees that peppered the grounds. The grass grew wilder the farther I got from the mansion. Whoever these Alphas were, they were rich to own such a large piece of land, and by the looks of those suited men, with slick hair and golden rings, in the room, they made deals with important people, which afforded them a grand home.

A faint crunch sounded behind me, and I glanced over my shoulder, my pulse thumping. Nothing moved. It had to be the wind or a bird.

Damn, girl, get your shit together.

I hadn't even left the compound, and I was freaked out.

The stone wall came into view, and the lofty iron gates shone a silvery hue beneath the moon as I ran parallel to the driveway. I remained in the shadow of the trees in case anyone looked this way.

Running to the gate was my last option since it came with the biggest risk. I had my eyes on the stone wall farther up ahead.

Another peek over my shoulder and a flash of movement cut across the yard. Someone had spotted me and moved so fast through the yard, I lost my breath and tripped over my

own feet. Heart in my throat, I swallowed the scream and shoved back to my feet.

Fuck!

I whipped back around and ran for my life to the stone wall, unsure how quickly I could scale it. From my bedroom window, I had spied some high trees along the edge, which gave me the idea to climb up and leap over the wall.

Frantically, I sprinted as I kept glancing over my shoulder when I finally saw him.

A figure traveled through the night as if he was made of darkness itself.

I shuddered, terror raking over me. The thump of my heart escalated, but I kept running, refusing to give up, even as a scream pressed against the back of my throat. Footfalls closed in behind me, and my skin crawled because the bastard chasing me was fast.

Pivoting sharply to the right, I jumped to the nearby tree, grasped the branch as I threw my legs forward, and lifted myself up... just as powerful hands seized me around my waist, bringing me to a stop. His forceful tug unlocked my fingers from the branch, and I fell back down.

“Let me go!” I thrashed against him when my feet hit the ground.

“You think this is a game?” Shadow growled in my ear, mocking me.

Something about the heaviness in his voice, his breath on my neck, and his hands on me made my knees weak and slick gather between my thighs.

Despite the fire rippling over me and my pulse racing, I balled my hands into fists, picturing him and those men in the room, just like the ones I’d seen at the Institute when they arrived to buy an Omega. They had leered at the girls and treated us like objects for their pleasure.

When I drove a heel into his foot, he growled, and his grip slackened. I ripped out of his hold and forced myself to run

from him. Even if my body ached for him, I had to get out of here.

Focus, Trinity. Focus on getting over the wall.

Whatever you do, don't stop.

Eight

8

SHADOW

I groaned under my breath as the sweet scent of slick engulfed me, and my cock throbbed. The Omega's perfume wasn't strong, but up close, it left every muscle in my body stiff. Adrenaline demanded I claim and mark what belonged to me.

She was going to get us all into so much shit pulling this stunt.

Lunging after her, I sprinted across the yard. She bounced through the night away from me... but not for long. My hands buzzed with the urgency to touch her, to run them over the body, through her hair, to hear her purring beneath me.

I shook my head, remembering she needed to understand why pulling this crap could get her killed, even if a wildness ignited within me. Quickening my pace, I tracked her along the stone wall, knowing she had every intention of scaling it. Good luck, considering the stones were smooth as fuck and impossible to climb.

Baring my teeth with anger, I pictured how badly this could go if my trading partners found her. They'd question where we'd gotten her. Word would spread, and before I knew it, whoever owned Trinity would be at my doorstep. Thank fuck, she wasn't in her heat cycle tonight, or we'd be royally fucked.

The moment I spotted the vixen peeking in the window, I signaled to Viper to get our trading partners the hell out of our compound. While I might have confidence when it came to

business dealings, I had zero control over Alphas around an unmarked Omega. They'd want her for themselves, steal her from us... whatever it took. The bastards hadn't found an Omega yet, so discovering one about to go into heat would end in bloodshed. They'd stop at nothing since we didn't have her legal documents to prove we owned her or a mark to show our connection.

Fury burned across my chest, but with her in sight, something else burst across my body—an inferno.

My eyes were glued to the pink hair slapping against her back as her dress fluttered around her legs. She was so tiny, yet she never backed down to me. My breaths grew savage when I finally caught up with her. Looping an arm around her waist, I snatched her off her feet and pressed her back against me.

She wriggled, groaning, “Put me down.”

Holding her against me, I inhaled deeply, drawing in her perfume. Sparks of desire and the ache to sink into her balls deep raced through my body.

“There’s something so enticing when you fight me, Trinity, but it doesn’t have to be like this. I could make your world all glitter and gold... give you anything you wanted.”

She stilled for a millisecond before she dug her nails into my arm.

“Don’t treat me like a child and lie... but I guess as an Alpha, it’s what you do best.”

I reared back, not expecting her abuse.

“What do you mean?” I lowered her to her feet but tightly grasped her arm so she couldn’t make a run for it again.

Panting for breath, she glared at me, the darkness crowding her glinting eyes. Her beauty shone far greater than she’d ever imagined, and touching her, inhaling her scent, sent a primal shot of lust straight to my cock. All I could think about was licking those full lips and tasting her mouth.

“You break my heart running from me,” I murmured, hauling her closer, which might have been a mistake because my cock hardened when she slammed into me. Her breasts pressed against me as her eyelashes fluttered with a combination of bashfulness and fury. “You’re beautiful when you’re angry.”

“I’m not yours or anyone’s.” She twisted away from me, wrenching against my hold.

I smiled, adoring her fighting spirit. I let her go, giving her a hopeful moment that she’d be free, but just as fast, I grabbed and turned her to face me. Quickly walking her backward, I pinned her against a tree.

“We have a problem,” I said, keeping my voice calm while she had her fists against my chest. Her blue eyes widened. She couldn’t deny the fire burning between us, the connection that demanded I fuck her. Her nipples pebbled, and the groan from her throat was delectable.

“Now, do you think an Omega about to go into heat should leave the safety of a compound? Are you running back to your family?”

Her shoulders reared back, and it was an amusing thing to witness such a beautiful little butterfly shudder with anger while her body rubbed against me.

“Yeah, we do have a problem. I want you to be honest with me, Shadow. Why am I really here? What do you intend to do with me after my heat? Why do you keep sending Daniel, instead of you or the other Alphas, to spend time with me if you want to help me?”

Her cheeks blushed, but she held herself strong, and I admired her. My head was swimming with her perfume, my arousal deepening, and my heart banged harder as blood dove to my dick, but her words stung. I’d miscalculated how much she’d need me.

She blinked up at me, making a purring sound, and I could see she struggled to restrain herself in my company.

“On the contrary. The reason for my distance has been to control myself. Do you have any idea how much it’s killing me not to fuck you? I dream of you riding my face with your wet pussy, of me knotting inside you. It’s driving me insane, but I wanted to give you time before I ravaged you.” Pushing a loose lock of pink hair out of her face, she leaned against my touch, trembling.

“Maybe I want all those things, too.” She breathed the words, her chest rising and falling rapidly. “But I don’t understand what you plan to do with me.”

“I haven’t been ignoring you, my Omega.” A growl spilled low over my throat, my hand curling into her hair. “I didn’t want to scare you so I kept my distance. That was a mistake on my part.”

She shuddered against me, and I adored how she blushed. She was the kind of beauty that made Alphas, like me, obsessively crazy, and it killed me that I drove her to the point she felt she had to escape.

My fingertips explored the ridge of her cheekbone, the plane between her eyes and the pink hairline, before my hand went to the back of her head, tilting her lips up to mine.

“I will fight the whole damn city to keep you as mine, and knowing where you came from allows me to understand what enemy I’ll have to face to fight for you. Do you want me to fight to keep you?”

She swallowed and lowered her, and when she glanced back up, the fierceness was replaced by a vulnerability.

“I think it’s best that no one finds out I’m here, but it’s hard to think straight when my body aches for you. When it feels like I’m being twisted inside out.”

A growl ripped past my throat. Whatever her origin, it scared her.

“That’s okay,” I cooed, stroking my thumb across her jaw. I’d find out who it was and deal with them. “You’re safe here from them, but even in my home, there are other dangers you must be cautious of.”

Evidently, she wasn't listening. Lifting herself onto her toes, she brushed her lips against the corner of my mouth, teasing us both.

"I can't stop staring at your lips, remembering how good they felt back in the room. I shouldn't do this, but I can't stop myself," she gasped. "I barely know you, yet I feel like I've known you for two lifetimes over."

My Alpha primal instincts kicked in, and the delicious slick fogged my mind, making me forget everything but my Omega. I collected her in my arms and in a swift move, swung her around and laid her on the ground nestled amid the long grass. Stripping off my jacket, I tucked it under her.

"Please, kiss me," she moaned. Her greedy hands pulled my shirt, and two buttons popped open.

Lowering my powerful body over hers, I shook with urgency, an escalating inability to hold back much longer.

Our mouths clashed, and she wrapped her arms around my neck, her legs curling around my hips. Her honeyed slick went straight to my head, and her moans made me growl possessively.

"I don't think I can wait. Rut me, Alpha. Please, it's hurting again." Her hips rocked, thrusting her pelvis against me.

My cock tented in my pants. They needed to come off before they strangled me to death.

I pulled back, much to her mewling protests. My thoughts cleared enough to know better about taking her outdoors, but when she pawed my chest, the desperate need for her stole my attention. Before I knew it, I had bunched her dress at her waist, revealing a pair of soaked white panties between her creamy, pale thighs, and my cock flexed. Reaching down, my fingers curled under the elastic of the flimsy underwear and tore them off.

She cried out and clenched her thighs, and I fought the urge to take her roughly, needing to take her tenderly and not terrify her.

Dipping her chin, she looked away, the shadows stealing her expression, yet her body writhed, and her desire was intoxicating. Pushing the hair off her brow, I stroked her chin.

“Eyes on me, little butterfly. After tonight, I’m keeping you, so be sure this is what you want.”

She raised her burning gaze, a small purr in her throat.

“I want this so much, I can barely breathe, but I’m scared and nervous, and so many other things.” She was speaking fast, her voice barely audible.

Running my knuckles across her jaw, I studied this beautiful Omega. I was desperate to feel her slickness—lick it, plunge into her—needing to see her come undone.

“You’re absolute perfection. Don’t hide any part of yourself from me. You have no idea what your body does to me, but this is the wrong place for this.” I pulled back, feeling like shit, when she came up, her hand grabbing mine.

“No, please, I want this now. I crave your touch.” She lowered my hand to between her widening legs, and my cock jolted in my pants. She was dripping, her lips puffy with arousal, and a thin layer of pink hair sat across the top of her delicious pussy.

“You’re absolutely gorgeous.” I was practically drooling. Kneeling in front of her, I adjusted my jacket under her hips. Staring at me with huge eyes, she rested back on her hands while chewing on her lower lip with anticipation.

“Let me show you how wild you drive me.”

“Please do,” she breathed.

Seeing her shuddering for me, breathless, her body arching, was so fucking hot.

A raw hunger gripped me that this gorgeous Omega begged for me. I leaned forward and kissed her sweet little pussy, then my thumbs spread her lips as I licked every inch of her.

Nectar with hints of orange smothered my senses and made me heady. My balls were so fucking tight, I was close to

exploding. I dove in, my lips wrapping around her offering as my tongue lapped up her slick.

She collapsed onto her back, writhing, making tiny chirping sounds, and it was clear she loved having her cunt licked. She rocked her hips, pushing her pussy against my mouth as I twirled my tongue in circles around her clit. Using my fingers to widen her, to prepare her for me, I pressed my hands to her thighs, wanting her wider as I thrust my tongue into her hole. The heat of her core was on fire.

The savage moans coming from her turned me on even more.

When I drew back, her cries shattered me.

“I have you,” I cooed, covering her body with mine.

Thoughts rippled over my mind about holding back, about not marking her, but they faded as quickly as they came. Her smell and the dampness of her slick were all I could think about.

We kissed, and I plunged my tongue into her mouth. She purred, hungrily taking me, licking my lips and mouth.

“I actually like the way I taste.”

“Fuck, you’re delicious, and you have me completely smitten.” I’d thought if I kept my distance, I could control my growing addiction to her, but time away from her had only intensified how badly I had to claim her.

“Then take me already,” she pleaded, clinging to me. Her body arched under me, and her core was drenched.

Reaching down to rip open my pants, my cock popped out, and I almost sighed with relief. I pressed my hips toward her, the tip of my cock finding her entrance almost as though the two were magnets drawn to one another.

“Please, Shadow.” Her spine curved, her breasts pressing for release. Pulling at the low neckline of her dress, the fabric tore too easily under my force, which I hadn’t intended, but the moment her gorgeous breasts spilled out, I growled.

Perfect tits, tipped with dusty pink areolas, had the most delicate little nipples, so tight, so inviting. Scooping one into my mouth, I flicked it, then paid my respects to the second one, knowing I could suck on them for hours.

“Omega, you’re going to ruin me.” I slipped the tip of my cock into her, and she moaned louder as the cradle between her legs closed around my hips. She was insanely tight, and I had to work slowly into her, sending fiery waves ricocheting down my spine.

Her hands grasped my shoulders, fingers digging into me, as her eyes locked on me. There was a touch of anguish and fear in her blue eyes, but she never told me to stop.

When the voices came from the mansion, I snapped out of my sex daze and lifted my gaze past the trees to the mansion. Across the long landscape, Aspen and Viper were practically shoving our two trading partners into their black Mercedes, seeing them off. All while I had my beautiful Omega beneath me. She twisted her head to look at what could have gone terribly wrong tonight.

I cursed myself internally that I’d fucked up so much. Instead of dragging her inside quickly, I had her legs spread wide, my cock sliding into her as I stared at the men. Her pussy gripped into my dick tighter, sucking down on me. When she made small sounds, I placed my hand over her mouth.

“Hush now. We can’t let them hear you.”

Her hips rocked against me, pivoting, demanding more.

The growl of an engine caught my attention. I lifted my head just as the headlights from my trading partner’s 4WD switched on, and they drove up the path toward the gate. Lowering my gaze back to my beauty, I held her hazy eyes as I drove into her, hissing at how tight she was, how I had to keep pushing my way into her. Arousal tightened in my gut, but I wouldn’t go fast... not yet, anyway. When I felt a slight resistance, I removed my hand from her mouth and kissed her.

“Don’t fight me,” I whispered. “I promise it will feel incredible.”

“I know. I just didn’t expect you to be so big.” Her voice was muffled. “Maybe you’re not going to fit, and I don’t—”

I stole her words with a tender kiss, calming her.

“I promise I will fit, but I won’t knot in you today, not out here, okay? Am I hurting you?”

She shook her head. “It feels incredible, and I want more of it, but it’s so strange, and I can feel how big it is.”

A primitive satisfaction squeezed in my chest at her words. Her features morphed into something euphoric as I broke past the resistance, burying myself inside her and sheathing my cock in her tight walls with that delicious Omega slick.

I loved seeing her beneath me, submitting to me as I worked in and out of her, steadily increasing my speed.

Throwing her head, breathing heavily, her delicious tits thrust toward me. With her lips peeled back, she keened for more.

I pushed up from her body, then lifted her legs against my chest, her ankles over my shoulders. Grasping her cute ass, I lifted her off the ground for easier access, and my gaze dipped to the most beautiful fucking sight in the world.

Her pink, glistening lips gripping cock, sucking me back in each time I withdrew. Seeing her perfect little cunt spread over my huge cock drove me insane, and I plunged into her, unable to hold back.

Her purring changed to something darker, more primal, and it was fucking sexy. Moving with me, her lush breasts bounced every time I thrust into her. It was a stunning image, and a fierce surge to pound into her faster and harder built in my veins.

My cock ached for release the more she clenched her wall around me, moisture dripping from her. Her radiant eyes, with hundreds of blue hues, the color of undulating waves of passion, never left me. I could almost look into her soul and

see the vulnerable girl who was dying to let go and give herself completely to me, to let me mark her as mine and knot her until she understood the true meaning of being claimed. I'd give her my world if she let me.

Lips parted in a way that was made for my cock. Dipping my hand between our bodies, my fingers played across her swollen lips and her aroused clit, rubbing it in circles. My muscles flexed, holding back from releasing into her as her scent deepened, her purring almost a growl as she writhed with each thrust. Arousal pooled heavily in the pit of my gut as her eyes flashed a brilliant blue, and her body stiffened.

I trembled with adrenaline when she cried out with a sudden orgasm, her body thrashing. Lowering over her, I kissed her, stealing her voice.

Her pussy constricted my cock, tugging, and with the way she was going, she'd bring on my knot without my control. I grew impossibly erect and so solid, I snarled against her mouth, desperate to unleash inside her.

Clinging onto me, she groaned as her beautiful body shuddered, and her slick flowed over my cock. When she opened her eyes, they were darker, fevered.

The tip of my cock swelled, and I pulled out rapidly, tamping the growing knot. With it came the sharp ache of leaving her warm crevice, my balls tight and full of cum.

My nostrils flared with my harsh breaths as my Omega lay on my jacket, her pussy open for me, her slick seeping out of her. I slid my finger over her gorgeous, wet lips, and her pussy gushed.

“That tickles.” She giggled, wriggling her hips.

“You have no idea how beautiful you look from my view, dripping with slickness.” Glancing down at myself, I noticed a smear of blood on the tip of my cock—her blood. She had been a virgin. My stomach cramped, and I groaned under my breath. I was her first. In the back of my mind, I'd known, but seeing the blood, knowing I made her first time in the fucking yard, destroyed me.

Shoving my erect cock back into my pants, I was barely able to zip up. Trinity's hand slid over mine, sending waves of desires through me.

"I'm not finished." She blinked up at me, her eyes still dark with arousal, her breasts exposed.

Fuck, she's going to ruin me.

I cupped the side of her face. "Not out here." I'd risked enough by losing my head. Tugging her dress to cover her lush tits, I pulled it down over her waist. Before she could protest, I scooped her into my arms and walked back to the mansion.

Cuddling against me, her fingers traced circles over my collarbone as her mouth found the softness between my neck and shoulders, sending pulses of lust to my cock.

"Omega, you are going to kill me tonight if you don't stop."

She rubbed against me, keening, and it felt incredible.

I moaned in response, knowing if I didn't clear my head, I'd have her pinned to the wall in seconds, fucking her brains out and knotting in her.

Inside the mansion, we made it as far as the first floor when she licked my neck. Her insatiability matched my own, and the sensation of her warm tongue dragging across my ear pushed me too far. There was only so much an Alpha could take before he cracked, and I'd reached my breaking point.

When I lowered her to her feet, my vixen dropped to her knees in front of me. She tugged my pants, unleashing my huge cock again, staring at it, studying every angle. Gasping, she looked up at me with huge eyes.

"It's as big as an anaconda... how did you get that inside me?"

I barked out a laugh, which turned into a groan when she pressed her full lips over the tip of my cock.

"Fuck." I slammed my back into the wall, and she shuffled closer between my legs, staring up at me. The delicate thing pulled the whole thing into her mouth so fast, she'd choked

herself. It was gorgeous to see her attempt to give me head when it was clear she'd never done it before.

“Take me one bit at a time, gradually making me fit,” I explained, running my fingers across her cheek and under her chin. “And use your tongue under my shaft to help, which will also drive me wild.”

Grinning, she didn't hesitate to slip me into her mouth, slowly this time. Her tongue flicked across the base of my shaft as she held onto my balls, her touch delicate yet fiery. A spasm shuddered over me as my cock engorged at the warmth of her mouth, at the tightness of her lips. Exhaling loudly, one hand still on her chin, the other on the back of her head, I gently guided her.

“That's it, work me in. Oh, fuck...” Arousal intensified, and I couldn't stop my hips from rocking forward. The urgency to spill inside her gripped me with ferocity. Her eyes never left me, not even when my cock hit the back of her throat and she teared up. When she gagged, I pulled out, and she licked her lips.

“You don't have to deep throat me, not your first time,” I murmured, wiping my thumb across her glistening lips.

“I can do this... I want to.” A purr danced in her throat as I slid my cock back into her mouth, the heat, her tongue, and her greediness leaving me breathless. I watched her bob her head, taking me deeper, her lips so beautiful while she ripped me apart on the inside. An explosion of vibrations tore through me and dove into my cock. This time, when I hit the back of her mouth, she worked me perfectly.

“That's it.” I lowered my hand to her throat. “Take it slow... take me deeper.”

Her eyes glistened, but she never relented, and with it came the thick scent of her slick, showing how much sucking me off turned her on.

“You're going to break me,” I growled just as my nerve endings fired all at once. I came so abruptly, it took me by

surprise. The climax ran through me from my toes to the top of my head, ripping me apart as it rushed to my cock.

My Omega never let go, sucking and taking my seed, taking all the cum that filled her delicious mouth and swallowing it all.

Shaking, I panted, heaving for breath as my hips jerked and more of my seed raced down her throat. I was thankful as fuck Alphas only knotted in the Omega's pussy since I loved getting blow jobs.

Sensing movement to my left, I realized we weren't alone.

Daniel stood in the middle of the hall, as if he'd stopped mid-stride, sparks of shock flashing in his wide eyes. The haunted look on his face had very little to do with being surprised that I finally gave Omega everything she'd desired.

That was his irritated face.

With a harsh growl, I spilled the last drops into my Omega's mouth.

Daniel's glare vanished before he swiftly turned and marched away from us.

Tightness coiled around my heart.

Fuck!

Nine

S

TRINITY

I'd never woken up so horny.

After a maid, a Beta, delivered breakfast, I ate half of it, then remained in bed, not ready to get up.

Last night, having sex with Shadow left me crazy satisfied, and I couldn't get him out of my head.

The climax he brought out of me the previous night had been euphoric, but nothing compared to actually being fucked. He was my first lover, and every inch of me still buzzed. The taste of his cum—salty, sweet, and so delicious—lingered in my mouth. I would never have guessed giving a blow job could turn me on so much. I couldn't explain the sensation, but the more aroused I became, the more I wanted him inside me, in my mouth, all over me.

Gods, he was breathtaking. Many said the first time you have sex, you wouldn't feel arousal, but I'd been the complete opposite. My skin tingled at the memory of his touch, causing slick to spill between my legs once more. The feral hunger hadn't abated as my core buzzed with a growing desire, something I assumed was the heat cycle.

I woke up alone, the blinds pulled, allowing only a smidgen of sunlight to peer through the gaps, and me gasping, my body on fire. I missed him. Whatever had connected us had become like taffy, drawing us together. I'd been stupid to think running away would help my case. I still had questions for Shadow—like who those men in his mansion were last

night—but I'd gotten so wound up in the sexual intensity he roused in me, I hadn't been able to think straight.

At that moment, I could smell him in the air as though he was right next to me. Rolling onto my side, I smelled his musky jasmine scent, the most appealing fragrance. Moaning, I squeezed my thighs together.

Last night, after he carried me inside the mansion, Shadow crawled into my bed, and I crashed from exhaustion. Peeling back the blanket, I was naked, so I guessed he stripped me after I fell asleep. Pressing his pillow to my face and inhaling his sweetness reminded me of midnight... rousing an ache in the pit of my gut. I missed him terribly. I rolled over again, my eyes shut, and pictured myself in his arms.

His aroma clogged my senses, and I wondered if he had purposefully stayed in my bed to leave me pleading for him when I woke up. I still tasted his cum in the back of my throat, the saltiness of his skin, the sugary taste of my slick on his mouth when we kissed.

When I shifted, a small ache danced between my legs from the mind-blowing sex and losing my virginity. I never knew it could feel so incredible. I couldn't tell if it was me or my heat, but I craved more, more, more.

Inhaling deeply, I purred, then tugged the bedsheets and wrapped them around me. The closer I felt to him, the more the ache eased. I didn't understand it, but his musk was everything.

Licking my lips, they felt swollen from taking his big cock. I pictured his face as I sucked on him—his eyes rolled back, his pulse thundering, floating in heaven. I did that to him.

My body longed for him, craved for him to dominate me.

Trailing my hand down my body, my skin was burning hot to the touch, and spreading my legs beneath the blanket, I was drenched. I was so hot, so desperate for release, so eager for Shadow's cock. Maybe Aspen and Viper could join me and actually show interest in me. I glided my fingers over the

silkiness of my pussy, and a moan spilled past my lips, and my toes curled. One breast popped out from under the blanket, and the coolness of the air felt like a lover's tongue on my nipple.

My cry for more drove me to play with myself, remembering where Shadow had rubbed me to make me explode. It felt amazing but nothing like an Alpha's tongue.

A sudden knock came at the door.

I didn't have a chance to respond before it swung open, and Daniel stepped inside. Heat raced up my neck and over my cheeks, but he was smiling gently.

"Trinity, don't stop on my behalf. I heard you in the hallway. Your moans were like siren songs, and your aroused scent brought me to you. Please keep going. Show me how you're going to make yourself come." He shut the door behind him.

"You heard me in the hallway?" I gasped, embarrassed to death while drowning in Shadow's scent, my hand still between my legs.

"Maybe I can help," he suggested with a tight grin.

My stomach twisted as he stepped closer, something in his expression different today. He'd always been nothing but kind and helpful, but during my heat cycle, he made it clear I wasn't to come on to him until the Alphas agreed. I'd taken that as I wasn't his type, and the Alphas were, which was fine with me.

"I-I don't think I could do that," I murmured, sneaking my hand free. "It's okay." Tugging the blanket to my neck, I tried to appear semi-normal, although I was blushing like crazy.

"Your room smells like Shadow and your slick," he said nonchalantly.

I was confused if he meant it as a bad thing as he strode closer and sat on the side of the bed next to me, his eyes narrowing.

"I remember the first time I tasted him. I couldn't get his scent out of my head for a week, and for days afterward, I

woke up aroused.”

I blinked at him. Wait, did Shadow tell him about our time in the woods last night? It would make sense for him to come and check on me. These Alphas and their Beta seemed to share everything. I didn't have a problem with their relationship with Daniel since I was drawn to him as well, even as a Beta. It left me curious how he felt about it, seeing how strange he'd been behaving.

“The more time you spend with Alphas during your cycle, the more you'll crave them. The less time you spend, the greater it'll ache. If you need to, bring yourself relief when you can't stand the loneliness.”

His words struck me as odd. When Daniel touched my arm, he had a way of making me lower my defenses and make me feel he'd never judge me because of how turned-on I'd become.

He playfully tugged the blanket, but I held onto it with a death grip.

“Don't let the moment slip. Let me show you a few moves that will help.”

“You... you know how to help a girl? I just assumed...”

Shut the hell up, Trinity, before you dig yourself into a deeper hole.

He chuckled as his hands slid up my arm. A soothing warmth followed his touch and spread over my body. The earlier embarrassment faded, and I felt as though I could do anything in front of him.

“I bat for both teams, Trinity, and have had both as lovers.”

Of course, he would have. Look how gorgeous he was, how immaculately he always looked with his hair perfectly combed and off his face, clothes crisp that fitted him like a glove, and was that eyeliner on he wore? I wished I could be half as put together. Maybe I'd been wrong about him not being interested in me.

However, even if his chocolate scent had me salivating, I wasn't ready to masturbate in front of him.

"You can stay beneath the blanket if it's easier, but how about you try it again with my hand on you? You'll be amazed what a touch like mine can do to you."

A fresh surge of nerves rippled down my spine that I would even contemplate this. "I just wanted to ease the pain." Before I even realized I was doing it, I had the pillow against my chest, inhaling Shadow's scent.

As a moan spilled from my throat without intention, lustful fire rose through me. It had never left me, keeping me prisoner to its cravings,

Daniel pushed loose strands of my pink hair behind my ear. "Don't fight it, Trinity." His soft smile pulled at the corners of his eyes as his tender strokes on my cheek calmed my breaths. In turn, it accentuated the arousal burning in my veins.

Daniel's attention comforted me.

"Lie on your back and touch yourself," he cooed.

His fingers ran small circles across my shoulder and collarbone, so soothing, I could easily close my eyes... which I did as I laid back down. I ran my hand beneath my blanket and down my body, my touch just as sensitive as Daniel's. The earlier ache faded, replaced by the thumping of my racing heart and the intensity of every nerve in my body. Before I knew it, my fingers were dancing across the apex of my spread thighs, across the fire that tightened around me.

"Rub your clit, Omega," Daniel whispered in my ear. "Feel how your sweet pussy responds, your lips swelling. You're getting wetter, aren't you? Good. Rub your clit in circles... like this." He traced the pads of his fingers across the top of my clit in tight rings.

Closing my eyes, my fingers followed his movements. My legs spread open, my nipples hardening as his exhale swirled over my flesh, and my breaths were rushed. I didn't think I'd been at it long when I started throbbing on the inside.

“Are you picturing Shadow’s massive body over you, pressing your thighs wide apart, then slamming into you, holding you down beneath him? Or do you prefer taking him in your mouth, sucking on him like you’d give him everything you had to bring him pleasure and to remind him that without him, your heart would stop beating,” he whispered really close to my ear, his voice darker than I expected.

“The ache of him stretching you is so overwhelming, you don’t think you can take it anymore, but then he pushes into you farther, harder. At that moment, you realize your life can’t possibly continue without him.”

I gasped aloud, my thoughts barely coherent with how quickly I’d escalated. Daniel’s heavy breaths rushed over me, his chocolate scent strengthening. When an explosive climax burst through me, completely shuddering me to pieces.

A scream laced the back of my throat as I shook and arched my back, my thighs clenching as every inch of me pulsed. Orgasm crashed over me, again and again. Tensing all over, my cries flooded the room. It felt as though a long time passed before I collapsed back on the bed, heaving for breath, perspiring across my brow, and completely satisfied.

Opening my eyes, I couldn’t stop the smile stretching my lips at the release that uncoiled the tightness from the pit of my stomach. Even if for only a short time, I’d take it. I also noticed Daniel was standing by the bed with a strange smirk.

“Everything okay?” I asked, tugging the blanket over my chest. Floating on an orgasm, I was unaware my nipples had been exposed.

“Well, it seems my job here is done.” His words came out harsh, with a hint of bitterness, which was new for Daniel. “You’re lucky I stayed to help you out, you know, or you might still be at it.”

I reared back and sat up on the bed as he crossed the room toward the door.

“Did I miss something?” I tried to sound strong, but I was startled. Daniel had been nothing but generous to me, a

sweetheart.

“Call it a favor,” he responded, opening the door. “Peace out.” Walking out the door, he locked it behind him.

Completely stunned, a sense of anger rolled over me at his arrogance. Was he kidding?

“What the fuck, asshole!” I yelled, wanting him to hear me. “I never asked for your help,” I bellowed louder.

I’d foolishly believed he actually cared, but I sensed his jealousy. So, he miffed after Shadow told him we had sex last night? Of course, that had to be it. It made me even more furious that he’d pull that stunt. Clenching my jaw, I hated he made me trust him, then tried to make me embarrassed and useless. Whatever his problem, he was going to have to learn to accept that until I had my heat.

It looked as though I would be stuck at the mansion with temperamental Alphas and one very jealous Beta. If he pulled that crap again, I might start rubbing it in his face.

Shadow

“Daniel,” I called, then spotted him entering the kitchen, but he hadn’t heard me and kept on walking inside.

I strode in that direction and stepped into the enormous, long kitchen. Lofty windows flooded the room with sunlight, which glinted off the pots dangling over the island in the middle of the kitchen. The sink and the counter beneath the windows were spotless, telling me the maids had come and gone. Across the kitchen, Daniel was leaning on the fridge, holding the door open with one hand while the other reached inside.

“Have you been hiding from me?” I teased, strolling across the room.

Daniel casually turned around, holding a container filled with last night’s leftovers. A smile curled his lips as he tossed the container into the microwave and zapped it to heat.

“Didn’t realize you were looking for me. Figured you had your hands full.”

I ground my teeth. His offhand comment might have been light-humored, but behind it was the irritated Beta I’d encountered in the hallway last night.

“We should talk.” Moving to the fridge to grab a bottle of pop, I unscrewed the lid and gulped down half the sweetness that chilled my throat. “I know you were upset when you found me and Trinity last night in the corridor.”

“Nothing to talk about. I’m dandy.”

When I turned to him, his perfect mask had broken, and the ache in his eyes was there, plain as day.

“You are the Alpha of this pack, and I know you had to find an Omega. You three have been talking about it for ages.” He shrugged and twisted away from me, the way he did when he didn’t want to deal with a problem.

“It’s okay to feel jealous.” Setting down my drink, I placed a hand on his hip, my fingers holding him tight, and pushed my chest against his back. “I hope, over time, you’ll embrace Trinity into our pack. She is yours as she is ours, and we are all hers... if she’ll have us.”

Daniel sighed, and I wrapped my arms around his strong torso. Towering over him, I loved the way he leaned back against me and how he was strong yet vulnerable. He coiled his arms over mine, and I held him, well aware he needed the physical touch and the reminder we still loved him.

“You mean the world to me,” I purred in his ear. I felt the heat ripple off his body as I held him flush against me.

Breaking away from me, he pretended to check on the meal in the microwave.

“It’s so much more than a bit of jealousy, Shadow,” he finally said, his lips pursed, and when he met my gaze, his eyes glistened.

“Then tell me what that is.” I closed the distance between us, but he lifted his hand between us for me to stop.

He raised an eyebrow, his face straight, and his eyes narrowed. I squared my shoulders but just looked at him, holding back my irritation that we needed to have this conversation when I assumed all was okay.

“I feel as if I’ve been with you my entire life,” he murmured. “You always saw the best in me, supported me, loved me, even when your parents were cunts to my mom and me. You always reminded me that not everyone was an asshole. From the moment you kissed me behind the garden shed, I knew I’d give you my heart for eternity.”

“Daniel, my gorgeous Beta, no one can take that from us or change it,” I explained tenderly. My mind was whirling on how the fuck I could make him realize Trinity wasn’t his competition. His reaction was adorable but frustrating.

I had to ease into this with Daniel, who had always struggled with a need to belong somewhere. His father had abandoned him and his mother, which was part of the reason my parents took them in to help around the mansion. But my parents weren’t heroes in this picture. I’d once found my father trying to rape his mother but had never told him as it would destroy him. I threatened to tell my mother what I’d seen, which got me close to being tossed out of the family estate.

A few years later, after his mother passed away from a tragic traffic accident, Daniel and I moved into a place of our own. He meant the world to me and had always been my rock in this fucked up world.

“Trinity will enhance our pack, help us build our family with children. Your place is by our side. You know that. We’ve been together for so long. Remember what I told you long ago? That one day, I’d find my Omega and would share her with you if you wanted to? That hasn’t changed.”

His entire demeanor was one of distress. I hadn’t seen him this upset since his mother died. Silence hung in the tension-filled kitchen, becoming suffocating the longer neither of us spoke. It killed me to see him this upset.

“I tell myself the same thing,” Daniel finally said. “I adore Trinity because she is special, but last night when I found her giving you a blow job... something that’s special between us, I...” He paused and licked his lips nervously. “That was our thing. I saw the way she looked at you, Shadow, completely captivated... the way I looked at you when I first became smitten. I knew I could never leave your side, or I might die. She is falling for you hard, and I’m struggling with no longer being the center of your world.”

My chest felt as if it might have cracked in half as I moved over to him. Dragging him into my arms, I choked up, hearing the ache in his voice.

“Daniel, I adore how much love you have.” Cupping his cheeks, I forced his face up to me and kissed his pursed lips until he leaned into me for more. “I would move mountains to prove you belong to me. You are not leaving our family... now or ever, and if I can help it, neither is Trinity. I know it’s hard for you, as is compromise, but Daniel, I need your help to help prepare and get her through her heat cycle.”

“What if Viper won’t accept her into our pack? What if things don’t go as smoothly as you think?” A strange expression flared over his face, filled with a dark hope that Viper’s issues might give me a reason not to keep the Omega. My gut sunk at the jealousy burning through him.

“Then we will find a way to shape it into something that fits all five of us.”

He blinked at me, not a fan of my response, and wriggled out of my arms.

“Then what do you want me to do? Pretend I don’t want to punch the wall when I see your dick in her mouth?” Heaving for breath, he ran his hand through his hair, pulling it.

I sighed. “All I ask is to trust me and give it time. She joined us abruptly, and it threw things out of order, but remember when Aspen joined my pack, then Viper? You were uncertain about both of them, but they grew on you.”

His hands twitched where they were wrapped around his middle as his gaze moved around the kitchen, avoiding me.

“Let me make it better.” Stepping closer, my gaze lowered to his gorgeous lips. I stood close enough to kiss them and show him he would always be mine.

His hands were caught against my chest when I pressed forward. When his gaze lifted to meet mine, the top of his head reached my nose. Sometimes, I forgot, despite the confidence he exuded, the masculinity and sexuality he carried that was fucking hot as hell, he’d lost a lot in his life, and deep inside, he had a lot of insecurities I’d been trying to help him with.

The microwave beeped, and he quickly retreated to retrieve his meal, then grabbed a spoon and walked out of the kitchen.

That went fucking well. Shit!

I scrubbed a hand down my face, then strode out the back door into the yard and beneath the sun. Shaking my head, I walked into the yard, prepared for any battle headed my way. No matter what happened, I would find a way to make our new family a unit that clicked and fucking accepted one another.

Ten

Q

VIPER

*W*e should just send the Omega to the cabin in the woods.

The thought twisted in my mind, and my gut hardened, knowing Aspen and Shadow had set their sights on keeping her, regardless of the dangers her presence posed to us. Sure, she'd affected me—my cock had been so hard in the car, I had blue balls by the time I got back to my room—but that didn't mean we should risk everything to bond with her.

Exhaling loudly, I left the mansion and strolled around the grounds. I'd learned long ago, fresh air cleared my head and calmed me the hell down.

The night we arrived home with the Omega, Aspen and I had gone out to meet with clients. Returning last night, it seemed she had already caused trouble. Shadow and Daniel were acting strange around each other. Shadow's scent was mingled with hers, and when he spoke of her, I noted the spark in his eyes and the slightly lower octave of his voice. Daniel just growled and walked away.

I shouldn't be drawn to the Omega. Years ago, I found my Omega, then lost her. My chest constricting, I shook away the ache and memories I promised myself I'd leave behind. Fuck, I had, but with Trinity here, the past had risen its ugly head again.

Yet I'd just finished standing outside Trinity's door for the past hour, convincing myself not to barge inside. I hadn't decided what I intended to do, but her scent called to me. Her

sweet perfume was driving me mad. I wanted her—wanted to own her and drive my knot into her until I couldn't stand.

Grunting under my breath, I paced. For years, I'd been with local Beta females to curb my sexual appetite—no knotting, no heat—short-term relationships, which was all I sought. Nothing serious. Nothing with baggage. I'd carried enough for the entire fucking city. The arrival of the Omega had changed the energy in the air, and my attention was constantly on her.

Before her, Aspen had kept to himself mostly, while Shadow had Daniel. That would be an interesting dynamic to watch. Daniel could be a possessive sonofabitch Beta about his loverboy. We once had to fire a male servant because Daniel had caught him eyeing Shadow. I'd sat on the couch with my popcorn and watched the fireworks unfolding, enjoying it because it wasn't me in the middle of the shitfight.

The night air around me grew warmer than it had been in a while, which didn't help lighten my mood. Frogs sang their mating song and started a thump in my head, perilously close to the rhythm of the frogs' song. A breeze blew through the tall pine trees at the back property line, softening the sound of the frogs to something that could be tolerated.

I walked the length of the backyard twice, watching the moon rise.

Throughout the compound, the Omega's perfume permeated the walls and filled my senses, even on the top floor. Last night, my dreams had been filled with her gorgeous face, her curvy body, and her moans. I woke up in a sweat, overheated, and with a raging hard-on that wouldn't go down, even when I thought about things I hated, like custard and sushi.

Normally, I didn't have to tame my thoughts. I was a damn Alpha, even if my mother was a Beta. I could do whatever I desired, with few restrictions. I could fuck whoever I wanted and destroy anybody who crossed me.

What maddened me more was Shadow seemed more concerned about helping the Omega about to go into heat than

the noose hanging over all our heads once her owners found the stolen Omega with us.

A sudden gust of air blew over me, bringing with it the heady scent of orange blossoms. My pulse raced in response as my adrenaline spiked.

Twisting around, I spotted the Omega standing by the pool, staring into the rippling water. The faint underwater lights shining up from the pool were bright enough to reveal the sweat on her face and the flush across her neck.

Locked in place, I watched her from the shadows. The balmy breeze swished through her pale pink hair and ruffled the white tee she wore, which fell halfway down her bare legs. In a heartbeat, she dragged her top up and over her head before dumping it on the wooden deck at her feet.

My heartbeat quickened, and the muscles in my arms bulged with desperation to take her into my embrace. Breaths sped up, my senses sparked with lust, and my cock twitched in my pants.

Every inch of me snapped to attention.

I knew she'd be beautiful with her clothes off, and even standing with her back to me, I was enthralled.

Such beauty—long, toned legs, thick hips that were a hallmark of an Omega, and a slim waist. Her ass was so firm and fucking gorgeous. I imagined my hands on her cheeks, pulling them apart as I slid my cock between them. Then I'd make her beg for more, and only when she was desperate and couldn't bare another breath, I'd fuck her brains out.

The sight of her nudity hardened my cock, my skin buzzing with an overwhelming need to possess her.

Fuck, her presence out here was so erotic.

When she twisted around, her face jerking up toward the area where I reclined against the tree, I thought she might have seen me. Her nostrils flared, making me wonder if she'd smelled my scent.

I inhaled the sight of her. Her busty breasts, tipped with rosy nipples, had me licking my lips. Her torso dipped to a tiny waist and a triangle of pink pubic hair. I bet that freaked her out.

She turned back around and stepped into the pool, then dove beneath the surface and emerged from the depths at the other end, her pink hair slicked back from her face. When She sighed with what sounded like relief, I assumed she'd sought out the pool to combat the fever that raged within her.

The Omega swam a few laps before she paused at the built-in steps and settled on the second one. Her nipples tightened, and her moan sang on the breeze. Was she distressed, or was it desire that roiled through her?

I received my answer when her hands moved down to her full breasts and her fingers clamped on her nipples. She let out a loud groan, so full of carnal longing, I nearly stepped out of the shadows. Her hand glided between her legs, still hidden by the water, but I saw her knees moving.

I wanted to help her, to run my fingers along her dripping entrance, through her damp folds until I found her clit. I wanted to taste every inch of her on my tongue and drink her slick.

"Fuck," I groaned as softly as I could, freeing my cock with a push of my hand along the zipper and unclasping the button with the other. Pulling out my thick length, I fisted it, then palmed it and started jerking off.

I inhaled sharply when her hips lurched up, and she cried out, her lips opening as her head came forward, her eyes staring into the darkness. She had to smell my scent now, had to know I was staring at her, that I was gazing at her naked body with pure lust.

I'd told myself I didn't need her, but the moment she stripped, I was lost. As much as I yearned to go over there and have her sit on my cock, to show her real relief, I held back and jerked off to sate the fucking starved beast inside me.

The Omega cried out again as her fingers worked overtime between her legs. Her free hand climbed up her neck until her fingers reached her lips. She sucked on the middle finger, pulling a groan out of me that was louder than intended, but that didn't stop her. As if she heard me, it drove her on.

She added another finger to her mouth before she brought them down to her nipple, teasing the hard peak with her slick fingers. Did she imagine a mouth there? Maybe two mouths?

Licking dry lips, I wanted my mouth around her nipple, around the clit she teased. Her young face, a mask of desire, fell out of my sight again, but her back arched to press her breasts higher into the air, begging for attention. She made a keening sound, almost imperceptible.

She wasn't as artful as some of the women in the clubs I'd been to over the years, but what she lacked in experience, she made up for with real hunger, uncontrolled movements, and the sweetest sounds of need and pleasure I'd ever heard. The young woman was purely the most seductive female I'd ever seen.

I pictured taking every single part of her until she cried out with climax after climax.

Growling as my arousal built, the pressure at the base of my cock close to blowing, I imagined burying myself between her thighs, deep inside of her hungry core, knotting her until she cried for me to stop.

The Omega sucked in a strangled breath, then her body was still.

Shaking as my orgasm built like a rocket readying for takeoff, I never took my eyes off her, watching her hips move again, mimicking the act she wanted the most.

Fuck, she was beautiful.

My seed spilled, shooting outward, pulse after pulse. I shuddered, the sensation fucking incredible as I pumped out more and more. Thing about Alphas was the sheer mass of cum we produced, enough to fill an Omega for breeding and then some.

Staring at her and wanking off didn't come close to satisfying the deep-rooted hunger clawing through me. A shiver ran up my spine as the sensation faded, leaving me lethargic, feeling the emptiness of not having her over me, beside me, anywhere near me.

I wanted her.

Could not deny it.

I had to have her.

Completely spent, I slammed back against the tree, cock in hand, my emotions a complete mess. I told myself I wouldn't bond with another Omega, that I'd had my chance with Lillian five years ago. But after I lost her, I lost myself hard.

But apparently I still knew shit all, as I balanced on the edge of despair about Trinity. I knew nothing about her, but I wanted to. My weakening control around her scared the shit out of me. It hadn't occurred to me until now just how much she affected me. I'd forgotten the animalistic urges between Alphas and Omegas completely ruled us.

So, what the fuck would it be like if I touched her?

Tucking myself back into my pants, I glanced over at the Omega, who was panting and gasping as she hurried out of the pool. She snatched her top and slid it over her body, despite being wet. It clung to her delicious body, and my cock throbbed once more at the sight. Swallowing hard, the languor that had flowed through me was gone in a rush.

So, how long before I really lost control?

Eleven

8

TRINITY

I woke up to the morning sun drenching my room, feeling lucid.

Viper was the first thing on my mind, along with the knowledge he'd been watching me down by the pool the previous night.

I'd sensed him as I inhaled his scent from deeper in the yard, but it didn't make me want to hide my passion... quite the opposite. Even now, a tingle ignited between my legs at the memory. Who would have thought that being watched turned me on so much, when the waves of heat came at me, desperation took on a different meaning.

His musky and pumpkin scent overwhelmed me as I pictured his fingers tracing my body, his cock pressing into me.

It was ridiculous to crave an Alpha who made it clear he didn't want me at the mansion, yet my Omega side didn't seem to care. When arousal came over me, I was lost to the heat. I tensed, thinking about how little control I had.

Pushing those thoughts aside, I showered, dried off, then wrapped a towel around my body and twisted my hair up in another towel.

Someone knocked on the bedroom door, then an older woman entered, carrying a tray of food and a bulging shopping bag. She wore her greying hair in a blue floral scarf pushed off her face. It matched her simple dress, which fell to her knees and cinched at her waist with a thin belt, with the rest loose

around her thin frame. I could tell by her sweet raspberry scent she was an Omega, too.

“Morning,” she chirped as she set down the tray with pancakes and toast, which left me salivating at how good they smelled. “We haven’t met.” Turning to face me, she stepped closer and set the bag on the bed. “I’m Thelma, Shane’s grandmother.”

“Shane?” I murmured, my mind circling with the names I’d learned recently and if I’d forgotten someone.

“The boy goes by Shadow now, but to me, he’ll always be Shane. You know, I used to babysit him. His father had little patience for children.”

“Nice to meet you. Good to know there’s another Omega in the mansion and not just me.” My smile felt lopsided as awkwardness came over me.

She rubbed my arms, her smiling eyes warming me. “Well, someone needs to take care of the boys in the house... and now you.” Her words were playful. “Now, I brought you breakfast for your big day,” she sing-songed, glancing over the tray of pancakes.

“I have a big day?” I blinked at her.

“You’ll find out after you eat something. You need the energy for your heat cycles.”

Her gaze shone a pale gray, reminding me of Shadow’s eyes. I could see the family resemblance in the shape of his almond eyes and the bridge of his nose.

I turned to the tray of food eagerly, ravenous for food, then looked at the bag she left on the bed.

“I went shopping for some clothes while you’re staying with us. It’s been so long since I’ve had a female in the house. Go ahead and have a look.” She laughed loudly, and I enjoyed how confident she was. I would have loved to grow up with a mother like her.

“New clothes?” My eyes might have been teary. I rapidly closed the distance to my bed in seconds, pawing through the

bag of clothes, including underwear and even bras. Sighing with a strange relief, I lifted my gaze to her, certain I was about to burst out crying. “Thank you so much.” I sniffled, blinking back the tears as I rushed over and hugged her. She smelled of fire and baked roasts

She patted my back gently. “I need to ensure you are comfortable here with us and to know you are safe.”

“I didn’t know what to expect, but this is a wonderful surprise. No one’s ever bought me a huge bag of clothes before.”

Her expression was kind, age lines deepening at the corners of her eyes, and she tilted her head, studying me. “Not even your mother?”

I shook my head and discreetly wiped away the one tear that escaped from the corner of my eye. “As far as I’m concerned, I don’t have one, seeing I don’t even remember her.” Retreating to the bed, I dug into the bag, excitement bubbling across my stomach. “This means everything to me. Thank you. In fact, I can’t recall the last time I got brand-new clothes,” I murmured mostly to myself. When I pulled out a pair of skin-tight jeans, I might have squealed. “You’re going to laugh at me, but I have never owned a new pair of jeans.” Next, I lifted a cute white off-the-shoulder top with tiny golden buttons down the front. I’d seen females on TV shows wearing these kinds of clothes, which contrasted greatly with the usual baggy pants and loose tops we had to wear at the Bakewell Institute for Girls.

Thelma stepped up alongside me, her hand on my shoulder, squeezing lightly. “You deserve only the best.”

Lowering the top into the bag, I twisted around to Shadow’s grandma.

“You’re really nice to me. I’m not used to it.” Lowering my gaze, there was a strange pull to the older woman, something motherly. Somehow, I knew she only had my best interest at heart. At the same time, I’d believed Daniel cared, but then he started acting all strange.

“I know how it feels. When I was about your age, I went into my heat at a carnival with my friends. Of course, our parents were there because going out alone was even more restricted back in the day than it is now. Anyway, I digress. The place was swarming with Alphas, and that’s when my life as I’d known it ended.” She breathed heavily, and her shoulders sagged.

“What happened? I can’t even imagine how terrified you would have been.” Back at the Glass Slipper Ball, I was scared out of my mind, crying, and an utter mess.

“My mother tried to protect me, ushering me back to the family car, but we barely made it a few steps before we were bombarded by Alphas, who had turned feral to get their hands on me. The only reason I wasn’t torn apart by the hungry men was the most powerful mafia boss of the city was there, and he stepped in to collect me in his arms. The rest of the Alphas backed away, terrified. Then he turned to my parents and said, ‘My son will take good care of her.’ That was the last time I saw my parents until I paid my respects at their funeral.” Her lips pursed, and she shrugged it away as though too much time had passed to feel the ache of being taken from her family so abruptly.

“So, wait, you mated into the mafia family of our city? Is it the Matteis or the Shchavlev family? And does that make Shadow part of the mafia?” I might have talked too fast at that moment because we’d all heard the stories broadcast on the news channels about the two Families dominating our city of Liberty, the constant deaths, the assassinations. And so many times, the fights had everything to do with the two mafia families trading Omegas. Rumors seemed to imply they controlled the authorities as well, but to discover Shadow was related to them left me shaking. I wasn’t sure how to feel except super paranoid.

“He led the Matteis, an Italian family who reported to the Godfather back in their homeland,” Thelma explained, scooping the clothes out of the bag and folding them on the bed. “My dear Alpha husband had been the kindest I’d known, except he wasn’t ever strong enough for his father, and after

years of living under his shadow, he abandoned his family. We moved away once I fell pregnant.” She started chuckling, but there was a strain on her face.

“Oh, that’s enough reminiscing for today of my miserable life. It’s a past I left behind, and I lost so much to the Matteis family, I don’t want to remember them.” The hurt in her gray eyes cinched in around me.

“I’m so sorry for what you went through.” I reached over and placed my hand on her arm. Her presence reminded me so much of my friends, and at that moment, I missed them terribly. My chest ached for her, for me, for my friends.

Thelma’s strong smile revealed the hardship and sorrow painted on her face. As much as I’d love to listen to her speak for hours and discover what happened to her husband and where Shadow’s parents were, I wouldn’t pry.

“All I have left is my grandson, and I want him to make the right decision, to find the kind of happiness I lost.” She turned to face me and tucked my pink hair behind my ears.

I stared at this woman who brought emotions out of me about the family who rejected and dumped me at the Bakewell Institute for Girls. I craved nothing more than to one day have a family of my own.

“And you, my dear, need to speak up for what you need from the Alphas. Sometimes, they can get in their own way by overthinking a situation. It sounds like you deserve a bright future, which my grandson can provide once he fixes a few things in his life.”

My throat thickened, and another tear rolled down my cheek while my head pulsed. Those were the kindest words I’d ever received. What did Shadow have to fix?

She wiped away my tear with a tender touch.

“Now, eat up because you have a big day ahead of you. Remember, you still have time before you go into full heat, so use the time to get to know the Alphas since they will be the only ones who can help you when your heat comes.”

“Do I? How can you tell?” I met her gaze as my chest tightened. “How long do I have?”

“Your periods of calm get shorter. Usually, cycles don’t last more than a month.”

I nodded, thinking I’d be stuck here for a month then, and perhaps it wasn’t such a bad thing until I got through my first heat. The thought brought with it the image of my time with Shadow. I’d rather have him help me through this than someone else. The other two Alphas felt distant to me, and Daniel, well, I didn’t know what was going on between us.

“I appreciate it.”

“You don’t know much about being an Omega, do you?” She pinched her lips to the side and folded the bag.

“Not really. I’m kind of fumbling my way through it.” My lopsided grin had Thelma sighing with a pitiful expression.

“It’s okay, dear. I’ll be here to help you. Now, I must go before the maid burns down the place. She’s a Beta and great at following orders, but she couldn’t find her way around the kitchen if I gave her a map.” With a small nod, Thelma strolled out of my room, closing the door behind her but not locking it.

I decided then that I liked her a lot. My mind ran over everything she’d told me. My gaze, on the other hand, swept to the plate of pancakes coated in maple syrup she’d left on the small corner table. I wasted no time collecting the fork and digging in.

I was used to bland food. At the Institute, Ms. Bakewell allowed us treats like this dish, but it always tasted bland because she only ordered enough ingredients to make half of what the cooks needed, so they had to spread it out as much as they could. Thelma, Shadow’s grandma, seemed to be unhampered by that restriction. The first mouthful had me moaning as the sweetness spread over my tongue, and the fluffiness of the French Toast melted on my tongue. This was a blissful slice of heaven.

I'd finished the toast and was working on my orange juice as I eyed the folded clothes, realizing I was still wrapped in a towel. Before I knew it, I dropped it and grabbed a white thong, pulling on, then a simple lace bra that fit perfectly. I ran my fingers over the fancy fabric that pushed up my breasts. A girl could get used to such luxury. All my previous panties and bras had been standard white without a hint of lace.

Was it crazy that such a little thing as a set of lacey bra and undies made me happy?

In total, Thelma had brought me four outfits and a pair of simple slip-on white sandals. I chose the sleeveless shift dress made of the softest white fabric, which gently followed my curves, falling midway down my thighs.

When someone knocked on the door, I lifted my head, half expecting them to just walk in since everyone had been doing that.

"Come in," I finally said when they didn't barge in.

Aspen strolled in, a large, blond, godlike Alpha with wide broad shoulders and chest broad and a square jawline covered in a thin layer of light growth. Roguish and charming with a bright grin, the Alpha had been the one who carried me from the ball. He stood in my room with tranquil blue eyes and hair hanging just over his shoulders and sitting messily around his face.

He was breathtaking.

My pulse thumped loudly, and I wouldn't be surprised if he heard it. The last person I expected was him, considering he hadn't visited me since we arrived from the ball nights ago.

"Hello, little Omega. I guess we haven't properly met unless you call being shoved into a car and rushing away from the ball an introduction." His face was illuminated by his humor and small chuckle, though beneath his teasing voice, he was being genuine. I remembered his kindness in the car when the other Alpha, Viper, had been a real dick.

"I'm Aspen, and I would have come to you earlier, but that night of the ball, Viper and I had rushed out of the city for a

job. But we're back home now, and well..." He wiped the back of his hand across his mouth. "I intend to make up for lost time."

He eyed me head to toe, his expression calm, though I caught the quickening of his breaths when he studied me.

"You look angelic in all white. Beautiful. Almost virginal."

I broke out laughing.

"Well, if you're here hoping to find an Omega to claim, we're fresh out of virgins." Twisting around and moving to put the clothes in the cupboard, I wasn't sure why it got on my nerves that he hadn't come to see me until now, but seeing him had my gut all knotted up.

The guy had no obligation to me, and he'd been out of town, yet my heat was rising along with a drama queen who demanded he should have been there for me. Talk about crazy. I barely knew the Alpha, and I behaved like we'd been together for months.

Footfalls closed in behind me, and I felt his large body behind me, the heat pouring from him, although he didn't touch me.

"I understand I fucked up and should have been by your side from the very beginning to help with your pain. I can't take back the time, but I can make up for it."

I turned around, and he stood so impossibly close, my breasts rubbed against him in the process. Desire erupted inside me so fast, the room spun, and his breath quickened.

"I don't know why I'm upset with you. You don't owe me anything," I murmured, my cheeks heating up. I stepped away from him before I begged him to kiss me. The need in me was staggering.

He gently took my hand, sending a jolt of energy racing up my arm and down my spine.

"That's where you're wrong," he explained. "That night at the ball when you had your first heat cycle, we were the first Alphas who connected with you, which semi-marked you to us

three. It's not concrete, but just being in the same room will get our juices running, you could say." He cocked an eyebrow, and his expression turned mischievous.

"So, you're saying if another Alpha walked into the room with me now, I wouldn't feel the need to climb him like a tree?"

The smile curling his lips deepened.

My thighs pressed together, and a light purr grazed my throat.

Geez, girl, control yourself.

"Correct."

He moved after me as I backed away. My pulse raced faster, and he kept coming until my back hit the wall. Leaning an elbow on the wall over my shoulder, the other hand casually tucked into the pocket of his jeans.

"But when any of the three Alphas under this roof come anywhere near you, you'll be desperate to climb us like a tree. And just for the record, I can't wait for you to do that to me."

He didn't touch me but seemed content staring at me, waiting for me to give in. No matter how we spun these dances of desires, we all knew the truth of where we'd end up. I was an Omega with an unbearable need to be fucked by these Alphas who wanted nothing more than to breed me.

I knew that and had fought it my whole life, but with my transformation, I'd lost all control of my body and urges. My skin rippled with goosebumps from the heat pouring off him and how I needed him to claim me to help break the heat cycles as they came over me. What made it worse was these men were well aware of my dependency on them, and I hated losing the last threads of freedom I had, along with every bit of my pride. Yet the longer he stared at me, the more desire skipped over my skin.

"Maybe the solution is to keep our distance."

"That's not going to work." He shook his head. "I don't want to upset you again for not being there for you. There's

really only one solution, isn't there, little Omega?"

My spine arched, my breasts pushing outward, while my cheeks blushed feverishly at how obvious I was at what I longed for him to say.

"I will give you the world if you'd let me." His breathing sped up, and I couldn't ignore his struggle. "We're going to start with a surprise I have for you. Well, if you're up to it. I'd like to take you out."

"Oh, you want to leave this room instead of it just being us?" I could have just died at that moment. My mouth had turned into a sex-starved monster. "I-I mean out of the house and this compound and..."

Just stop talking now.

His chuckling didn't help.

"Ready to go now?" Taking my hand, his touch ignited a zap of fire in my chest, opening me up to him. He glanced at me, and his shoulders reared back as if he'd felt it as well. The connection—or whatever we had—made this Alpha call to me.

Blinking up at this gorgeous, powerful man, who might be strong enough to carry a mountain on his shoulders, warmth raced up my neck and face at his touch.

Whatever you do, don't ask him to stay in the room all day so he can fuck you like rabbits do.

Keeping my mouth clamped shut, I nodded while my nerve endings were popping with a terrible hankering for a huge mountain man.

"Come on, let's get going before you start climbing me, then we're going nowhere." Aspen led me out of the bedroom and down the stairs so fast, I could barely keep up with him. If he hadn't been holding my hand, I would have been lagging way behind, considering one of his long strides equaled two of mine.

We passed a bunch of wooden crates near the back door, which had no markings on them, and while I had every

intention of asking Aspen what they were, I completely forgot about them the moment I stepped out of the back door.

My jaw dropped as I looked at the yard.

Right in front of us towered a multicolored hot air balloon.

“Whoa! Is that for us? And you were serious. We’re leaving the compound? It’s safe, right?”

“You’re always safe with me,” he assured, already dragging me across the lawn to where a female, I assumed a Beta, stood near the basket, her head lowered in respect to Aspen.

He lifted me into the rectangular basket, which was big enough to hold six adults. There was a leather bench-like seat on one end and two metal cylinders on the other end.

Aspen climbed in and fiddled with the burner that blew into the mouth of the balloon, and its heat slightly flared across my face, then it roared loudly, making my ears ring.

Turning around, I stared at the yard, lost for words. I hadn’t expected this—not in a million years. Next thing I knew, we were moving upward. Panic shooting through me, I grabbed the edge of the wicker basket. Frantically, I turned to Aspen, who was working the burner, the blaring sound only adding to my distress that we were about to float into the air, and I might die if we fell.

“You’ve done this before, right?” I pasted myself to the edge of the basket, watching the yard grow smaller beneath us. I had no reason beforehand to think I suffered from a fear of heights, but as we soared above the tree line, my breaths were coming out as gasps.

“A couple of times. It’s pretty simple,” Aspen explained, glancing from me to the basket and down to the ground. “It’s super simple. Hot air helps us rise, and cool air will have us slowly descend.”

I kept looking over the edge, seeing how I wouldn’t survive such a fall. We were too high. I saw the chimney on the roof of the mansion and even the roof vents. Beyond the compound walls, I realized the place was almost in the middle

of nowhere. A road wove away from the gate past open woodland without a house in sight... at least not yet. And I didn't want to go higher to find out, especially when the world seemed to spin around me.

"I think we're high enough now. You can stop. This is the perfect spot. Oh, look, how lovely. Yep, okay, let's go back down." My stomach lurched each time I glanced down, and my chest tightened. A knot formed in my stomach too, but I squelched it with a deep breath.

"You alright?" Aspen called as he operated the balloon.

"Fine," I said, trying not to sound afraid. "Tell me about yourself, Aspen." Maybe if he talked, I might be able to get through the trip. I quickly sat down to avoid looking over the edge any longer.

"What do you want to know?" He came to sit beside me, his presence calming me a little.

"Do you have a family?" I asked and regretted it. I'd grown up in at Bakewell Institute for Girls and knew not everyone had a family.

"Yeah, well, I did. I had an older brother once." He looked away, and I caught what he'd actually said.

"Once?" I asked, my eyebrows up.

"Uh, there was an accident during a fight, and things went really bad." He didn't elaborate but stared out at the cloudless sky around us, and it hurt me to see him in agony.

We sat in silence, and I placed my hand on his, letting him know I was there. I didn't understand the conditions under which his brother didn't survive the fight.

"I'm sorry that happened," I finally murmured, feeling the pain washing off him in waves, his masculine scent faint, almost gone completely. "Aspen, I wish..."

"You wish what, Trinity?" He looked back at me, his brow furrowed and his voice dark. "I've wished a million times for one thing, and it's never happened. I've told myself we were

better off living for those that can't, but I haven't managed it yet, just like I failed my brother.”

Silence pulsed between us, then he shook himself and exhaled loudly.

“That went south fast, didn't it? Sorry, little Omega, for being a downer. I'm good at fucking things up, but we're going to fix this. I didn't bring you out here to bring you down. Quite the opposite.”

I gave him a heartfelt smile, and while the sense of grief evaporated, I understood he'd learned how to hide it away. I could see the traces of it lingering in his eyes and felt something new in my chest, something that could be admiration... or adoration. Maybe a little of both, I decided as I leaned against him.

That was exactly when the balloon lurched, and it felt like we were dropping out of the sky.

I screamed.

Twelve

ℒ

ASPEN

I jolted to my feet as the balloon lurched, cursing internally for the bump in the moment I'd been sharing with Trinity.

I hadn't meant to open up to her so completely, but I couldn't stop the words from flowing once they'd started, and it was fucking ridiculous how great it felt.

Getting the balloon back under control, accounting for the sudden gust of wind that made it appear worse than it had appeared, I glanced down at Trinity.

She was huddled in the corner of the bench, her face blanched. Hell, I'd scared her.

"You alright?" I moved down to kneel in front of her. "It's fine, just a little bump."

"It's okay. I'm okay," she said as if it didn't matter, but even I could hear the strangle of fear in her voice and see the wildness of her gaze and the white of her knuckles from how hard she gripped the seat beneath her.

My heart thumped so hard, it felt like my ribs rattled in my chest. I'd fucked up, just like I did with most things.

She reached for me, clawed at my shirt, and leaned into me as I took her into my arms.

"What's going on?"

"I think I'm terrified of heights." The whispered words came out with clear shame.

“Why didn’t you tell me? I’ll take us down.” I started to get up, but she clung to me, her fear making her perfume fill the air. Fuck, I wanted her.

I felt guilty about that, too, but I couldn’t help it any more than she could help being afraid. She was beautiful, yes, desirable, and so fucking adorable, with the face of an angel and the body that didn’t quit, but it was also how beautiful she was as a person. She was obviously brave, strong-willed, and smart. She’d managed to outwit all of us so far and hadn’t revealed a thing about where she came from. Most Omegas in an Alpha’s presence were eager to tell them every secret they guarded without a second thought, but not Trinity. Something was very different about her.

“You’re going to laugh at this, but I didn’t know I was scared of heights until we got up here.”

“I would never laugh at you.” I cupped her face, running my thumbs under her eyes, catching the stray tears. “You’re safe with me. Okay, little Omega?”

“Aspen,” she gasped my name as an inferno burned from her body into mine. “Before the heat comes back, I want you to know. I really enjoyed just talking to you, being in your company, and I loved that you brought me up here, getting me out of the mansion and doing something other than being inside. I’ve done that so much of my life at the institute that I wanted to die. To be up here has my heart beating fast with excitement, even if I’m scared to death of falling.” Her face looked clammy, her eyes wide, and her fingers were tight around my shirt.

She spoke fast, so much so, I doubt she even realized she’d slipped and said something she probably hadn’t intended. Institute... so she’d come from one of those, not a family, which just made our search less a needle in a haystack. Sure, there were hundreds of institutes dealing with Omegas in our city, not to mention those outside the city, which she could have come from as well, but a clue was a step forward.

She kissed me then, and even though I’d promised not to touch her, not to put my dick in her today, I couldn’t stop her. I

longed to taste her sweet lips too much, to feel the slide of her tongue along mine more than I could bear.

“Give me one sec,” I whispered, painfully dragging myself from her as I quickly moved to the propane tank and gradually opened the metering valve to help keep us at the same height for a bit lower and not lower too fast.

Then shutting that off once more, I practically threw myself back next to Trinity. My ass barely hit the seat before she pressed herself against me, and the intensity of her slick was overwhelming. Her sugary perfume fogged my brain, making my cock tent in my pants as her heat wave flared at the perfect time when it was just the two of us.

Dragging her onto my lap, a moan rumbled in my chest while she purred, the sound so animalistic, so fucking sexy.

She shifted and pushed a leg over my lap, straddling me, her beautiful legs open, but I didn't think she was aware of just how much she revealed to me. I could see the white of her lace underwear, the moist fabric, and the pink of her hair beneath it, and a growl ripped out of me.

She licked her lips, inviting me to do so much more than a kiss, as her legs tightened around my waist. Her blue eyes glinted in the sunlight, begging me to plunge myself into her, to knot her. To lose everything I was, and could be, deep inside of her.

I hated to break the promise to myself, but who was I kidding? I was beyond rescue. Trinity in my lap, spread, her slick in my nostrils, completely undid me. Her orange blossom scent swam in my head, and the way she tasted like freshly squeezed oranges coated the back of my throat.

My hands dug into the softness of her round ass, and I ached to strip her dress away. Instead, I drove it up over her hips and ran my hands down the bare skin of her thighs, my fingers tracing the thin lace thong she wore.

Her gaze widened as I lowered my hand to between her legs, but she didn't push me away.

“Tell me, is this how you like me to touch you?” Tracing her bikini and the slick coating her skin with the pads of my fingertips, the urgency to slide into her pumped through me, going all the way down my shaft. Heat radiated from her, leaving me feeling as though every inch of me was on fire.

“Is that what you want to hear?” she teased, her breaths quickening, her chest arching toward me. “For me to beg you to rut me, to take me?”

Moving one of my hands to her breast, I squeezed the tight nub, coaxing a moan from the Omega.

“You’ll be a good girl for me, won’t you? Spread for me and plead for me to take the pain away?” My cock throbbed when her body shuddered at my words, and I rewarded her by tracing the back of my fingers across the sweet little pussy, desperate to rip away the fabric between us.

“And if I don’t?” Her back arched.

I leaned in closer, my mouth on her neck, her scent so strong, it left me heady, while her hips rocked on my lap, grinding herself on my growing cock. A raw hunger gripped me.

“Is that what you really want, little Omega? Or do you want to be my good girl? I’ll reward you, but if you’re bad... well, you might be surprised to find yourself leaning over my lap with a gorgeous red ass.” The flirty talk was driving me mad with need. I could tell she fought her instincts, attempting to appear as though she had control. I almost laughed out loud at how wrong she was.

When I slid my fingers under the elastic of her thong at her bikini line, she made keening sounds and cried out.

“Tell me this is what you want, little Omega,” I whispered in her ear, sucking the hoop in her earlobe into my mouth.

Shivering, her hands gripped my shoulders, her body pushing and shoving against my fingers, grazing her swollen pussy lips.

Completely drenched—I fucking loved her this way. The shock waves of arousal hardened my cock. When I slid a

finger into her, those gorgeous features froze as if she couldn't believe how quickly I pushed into her.

“So, tell me what you want?” I teased. “And I'll take such good care of you.”

She chewed the corner of her lower lip, rocking her hips, riding my finger. Slick dripped down my hand from her arousal, and I craved to shove her onto her back and plunge into her, slamming into her in every conceivable position in the Kama Sutra.

I pulled out of her, and she protested, her breathing heavy now, her shoulders curved forward. My cock hurt, the building tension strangling me, yet I lifted her off me and set her on the bench.

When I got up, she moaned.

“What are you doing?”

“Are you begging me?” I asked over my shoulder as I stood, and she was pouting. Fuck me, but she was so stunning, so hungry. Her hand slid between her thighs.

“No touching, dear.”

Her brow furrowed, and I quickly looked over the side to see we floated not too far from the house and over a field, though we'd lowered, so with several quick bursts of flames into the balloon, I had us rising higher, then turned back to my Omega.

“Stop being a prick, Aspen.” She sat there, her hands under her skirt, her slick in my nostrils, and she was killing me.

“So you give in to me?” I lay my hands over my belt, her gaze following my hands.

“Yes, I submit.” She moaned louder, her breath stuttering. “Please.”

Moving with the speed of the wind at her plea, knowing I'd pushed her too far, our mouths clashed, and we kissed with fever as my cock pulsed. I was aware that I moved, aware I knelt in front of her as if worshipping her. I was aware I kissed a path up her thigh, inhaling the smell of her skin and her

slick, but I couldn't stop myself. My body had taken over, and my actions were driven by pure addiction, unsure how I'd ever come back for it.

I worked her thong off, rolling it down her legs.

"I'm done pretending I can control myself around you." I stared up into her eyes to make sure she knew I meant it. Her lips were parted with absolute lust.

Kissing up her spreading thighs, my tongue thrust into her drenched pussy.

The taste of her slick exploded on my tongue. The sweetest, most wonderful taste I'd ever experienced turned my head into a beehive of pleasure. Dragging her tighter against my face, I devoured the slick that coated my tongue. Filling my mouth as I stroked her folds, I cleaned up what I could before I moved up to the magic part of her that would undo us both. Her clit was easy to find, driven to arousal.

"Do it, Aspen. Make it stop, oh please, make the ache stop," she begged, which did little to control my raging desire. Her plea, the way she gasped it so prettily, made my right hand move to unleash my cock from my pants.

I was rigid and hard in my hand, throbbing in a way I've never throbbed, needing my Omega, but I had enough sense not to take it that far, not to break my vow completely. I held back, my hand stroking my thick cock, as I teased her pert clit with my tongue.

"That's it, Aspen. Oh fuck, that's so good," Trinity panted.

Glancing up, her fingers were plucking at nipples visible through her dress, and her face was a mask of pleasure. I hummed a growl of satisfaction against her soaking skin.

Her slick poured from her, a sign she was ready to take me, to be knotted, to be rutted.

I shifted slightly, adjusting my position so I could stroke my cock more freely. She ran her hand through my hair, pulling me closer, and I loved her dominant side. I wasn't leaving her clit, not until she exploded on my face. Sucking the little bud harder, I stroked it with my tongue, learning

exactly what made her moan, what made her shiver, what made her hips jerk up in a rhythm I could barely keep pace with. Trinity's hips jerked against my face as I settled into the pattern she cried for while she slumped back onto the bench, giving me better access.

Trinity rocked against me, mewling her need, and I'd tell her what she was doing to me if it wouldn't take away her pleasure. But it would, so I decided to save those words. My little Omega was close. Her perfume filled the air, drowning out even the intoxicating scent of her slick, and I knew she was on the verge. Trailing my free hand down her folds, I soaked my thumb in her slick before I probed her ass. Trinity's hips jerked spasmodically, and she cried out my name.

A chuckle rumbled out of my chest, a sound of delight at her response, as I gently pushed my thumb into her hole. My tongue never stopped on her clit as I listened, waiting for the second her breath caught. That was when I pushed my thumb deeper inside her ass, loving the way her body closed around me, imagining how it would feel if my cock were there instead. She would be painfully tight around me, but it would be exquisite torture, the kind you couldn't turn down.

"Fuck," I mumbled against her clit, and the vibration must have been the final piece of what she needed because everything that was Trinity clamped down. She squeezed her legs against my head, her ass constricted my thumb, and her lungs seemed to have come to a halt.

I lost all my control. She came apart, and it was my undoing. Her cries, her shaking body, her pussy and ass sucking down on my fingers destroyed me.

"Fuck, Trinity. I can't hold back anymore."

Her eyes fluttered open as she reached for me. Finding her entrance with my cock, I pressed into her slowly. "You're so tight, and fuck, you have the most gorgeous pussy that needs to be fucked."

There was a gasp, then her fingers clenched in my shirt, and I thrust into her.

“Yes, take the pain away... please.” Her hips came up to meet mine, the slick pouring from her. She pulled me into her, and I pushed harder, deeper, losing myself in the silky, hot honey of my Omega.

Her legs coiled around my hips, and I leaned over her, my hands on either side of her head as I worked my cock into her, no longer caring about promises. I only cared about making her gasp again.

“Come for me, precious one. Make those sounds again. I love hearing you come. I want to hear you come as you take my knot.”

I opened my eyes when she moaned my name.

“Aspen,” she cried out, and a groan escaped my throat.

Her irises were wide as she floated in Omega heaven. The dazed look on her face, a mixture of extreme pleasure and satisfaction, had me riding her fast and dirty, my hips swinging in time with hers. We were one at that moment. When my cock swelled, I pushed her a little further, burying myself completely into her.

“I love the way you take me, how tightly your pussy hugs my cock, so pretty and sweet as you do it. Fuck, I’m going to love rutting you over and over.” I fucked her until I felt her walls contract, sucking at me.

My little Omega was coming.

Lost in her, I sat up on my haunches, my hands gripping her bottom as I plunged brutally inside of her.

“More Aspen, now. Give me more,” she pleaded, clutching at my hands while I tilted her hips to give her exactly what she wanted, thrusting as deep as I could go. This was what an Alpha was supposed to have with his mate, his Omega. This was what she would bring into our lives.

I let myself go, and the climax inside us both burst. She screamed, shuddering beneath me, while I paused, pulsing so hard, my head spun. Spilling my seed into her, I pumped my hips while my cock started to engorge, to push against her inner walls.

My shaft pumped into her, filling her, and she thrashed from her own orgasm, a small growl falling from her lips.

Her pussy milked more of my seed until I was certain my balls were empty, yet I felt another orgasm explode, and the process started again. Shuddering, my eyes rolled up, and I roared. She would be sticky with my seed for days.

“Mine,” I growled under my breath. “You are all mine.”

When she settled down, her eyes flew wider.

“Something feels odd.”

“Is it good?”

She nodded. “Yes, but it feels so huge, as if I might burst from how hard it’s stretching me.”

Listening to her, I still pumped cum into her. My fully swollen cock, stuck in her, left me in awe of how breathtaking she was.

“I’ve knotted inside you, Trinity. Does it hurt?”

“No, but I can feel how big you’ve grown.”

“You’re going to take every last drop of my seed like a good Omega, aren’t you?”

She blinked at me, dazed and startled.

I stroked her hair and shifted us to our sides, then lifted her to straddle me on the seat.

Her eyelids flickered, bringing bright blue eyes filled with both fear and bliss.

“There’s nothing to fear. You won’t fall pregnant just yet if that worries you, but once your heat arrives, you won’t know what hit you. You’ll be demanding I put a baby in you.” I laughed while she stared at me, utterly shocked.

As those words left my lips, her body tensed. I seemed to have a habit of scaring her.

“I-I’m not ready to have a baby. In fact, I don’t think I can do this.”

Drawing her close, I embraced her as her small form cradled against my chest and kissed the top of her head.

“Everything will be alright, you’ll see.”

I held her, not sure how to break it to her that most Omegas got pregnant on their heat because, with knotting, there was no pull-out method or condom since it would overflow with how much cum Alphas produce. A few birth controls were available on the market for Omegas, but from what I’d heard, most didn’t work, and the Omega’s primal instinct rejected them.

For the moment, I held her, well aware I had to get up soon with her in my arms to slowly steer the balloon down to a landing spot. We’d be alone and wait for my knot to go down.

She breathed heavily, and when I glanced down at my little one, she’d fallen asleep.

“Rest, little Omega. You’re going to need it.”

Thirteen

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TRINITY

I woke up with a tingling ache between my legs.

Rolling onto my back, I bumped into someone, and my eyes shot open. My initial reaction made me flinch. I'd never awoken with anyone in my bed, but when a strong arm wrapped around my middle and pulled me back across the mattress, cooing in my ear, a soothing calmness came over me.

With it came the most seductive, masculine scent that made everything in the world feel as if it would be alright. I could breathe easily knowing I wasn't alone, and he could hold me up while the rest of the world tried to tear me down. Of course, the reaction scared me, yet I didn't want to let go of it.

I twisted my head around to the gorgeous mountainous man who had my pulse racing.

"Aspen," I purred, a sound I seemed to be making more often, which was new to me.

Full lips pulled into a tranquil smile, and turquoise eyes glinted from the outside light. He appeared wide awake while sleep still clung to my eyes, leaving me wondering how long he'd been waiting for me to wake up.

"Have you been watching me?"

"Did you think I would leave your side after you experienced your first knotting? I'm not a savage, little Omega."

I blinked at him, then over at the window where the light dimmed.

“How long have I been out of it?”

“A while.”

“And you stayed by the side the whole time?”

“Of course.” His grasp squeezed lightly, and his smile widened. “Now, how are you feeling?”

With his fingers gently drawing swirls on my hip, my breaths picked up, and I glanced down to where my dress had ridden up to my hips. I had on nothing underneath, and while I should have gasped, a delicious shiver coated me that Aspen enjoyed my company.

A purr slipped from my mouth once more when I attempted to speak, and with it came my faint fruity scent. I’d just perfumed, which, apparently, didn’t take long when it came to an Alpha caressing me.

“I must have been incredible this morning.” He chuckled, his hot breath on my cheek as he cradled me. His large hand splayed across my hip, fingers digging into my skin with his own desperation as the thick ridge of his cock poked against my rear.

I nodded, finding it hard to speak while my body hummed with the tune of his grinding hips. His hand slid up my body and curled under my jawline, turning my head to face him in a move that was dominating, yet tender.

“You don’t need to be shy around me. So, tell me, little Omega, are you sore from my knotting?”

Staring into those soulful eyes, I half-expected to find mirth or something mocking behind them, but all I found was a sincerity that surprised me.

“A little.”

I tried not to blush about what we’d done, but the ache was there, deep inside me from where he’d stretched me and filled me with his cum. When I closed my eyes, I could almost feel him inside me, taking up every inch. I couldn’t express how

badly I wanted more of him, but evidently my body was trying as my pelvis rocked against him.

“I’ll have to take care of that,” he whispered in my ear, his lips on my earlobe sending delicious shivers down my body.

“W-What does that mean?” My breath wedged in my chest.

“You’ll see,” he groaned, moving down the bed, leaving my side. His hands went to my hips and rolled me onto my back, then he tenderly trailed the pads of his fingers up my bent legs to my knees, which were pressed tightly together. The harder I squeezed, the more the fire of desire and the burning ache flared.

His gaze never leaving me, he took a deep inhale, filling his lungs with my growing scent.

“I had no idea an Omega’s perfume could be as sexy as yours. When I’m not with you, I think of nothing else, like you’ve taken residence in my mind and soul.”

I looked up at him through my eyelashes, my chest rising and falling quickly. The moment he pried open my legs, the intensity of my heat hit me. Lying on the bed, writhing, the slick of my arousal slipped over my folds.

He paused for a moment, his gaze lowering to between my thighs, which had me in a panic that he wouldn’t like what he saw now that he looked at me properly and we weren’t balancing in a hot-air balloon. I had been so glad to finally be down from that thing. Aspen had carried me inside, where I fell asleep almost instantly.

“Absolutely beautiful,” he murmured. His tongue slid out from his mouth, dragging across his bottom lip, and looking every part the hungry wolf.

Whatever doubts I had moments earlier faded away, taken over as a burning blush covered my whole body.

He spread my legs wider, completely exposing me, and I moaned from the aching need building within me. Half the time I couldn’t tell if my desire was pure lust or my heat since

it was all a tangled mess in my head, but as he leaned forward, nothing else in the world mattered except this moment in time.

“Let me kiss it better where it hurts. Let me make you feel something other than the ache.”

I trembled at his words, at the growing need when he licked me in long, slow strokes and savored every inch of me. Moaning, I craved his touch right there, deep inside of me. His tongue plunged into my opening—demanding—and the wet sounds he made turned me on crazily.

His hands pressed on the insides of my tight, pushing me wide as he shuffled closer, his growls deepening. I rocked my hips, pushing my pussy against his face as wave after wave of pleasure rippled over me.

“More, please... I need more,” I groaned, my hands fisting the bedsheets. When he broke away, I lifted my head to find him looking at me as he licked his glistening lips.

“I’m not going to fuck right now, little Omega, but I’m going to kiss your sweet, tender pussy to bring you the relief you need. The first few times we knot in you, it will hurt, but then you’ll feel no pain, I promise you. Now, lift your shirt up so I can see those gorgeous breasts.”

A groan brushed over my throat as my trembling hands tugged the fabric of my dress up and over my chest. His eyes lingered on my tightly beaded nipples and hazed over with lust.

“God, you’re so beautiful, so innocent. I love seeing you blush as I suck you off. Now, be a good girl and pull on those pebbled nipples. Show me how you turn yourself on.” His thick tongue twirled between my folds before assaulting my clit.

Shocked, I gasped when he devoured me. Gently, he slipped a finger into me, and my pussy clamped down on it, sucking on it and making needy, erotic sounds.

I pinched my nipples, and my back bowed. Teasing my clit, his mouth pushed hard against it, and the pressure of his teeth on the tender flesh brought me closer...closer...

“Aspen,” I moaned, the tightness in my stomach too much to bear. The orgasm ripped out of me like a tidal wave, and I screamed with its torture, shuddering as I came all over his mouth. He lapped it up, taking all of it, his eyes never leaving mine as he licked me like a beast.

With my head pressed back against the pillow, my chest thrust forward, and my legs spread, I kept screaming from the euphoric fire burning through me. His mouth was magic, never relenting, sucking and licking every last drop. Even when I finally collapsed on the bed, gasping for breath, he kept taking long strokes, keeping me open, his finger inside me.

The sight of the blond god bent between my legs, eating me, had me rising on another crescendo of arousal. His pace quickened, and I whined, grinding against him once more, unable to believe how quickly I was back up again, demanding more.

“You’re devious,” I groaned between panted breaths, sweat coating my brow.

His eyes grinned, glinting like the brightest tropical waters, and when he laughed, his hot breath against my drenched folds only drove me wilder.

“You have me so worked up, little Omega. Be a good girl, and cum in my mouth again,” he muttered, then dove back in, bringing me to an ecstasy I never knew existed.

Flashes of his words pulsed across my mind as I lay completely under his control. He owned me at that moment, and he knew it. I’d do anything he asked for the pleasure he brought me.

His grip tightened on my spread thighs as my fingers worked on my nipples. His tongue should be worshipped for the things it did. It sent me off the edge so fast, the second time I burst with orgasm, the room spun from how hard I came.

Thrashing, I cried out as my slick dripped out of me.

“Fuck,” Aspen grunted and hastily got to his knees between my legs, palming his huge shaft. Thick streams of

cum exploded from his cock, splashing onto my stomach and chest. Droplets hit my face, and I licked the ones on my lips, the salty, sweet taste captivating. It felt warm against my skin, sticky, and he growled as he pumped out more and more cum.

Still shaking from my second orgasm, I gripped the pillows. Aspen and I sang our tunes of climax, loving how intimate this felt between us.

When the final drop spilled onto me, he grinned and ran his hand through his cum, spreading it across my stomach, then up and over my breasts, covering every inch of my torso.

“Cum is said to be a healthy moisturizer for skin,” he said on a raspy breath as I rather enjoyed the smoothness of his touch over my body. “And it should also help calm your heat with my scent.”

I smirked up at him. “And it has nothing to do with keeping anyone else away from me?”

He barked out a laugh, his head tilting back, and he made the most gorgeous sound I’d ever heard. How could an Alpha sound so enticing, I had flashes of me pregnant with his child and wanting it so desperately, it hurt.

“Little Omega, I will always share everything with my pack, especially an Omega as gorgeous as you to make us a complete family, but there will be days where I’ll be a selfish asshole and want you completely for myself. To hide you away from them so all you can smell is me on you, so every time you think of me your pussy pulses and drenches your panties.”

“The things you Alphas say makes me blush.” I swallowed hard. “I’m not used to being so admired, talking about sex, and seeing so much cock.” That time, I laughed out loud.

Moving from between my legs, he sat beside me and cupped the side of my face.

“I promise you will get used to it and will feel like you can’t breathe without us.”

I gasped, knowing I craved their touch and so much more already.

“How can it get more intense?”

“Don’t worry about that. For now, get some rest.” He tugged the bedsheet up and over my body. “Your body is using up a lot of energy, so you need to stay in bed.” Leaning in, he claimed my lips.

The kiss was gentle and sweet, the kind I’d expect from the man I loved, not someone I have barely met. Though the things I knew about Omegas and Alphas was that when they met, it was like an explosion of fireworks in the night sky.

For a long moment, I almost forgot I was with three Alphas’ who’d stolen me from my life. While I might crave and enjoy them, what would happen if my past found out where I was?

I berated myself for thinking of such things during such a blissful moment. I couldn’t think about that, not as I fell deeply under Aspen’s kiss. I allowed myself to pretend I had a future with this pack, which came with a happily ever after.

Yet the past crept forward like a shadow, and thoughts of Bakewell and the Institute buzzed in my mind, reminding me someone like me rarely had anything good happen in their life.

“What has you smiling like that, girl?” Thelma asked from the doorway as I stood in front of the window, staring out the sunlight and how warm it felt on my face. “Has one of them finally knotted you?”

My cheeks heated up. I’d not grown up talking about knotting and sex. Things Bakewell told us we’d learn later, which I realized now never came. She was more fascinated with controlling all the information we girls were exposed to

and selling us as innocently as possible to Alphas. I remembered something I once heard a visiting Alpha asked her when they didn't know I was eavesdropping from around the corner.

“How much does she know about being an Omega?” he demanded.

“Krys knows very little, I give you my word,” Bakewell assured.

“Good. That’s how my clients want them.”

I tensed thinking back to everything Ms. Bakewell kept from us. She took away our rights, our freedom. The less we knew, the less we questioned, then she sold us to whoever paid the most, even if they were monsters.

The longer I stayed at the mansion with the Alphas, the more I dreaded ever returning to the Institute. I hated her for treating us that way, for not caring that Omegas like my friend, Frannie, had gone missing. Sharpness dug into my chest at not knowing where she was, or how Adella and Charity were doing.

When I faced Thelma, her white brows were knotted between her eyes as she scanned me, then a softness washed over her face.

“You don't have to tell me anything, but if you have any questions, I'm here for you. But I know that look in your eyes that Omegas get after being knotted.” She grinned, studying me with an approving expression, which I wasn't expecting. “Come keep me company while I start dinner.”

I trailed after her out of the bedroom, feeling semi-normal after a few additional hours of sleep. I woke up with no sign of Aspen, though his scent coated me—literally, as I still hadn't taken a shower after he'd covered me in my cum.

Strangely, I had no desire to wash it off me. Where he'd rubbed it on me, my skin seemed softer, so maybe he was onto something about his moisturizing cum. My nostrils filled with his muscadine grapes and fruity scent, and beneath it, a masculine smell that sent a buzz to between my legs.

I couldn't get him out of my mind—the way he kissed my soreness, not pushing me to have sex so I could feel better. I wasn't used to someone caring about me so much.

Finally, we reached the kitchen, a large room with an oversized burning stone hearth against the far wall, warming the place. All the latest appliances and gadgets filled the space, sky blue tiles were on the walls, the floor was white, and a middle island counter had a rack of pots suspended over it. I could have easily stepped into a photo from a magazine. Everything looked perfect.

We took cooking classes at the Bakewell Institute For Girls, but they were run from a communal classroom with freestanding small stoves and a single table as our prep counter. Nothing compared to this. I might have gasped as I spun on the spot to take in the kitchen.

Thelma chuckled and pulled out a stool from the island counter and patted it.

“Take a seat and tell me which Alpha made your eyes sparkle from your first knot? And just so you know, it's alright to be scared. I was a complete mess when I first started going into heat.”

“Aspen. He's been so kind to me since I arrived here and around him, it's like I have no control.”

“Ah, yes, that boy has a heart of gold, and that's exactly how you should be feeling. He is bonding with your Omega side. Males are born either Alpha or Beta, while some females are special and come into Omega. The only way to tame her is by bonding with Alphas by knotting and marking you.” She tied a white apron around her waist and moved to the fridge across the room.

My mind spun with the notion of being marked and owned by Alphas. Some days, I wondered if being an Omega was more a curse than a blessing.

“Will I get pregnant right away?” I started, then cleared my throat, wondering if that was too forward a question to ask.

“Not every Omega gets pregnant on her first time. Not even when she has a pack servicing her. It might take a few heat cycles, even a few years, before she gets pregnant.” The woman paused as she took a large roast out of the fridge and turned toward the counter. “Back in my day, it was more common, but with the next generation, something happened. I think it was the war between the countries, that some chemical was spread we weren’t informed about, which impacted the number of females who became Omegas, then fell pregnant.”

I didn’t know a lot about the war that started the year before I was born, but I knew it was still going on at the borders of the country, from all sides. It was far enough away that most of us didn’t have to worry about it, but I’d always been curious what caused it, and why it was still going on, considering we weren’t permitted to watch the news at the Institute.

“You think I might not be able to fall pregnant?” I asked, hoping that wasn’t what she meant. I didn’t want to have a child right away, but eventually, I did want kids and finally have a family I never had.

“I think you have a better chance of getting pregnant by Daniel than you do the Alphas. The problem might actually be the Alphas, not the Omegas.” Thelma turned back to me after she had the roast in a pan and had started cutting up vegetables. “The Alphas in control don’t want to admit it, but that’s my suspicion. Omegas can get pregnant from Betas. We were told Omegas shouldn’t mate with Betas because children would not be produced, but as we know now, that’s simply not true. Life finds a way. Babies from an Omega and Beta will never become an Omega or Alpha. They will be seen as equal to a Beta in status.” Her face grew deeply lined, then she returned to her chopping.

“I don’t want to have a baby right now. I only just found out I’m an Omega. I haven’t had a chance to really explore the world. And I have to find my friend.” I felt heat rush up my chest as I realized how long I’d been away from my friends. Everything felt fast. Earlier my mind went to babies too, and it scared me.

Thelma didn't respond right away, and when she did, it came with a sigh.

"One is never ready to become an Omega and go into heat because it's not something we can train for. All the explanations in the world won't prepare you for the reality of emotions and cravings you face every day, leading up to your heat finally breaking." She returned to chopping vegetables, humming to herself.

The longer I remained, the more restless I felt.

"I think I'll go upstairs and rest," I suggested, sliding off the stool.

"Of course. Dinner will be ready in a couple hours. Rest for what's coming next, Trinity. You'll need all the rest you can get." Thelma looked at me with a clear gaze, nothing there but the same candid look, which honestly terrified me of what was coming my way.

Regardless of how I felt, I smiled and thanked her for the information. I knew there was more I should ask her, but for now, I retreated from the kitchen.

The corridors and rooms were empty. No voices or sounds, which had me walking right past my room and down the corridor to explore more of the mansion. Bare walls, decorative brass lighting fixtures, and long rugs were all I found. Out of curiosity, I tried opening one door, but it was locked, which shouldn't have surprised me. Around the corner, where light poured in through an arched window, I spotted a door sitting ajar. I moved forward before I knew better.

I barely knew anything about these Alphas aside from how they made me wild with lust. After learning Shadow was related to one of the city's powerful Mafia families, I had to know if they were in the same business of crime. If I was going to be stuck here for the time being, shouldn't I know the devils I lived with?

Pausing at the door, I peered inside and found the room empty. I released the breath I'd been holding and slipped into a study. Every piece of furniture was made of mahogany wood

—the desk beneath the oversized window, the bookshelves, the glass cabinet filled with bottles of whiskey, even the black leather couch in front of the fireplace had mahogany feet. Elaborate abstract paintings in thick, gold frames adorned the wallpapered walls, and lush, dark carpet sank beneath my feet. Wriggling my toes in its soft threads, I wondered who owned this room. My bets were on Shadow. I could easily picture a Mafia godfather sitting in here, smoking a fat cigar while dishing out hits on his enemies.

Of course, I hoped that wasn't what Shadow did, but I was about to find out.

My gaze landed on a black, old-fashioned phone on the desk next to a laptop. Anticipation twirled in my stomach at the possibility of finally contacting my friends. I quickly checked the door, then lunged for the phone, frantically dialing the Institute payphone, which we would be permitted to use if we paid Ms. Bakewell for a calling card. We'd have to pay for it from the money we got from the state each month, but Adelle had one, which she'd used to speak to her mother. I just prayed she was in her room when they beckoned her to the phone. I was ready to deepen my voice to sound like her mother and to avoid being recognized.

Picking up the phone receiver, I punched in the numbers in the keypad. A female voice had just answered when a sound made me look up to the doorway.

Viper burst into the room, a growl in his throat.

At the sight, my blood turned cold.

It all happened too fast.

He snatched the phone out of my hand.

“What the fuck are you doing?” he snarled, flecks of darkness consuming his evergreen eyes as his face reddened.

My heart shuddered, and panic curled around my chest.

Fuck.

Fourteen

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VIPER

Panic strangled me, and my knuckles turned white from how hard I gripped the phone. I slammed it back down on the receiver and narrowed my eyes on the Omega who stood in front of me, breathless, her gaze darkening and filled with fear.

Pressure gathered across my temples from the thumping of my pulse, the dread of how impossibly bad things could have gone for us if she had completed her phone call. The authorities discovering we'd stolen an Omega would lead to our deaths.

“What do you think you were doing?” I growled in a gruff voice. I hadn't intended to terrify the Omega. Yet I'd royally fucked that up.

She recoiled from me, but her defiance, with her head kept high, impressed me. I focused on those full lips, the paleness in her cheeks, and the whirling dread behind her gaze. My attention dipped to her loose white dress, and the nipples pressed against the sheer fabric, clear she wore no bra underneath.

I shouldn't care. I'd told myself I didn't care. I loathed myself for my growing addiction for the Omega in our home. Except, moving away from her seemed impossible.

“I was trying to call my friends since it seems none of you have bothered to call them. The whole reason I even went to that ball was to find a friend who's missing... then my heat

cycle started. She could still be missing. They'll think I've been taken too, and..." She said all that in one breath.

"Where are your friends?" I asked curiously, hearing the worry in her voice.

She shrugged. "I promise I won't say anything about you or this pack. I just want to make sure they're safe."

Lowering my shoulders, attempting to appear less intimidating, I said, "How about you give me their number, and I'll contact them for you."

She blinked at me blankly. "It's not going to work. It has to be me."

Running a hand across my jaw, I scrutinized her, noting how clear her eyes were, yet her chin trembled. Such a gorgeous Omega—her pink hair pulled back into a ponytail, her face fresh and utterly beautiful—and completely not mine.

"Then we do it together," I suggested, giving her a blank look.

She swallowed and glanced at the phone momentarily, then back at me.

"Why? Why do you even care?"

The sharpness of her tone should have surprised me, but it intrigued me.

"Anyway, I barely know you, and for all I know you probably don't even know my name. So, why would I share anything with you?"

"I know plenty enough. Your name is Trinity, and you smell like the most delicious fruit in the world. You're scared but secretly, you want to find a family to call your own. You never ask to speak with family, only your friends, which tells me you don't come from a family. You know very little about being an Omega, telling me you were deprived of any information, or perhaps you wished you'd never come into your Omega. You love pineapple because I see it brought to your room with every meal, while you never eat the potatoes."

“Enough,” she gasped. “Fine, you know a small fraction about me, but that doesn’t make you trustworthy.”

“Except we both know it’s illegal you’re with us, so the last thing we need is to draw unwanted attention that will send us into prison, or far worse, for stealing an Omega. Though, for the life of me, I don’t understand why you’re still here. I told Shadow to send you back and free you, but the guy has some crazy infatuation.” Not to mention the drama escalating from Daniel who was jealous as fuck about Trinity.

Her pale blue, wolf-like eyes scolded me, and she blew out a held exhale.

“That must be so hard for you. Shall I pull the violin out?” Her mockery had me laughing. I adored her all fiery and sassy. Call me broken, but I preferred my females looking like they might claw my eyes out.

“I like you like this,” I murmured, coaxing a spark of surprise from her widening eyes. The corner of her mouth curled ever so lightly. She was spectacular, and I couldn’t ignore the beauty in front of me, even if she looked ready to scream at me.

“So, you enjoy seeing me suffering and worried sick that my friends might be dead? You’re a fucking sadist.”

I was so out of my mind with torn emotions of the attraction I fought. I shook my head as a growing need to explain myself rose through me.

“You couldn’t be more wrong, Omega. My pack means the world to me, and for that reason I won’t let you call whoever was on the other end of the phone. If they find out where you are, we’re all at risk of losing our lives. So, think about your situation differently. We are risking everything to hold on to you, and considering how protective you are of your background, I can only assume you are also worried of your demise. Do you really want to make a call that could be traced back to us?”

At first glance, I might have appeared mocking in my response, but the stern feeling tensing my muscles had me

biting back a snarl of anger that she would risk our lives.

“I-I just wanted to check on my friends and not risk ever being sent back there.”

Her trembling response affected me more than it should, and by the redness of her cheeks, I gained the impression she hadn’t intended on showing such emotions.

Sure, part of me wanted to push the point and find out more about what they did to her that she feared them. Who was she hiding from? My hackles rose from the perspective that if we were dealing with one of the bigger institutes, which had connections with powerful families, they’d stop at anything to get their assets back—Omegas.

If they hurt her to the point of her not wanting to be found out, the more reason not to reveal her location to them.

“So I guess we’ve reached a stalemate,” I murmured. For a fleeting moment, I could have sworn a tear slid from the corner of her eye, but she looked away, hiding it from me. I might be a bastard, but that sight chipped away at me like cracking glass. “I’m not a bad man, Trinity. I need to protect my pack, and although it may not seem like it, I’m keeping you safe as well.”

She stepped forward, wanting to protest, if that defiant look in her eyes meant anything, but I smelled something on her, something that had my insides growling and took me off-guard.

Muscadine grapes, fruity, and fucking all Aspen. His scent came off her in waves as though he’d fucking marked her as his own. Maybe my head was messed up, but didn’t we agree to keep her until after her heat, then make a call, not fucking bond her to one of us for life.

I shouldn’t give a fuck, yet I stepped up to her. She recoiled until her back hit the wall of bookshelves in Shadow’s study.

“I know you gave yourself to Aspen.” My mind and heart weren’t exactly aligned, not when a pulse of fire thumped across my chest. Being this close to her, the smell of orange

blossoms and Aspen's scent tangled in my senses, leaving me confused and furious, yet unable to leave her side.

“What are you talking about?”

I stared down at her breasts crushed against my chest. The pebbled nipples were all I could focus on and looking away seemed an unbearable task.

Only one other woman had influenced me to such an extent. When I lost Lillian five years ago, I'd forgotten the euphoric burning an Omega could awaken. I'd been around other Omegas, yet none had impacted me the way Trinity had. Apparently, she was the exception...

For a moment, her captivating scent was enough to make me forget Aspen's scent on her. Dropping my head to her neck, I inhaled her orange blossom scent, but it was mixed with Aspen's deep scent, which brought my anger to life. My hand went to the back of her head, grasping her hair and pulling her head back until she looked up at me. There was no fear in her eyes, though, only a dare.

The freckles running across her nose added a dash of cuteness to her glare. Her pale aquamarine eyes stood out against the pink of her Omega hair, and her lush lips demanded to be kissed

Touching her had my cock stiffening. I knew she felt the thickness against the apex of her thighs as I held her pinned to the bookshelf with my body.

“Get off me,” she demanded, yet she thrust her chest out against me, and her perfume burst around us.

“It's not what you really want, is it, Omega?” I hissed just before my lips were on hers. If Aspen broke his vow, so could I. I'd take her here against the bookcase and get her out of my system, once and for all. Then I'd be done with it.

Our mouths fit together perfectly, and while in my mind anger boomed that this was a shit idea, I loved the way she pressed her hands against my chest with resistance, yet kissed me as if she couldn't get enough, like she might stop breathing if I broke away from her.

Whether she knew it or not, her Omega desires called me to her. She was spectacular.

Releasing her hair, I slipped my hand down her spine, not a single thought other than how incredible she felt against me, how her ass cradled in my hand.

A purring sound came from her throat as she curled a leg around my thigh, her once resisting hands now fisting my shirt, drawing me closer.

She brought out a primal growl from me as I licked the scents from her neck. I could taste the lingering touch of Aspen on her skin, tasted him on my tongue with her, and it nearly melted my brain. I didn't cross swords, and neither did he, but we'd shared female Betas, and there was something alluring about fucking a female with my best friend. I was more than familiar with his scent, and while I growled at the thought that he might have marked this Omega, I realized the truth.

What I tasted wasn't the final mark, but the bastard smearing his scent all over her in a protective gesture. Fuck him, but damn it was a smart move, so I couldn't hate him for it.

Trinity's scent swam in my head.

I tore my lips from her, knowing I balanced on the edge of losing my head big time. Once I went that far, I'd rip her clothes off and fuck her until she screamed so loud, everyone would come find me balls deep in their precious Omega.

Grazing my lips along her neck, I groaned, "You're going to fucking wreck me, you know that, Omega?"

On a gasp, she mewled, "Viper." The husky sound of my name on her lips might as well be her asking me to slide my cock into her cunt.

My dick pulsed, hurting as it thickened. Pulling back, I stared down at her lips, swollen from how hard I'd kissed her, and all I could picture was me sucking on her engorged pussy lips.

I slid my hands under her dress, and her breath hitched when I hooked my thumbs into the elastic of her panties. Kneeling in front of this gorgeous Omega, I dragged them down her legs, and she didn't need to be asked to step out of them. Scrunching them, I felt how wet she was and pushed them into my pocket as I stood.

"You're messing with my head, sweetheart. All I want is to see you naked, bend you over the desk, and fuck you mercilessly." My thumb stroked the length of her jawline, my head dizzy with her scent. The truth of the situation was I fucked up by kissing her when I promised myself I'd hold back. My lust had opened up Pandora's box, and I had no idea if I could hold back before I claimed the Omega over and over and fucking over.

A tiny laugh escaped her lips. Untangling herself from my arms, she looked down at my bulging pocket with her panties, then back up at me. She glanced at the phone, then at me, seeming lost for words.

I noted her pointed nipples, the heavy scent of her arousal, yet she pulled away from me as though she struggled with controlling herself.

"I shouldn't have kissed you," she muttered, her chest rising and falling quickly. Shaking her head, she put a distance between us.

"You're right. I should have fucked you by now." I grinned and reached for her, but she ducked under my arm and darted out of the room, leaving me so damn wound up, I mentally struggled with the idea of chasing her and fucking her brains out.

I watched her run from the study, leaving me alone.

I couldn't remember the last time I felt hungry for an Omega, so turned on that my cock ached. She had the kind of beauty that drove men to obsession, and they created wars over, and here I paced, dealing with the primal starvation she'd awakened within me. She fought me, but in the end, our instincts bound us together.

Aspen wasted no time tracking her down and fucking her. Shadow had done the same a few nights ago. It seemed I'd fallen behind in my duties as Alpha.

I laughed out loudly, almost psychotically. I'd worked so hard to keep my distance, then one incident, and I was lost.

“Shit!”

Strength pulsed through me, and I turned toward the door. My hands fisted with the ache for release building deep in my gut when I caught sight of the phone.

Without thinking, I picked it up and hit redial. After three rings, a female answered.

“Hello, Bakewell Institute For Girls, how can I help you?”

My heart drummed, and I slammed the phone back down.

“Oh, fuck!”

Of course, she had to come from the biggest damn omega institute in the whole country, the same one funded by the Shchavlev Mafia, enemy to Shadow's family.

He was going to be so pissed when he found out.

We were fucked!

Trinity

One look at Viper and I lost my mind. Back in the study, my heart drummed in my chest. I had promised myself I wouldn't let him affect me and that I'd keep my distance from the grumpy Alpha. Yet one look from him, and my knees melted. How could someone so annoying be so ridiculously handsome?

It was unfair that he smelled of my most favorite thing in the world—pumpkin pie. Combined with his musky, sexy scent, his potency left me completely messed up. Add to that the messy dark hair with tints of red ruffled around his face, as if he'd arrived from the pits of hell, and piercing green eyes, as though they were made from venom, Viper could easily be mistaken for the devil. He sure as hell kissed like one. My toes

were still curled from that single kiss, which left me completely drenched.

And the asshole took my panties.

Pressing my back to the door in my bedroom, slick dripped down the inside of my thighs from how turned on I'd become from that single kiss.

One thing was for certain. The lure between us was growing stronger, and evidently, when my heat spiked, I was willing to be fucked even by the Alpha I should hate. He surprised me by paying attention to things about me no one should notice, like what foods I enjoy from the meals.

Who did that?

His energy wound tight around me, and I could still picture him bursting into the room with that perfect face and that divine body. His worn jeans and deep blue Hensley shirt did nothing to conceal the sheer size of the muscles that filled his clothes. And the guttural huskiness of his voice came close to undoing me. Sexy as fuck, he covered me in shivers, so when he whispered in my ear, desire shot through me, and my panties were soaked in seconds. I could still feel his hard grip on my body. He shouldn't turn me on.

I slid my hand down my body and under my dress, needing to get him out of my head... along with the climax building from the mere thought of him.

Fifteen

Q

SHADOW

“We need to talk,” Viper snarled on his way into the lounge room we used for entertaining guests. I’d just finished a video conference with one of my suppliers of Omega supplements and suppressants, learning there’d be a delay in the next shipment due to the escalating war that encroached on the docks.

I doubted Viper’s concern was related. Close on his heels, Aspen strolled in as though he’d been dragged in here. He ran his hand through his messy blond hair, glancing around the room expectantly.

“This better be important. I was about to tint my eyebrows,” he mocked, then burst into a chuckle and glanced over at Daniel slipping into the room, paying him out from the time he dyed his hair blue. He’d wanted his eyebrows to match, but he used too much solution and his eyebrows all fell out. Aspen and Viper never let him forget it.

Except, Daniel and Viper weren’t biting. They marched across the room to stand by the fireplace. Viper had his hands deep in the pockets of his pants as shadows rushed across his face. He looked worried, which stirred my own anxiety.

The rest of us joined him. Aspen flopped down on the leather couch, Daniel next to him, crossing his legs, and I helped myself to a glass of whiskey.

“Okay, you have our attention.”

Viper coughed, then blurted, “I found Trinity in your study, Shadow, calling her home. She’s from the Bakewell Institute

For Girls. The same fucking place sponsored by the Shchavlev family. And we've kidnapped one of their own." His voice climbed. "They'll butcher us if they find out."

My heart plummeted into my stomach and ice filled my veins as the past drove over me like a freight train. Fragments of what my parents had told me lingered at the forefront of my mind about the Russian Mafia using any excuse to destroy their enemy—my family line.

My parents might have broken away from theirs, but one never really left the Mafia, especially when the Matteis blood ran in our veins. I'd ensured my dealings bypassed both families as much as possible, but Father's words streamed across my mind.

"Son, don't for one second believe the Shchavlev family won't find a reason to destroy you. So don't give them one. Understand?"

"Don't mince your words," Aspen boomed, tearing me out of my thoughts. He climbed to his feet, while Daniel took a sharp intake of breath, his face paling. They all knew the truth, and Viper was spot on. While my father had cut all ties with his family—the Matteis Mafia—we still weren't safe.

"So, what does this mean for us?" Daniel asked, his voice timid, his hands wringing in his lap.

Filling the crystal tumbler to the halfway point with Dalmore whiskey, I pressed it to my lips and drank it in two gulps. I always savored the honeyed elixir, but I needed a fast shot to calm my nerves. Setting the tumbler down, I turned to my pack.

"It means we need to be extra vigilant so no one finds out Trinity is here. We double our guards outside the gates and install more security cameras. And she has to stay indoors, especially since she's perfuming more frequently."

"So, you're still hung up on keeping her?" Viper barked. "Don't get me wrong, I get the appeal. Our primal nature is calling to her as an Omega, but you're going to risk everything? Are you going to conceal her for eternity?"

“Maybe Viper has a point,” Daniel piped up.

He glanced my way, looking nervous, but I ignored his comment, knowing it came from a place of jealousy and fear. Soon, he’d learn to accept Trinity as one of us and as family.

“I don’t agree,” Aspen responded before I could. “Maybe you haven’t spent enough time with her, Viper, but as far as I’m concerned, she’s my Omega... *our* Omega, and we’re not going to just toss her away because you got scared. We’re not exactly weak, so grow some fucking balls and get ready to fight for what belongs to us.”

“Fuck off,” Viper snarled. “I’m aware what she means for us, and if she goes back, she’ll be in grave danger at the Institute, but we’re already a family. Are we ready to risk everything we worked for, even our lives, for this Omega?”

“Here’s the thing...” I stepped toward the two Alphas, who were standing feet apart, ready to launch at one another. It took all I had not to bellow my command that she stayed. “I get why you’re not convinced about Trinity. You’ve been living with grief for years, but that doesn’t mean you don’t have a right to find happiness once more with another Omega. Like Aspen, I can’t walk away from Trinity. That moment has long passed, and if what you say is right about her being in danger, you’ve just cemented our decision that she stays.”

Gritting my teeth, an ache flared in my head at the thought that we’d stolen an Omega from the worst possible Institute, but I wasn’t a bastard to walk away from danger.

“So, we’re going to babysit the Omega?” Daniel stood.

“Sit the hell back down,” Aspen snapped, anger spreading across his face. “Unless you’re going to contribute from a place that isn’t jealousy...”

“Enough,” I spat. “We don’t turn on each other. We are one, a found family, and we’re going to overcome this. I have connections across the country who have men inside both Mafia families, so Aspen, go pack. You and I are going on a short trip to pay them a visit. Viper, increase the security and lock down the fortress until we return.”

Daniel sat with his shoulders curled forward, and I placed a hand on one, squeezing lightly.

“For now, we give Trinity everything she needs. A sense of calm, comfort food, and help creating her nest since she’s getting closer to that stage.”

“And?” Viper pressed.

“We keep her happy, so she doesn’t want to run away from us or attempt to call the Bakewell Institute For Girls and compromise all our situations. It can’t be that hard.”

Viper growled under his breath, and Aspen nodded, but Daniel remained rigid in his seat.

“Remember, she’s here because we took the Omega, and our bodies are desperate to bond with her. It’s what we need. Sure, she came to us unconventionally, but that doesn’t mean shit. She’s ours.”

“I’m ready,” Aspen agreed with a grin. “Anything to find a way to fix this because I’d do anything to keep her. To me, she smells like home. It’s unmistakable that she belongs to us. She’s not a pushover. She almost clawed my eyes out that night she tried to escape.”

“I might like this girl after all.” Viper grinned, then pressed his mouth into a thin line and stalked out of the room, Aspen on his heels.

My chest tightened because in a world where governments were corrupt and ruled like puppets by the two Mafia families, it was a challenge to keep out of the line of danger, especially in our work. There was no room for mistakes.

So, we’d find a way to make her officially our Omega, even if it came with changing her identity and creating a fake ID for her. That would give us a starting point to prove she had always been with us. I sure as hell wasn’t beyond lying to protect her.

My father’s words kept swimming in my mind, confirming I was doing the right thing, even if doubt curled in my brain.

“When you find the right Omega, you’ll know it before you even have a chance to kiss her. Your body will burn for her, and your mind will be infatuated. Nothing will stand in your way to make her yours, son.”

I’d grasped hold of his belief with conviction, even after he and my mom were butchered by Shchavlev enforcers for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. My chest tightened—the ache was still raw after these twenty years. I’d been eight at the time, but death never leaves you when you lost a loved one. It just followed you like a shadow, now and then reminding you of the piece of your soul that had been ripped away.

“Have you ever wanted something so much that it hurt?”

Daniel’s voice sliced through the memories and dragged me back to reality. I lowered my gaze to my Beta, now standing in front of me, heartache in his eyes, and it broke me to see him going through his anguish.

Taking his hand, I drew him closer. He coiled his arms around my waist while his cheek nestled in the middle of my chest, and my cock stirred. It didn’t take long for my body to awaken to his touches.

“More than you’ll ever know.” I kissed the top of his head. “But you have little to worry about. You will always be mine. I would risk everything I had to save you, too. I am officially your Alpha and your boyfriend. That doesn’t change unless you want it to, okay?”

“The Omega’s really warmed up to you,” he murmured, his eyes lifting to mine, a sharpness behind them. I expected him to keep speaking, but he never continued.

Sliding my finger under his chin, I stared into the deep-brown eyes that looked soulful. His lips pouted for a kiss. I slipped my thumb across his sharp cheekbone, then threaded my fingers through his dark hair, which was long overdue for a trim.

“She has, and she will be all of ours. Tell me, what’s changed with you? When she first arrived, you were buzzing

about her arrival, excited almost. Now, you can't stand to even say her name."

He drew the corner of his bottom lip into his mouth and gnawed on it before answering

"I'm worried you'll forget me."

Letting his words fill the silence of the room, I studied the man I fell in love with before I knew what love was.

"I haven't spent enough time with you, have I? Or told you how much I miss you when we're apart?"

Something light in his eyes had my heart fluttering. Swallowing, he lowered his gaze and tucked a loose strand of hair behind his ear.

"When I found her with your cock deep in her mouth, something changed inside me. I'm trying really hard not to be jealous, but I can't get that image out of my head and that she did it better than me. That she—"

"Hush." I placed a finger to his mouth. "I think I need to fill your head with a different memory, to remind you how much I adore you, and to get those negative thoughts out. I also need you to promise me that you'll make an effort with Trinity."

The corner of his mouth pinched, and his shoulders lowered. After a long pause, he muttered, "I promise." Then the spark from his eyes returned.

"But back to what you were saying... What do you have in mind, boyfriend, because it needs to make me forget a lot."

I laughed, adoring how excited he always got when it came to anything sexual between us. I'd always considered myself a sex fiend, but Daniel was a rabbit, ready to go at the drop of a hat anytime, anywhere.

His hand slid down between us and curled around my growing erection. I hissed, then groaned.

Daniel was the type of man who craved attention and affirmation, and I'd fallen short of that lately.

“Allegedly, a spa is one of the best places to fuck,” he whispered.

“Allegedly?”

“Read it in a forum.” He shrugged. “Maybe we need one installed outside.”

“How about we revisit that once we sort out the current state of affairs.”

His face fell. “Yeah, of course. Not everyone is a spa lover...”

I let him ramble, knowing him well enough to understand when he did, regardless of the topic, it helped him cope with his anxiety. Though a spa might be a fun element to add to our lives.

When his hand rapidly slid up and down my cock, the heat in my body erupted, and my shaft twitched against his touch.

His eyes widened, and an excited moan spilled from his throat. I adored this Beta more than he'd ever know, complete with those sexy sounds he made, even with his spouts of jealousy.

My cock pulsed when he dropped to his knees in front of me. He started to pull at my belt and zipper, but I needed something different, and so did my little Beta.

“Not tonight,” I growled, lifting him back to his feet by his arms. Spinning him, I bent him over on the side of the couch, and a gasp was expelled from his sweet lips.

“Fuck me, Alpha, fuck me hard.”

Stripping off his jeans and boxes, everything in me seized up. Seeing his ass in the air, my erection grew to the point of pain.

I unzipped my pants and my cock flopped out, thick and swollen, already leaking. I snarled at how good the freedom felt, then stepped between my lover's legs. Rubbing the tip along his ass, I reached around his hips and curled my fingers around his thick member. I palmed him a few times, and he shivered beneath me.

“Keep making those sounds, Beta. They’re bliss.”

He made delicious trilling sounds.

His hips bucked back against me, his tight little hole ready for me.

“I’ll be right back,” I murmured and moved to the drawers against the wall where I grabbed a tube of lube. Fucking my Beta at any chance I desired meant I was prepared in every room of the house for such an occasion.

“Fuck,” he grunted, keeping his gorgeous ass in the air, his head resting against a cushion on the couch.

I had to steady my breathing with the urgency pumping through my veins to fuck him already.

“Let me get you ready.” I spread the lube across that gorgeous hole waiting for me, then pushed the tip of my cock into his ass, pressing in deeper without pause. He was so tight, squeezing me to the point of delirium pleasure. The burn turned into ecstatic sensations, sending small jolts of arousal through my body. I had little patience today and longed to fuck him—to pound into him, to make him scream.

Stuffing myself into him down to my balls, I stared down, and a shiver of elation rushed down to my back, seeing how deeply embedded I was in him.

His hands fisting the cushions, he gasped for air.

“Have you gotten bigger since the last time?”

I chuckled.

“Are you going to scream for me?” I purred, pulling out and driving back in, slamming into the hole that swallowed my cock, taking complete control of him. Daniel craved to be dominated and listening to his moans ignited a match.

I rocked in and out of him, tingles of pleasure rushing over me. There was no pause, just the constant slapping into my lover so powerfully with each thrust, the couch moved a few inches across the wooden floorboards.

His screams flooded the room, and already I felt him clamping down around me, shuddering with his release. Fucking him this hard from this position always brought him to orgasm fast. I ran my hand down his back, pushing him down—he loved it when I held him down, when I dominated him.

“Yes... yes,” he breathed heavily.

I sank deep just as tightness spread across my insides, and without thought, an orgasm ripped into me. Gripping him, I shoved myself deep and pumped my load into him, so much that some slushed back along the shaft. I wasn't close to being done, but there was nothing more empowering than filling my boyfriend's ass with streams of cum while he burst with his own orgasm, making a complete mess on the couch when his climax spilled his semen.

Daniel's strained moaning sounded barely coherent when I finally drew out of him, though a sense of emptiness coiled around me. The absence of knotting—something that only happened with an Omega—buzzed in my veins, and despite the room smelling of sex and cum, I felt incomplete, unfinished.

Glancing down at my Beta, still bent over the couch, groaning with happy sounds, I enjoyed the sight of cum dripping from his hole. Fucking gorgeous.

This fuck was for Daniel to feel loved, to spill his seed. Drawing him off the couch, I lifted him into my arms, cradling him against my chest. He collapsed against me, his blissful smile warming my heart.

“I fucked you hard, so you never forget you are mine, and now I'm going to wash you and take you to my bed.”

With his head against my shoulder, he whispered, “Thank you. You have no idea how much I needed this.”

“Anything for you.”

Anything to get my mind off the danger we'd suddenly found ourselves in. And while I wouldn't admit it to anyone, I was worried we were in deeper shit than anyone realized.

Sixteen

S

TRINITY

The maid, who called herself Jane, opened the door for me on the top floor of the mansion, gesturing I enter with her outstretched arm.

“Thanks,” I said, moving inside, unsure what to expect after she appeared in my room early this morning in a flurry, saying I’d been summoned by the Lords of the house and rushing me. My skin crawled, anxiety tightening my chest. Was this about me ringing the Institute yesterday? Whatever it was, I’d find another way to get word to my friends to let them know I was okay.

In front of me lay a set of tiled steps that led to a door sitting ajar, encouraging the wind to rush inside and bath me in its cool touch.

I made quick work of the stairs and pushed open the door to a terrace, which stretched outward and seemed to grow right out of the mansion walls. The metal railings were a mossy forest color, and long wooden couches overflowing with white cushions sat in front of an oversized square coffee table. The view made me catch my breath, reminding me of the splendor of the woodlands and mountains I’d seen from the air balloon.

My attention switched from the scenery to the four men looking my way. Butterflies burst awake in my stomach, their wings beating furiously, seeing them all together, staring at me. Evidently, they’d been waiting for me since the food in front of them looked untouched.

“Trinity, join us,” Aspen called out, throwing himself over the back of the sofa and strolling toward me. I knew in the pit of my stomach that rushing toward him made me look eager and maybe not a great idea with the rest of the guys watching—I still hadn’t decided what I was going to do once my heat passed or what state I’d be in—but I felt electricity zapping down my spine around Aspen. The last time I’d seen him, he was sucking on my pussy. My libido practically twisted into a pretzel at the memory.

By some small miracle, I restrained myself from breaking out of my room last night and sneaking into his room for a midnight booty call. I laughed to myself at the things I was contemplating when, just last month, I blushed when Charity shared with us images from a magazine of men showing off their packages. The entire thing had been dedicated to naked men, and it was spectacular. While I didn’t say it at the time, I secretly savored every image I saw and imprinted them on my mind, every line of muscle, every curve of their cocks, and how incredibly sexy they looked.

Nothing compared to the real thing, though. Aspen was a blond god with a huge dick, and everything about him screamed sin.

He extended a hand, taking mine quickly and drawing me against him. A soft, raspy breath escaped my lips when my breasts pressed up against his stomach. Did I mention how small I was next to these Alphas? Towering over me, they were mountains of muscle. When they stared at me, their gazes looked ready to devour me.

“Good morning, little Omega. How are you feeling?” Concern flickered in the depths of his blue eyes.

“A little tired,” I responded. “But you have me curious. What’s the occasion up here?” I glanced around the terrace.

“Breakfast with a million-dollar view.” Aspen’s eyes crinkled with his smile. “We couldn’t have you missing out, plus we wanted to talk to you. We should have already all sat down for a meal together by now.”

“Oh,” I murmured. It never crossed my mind they’d invite me to eat with them as a pack.

He walked me toward the rest of the men, my hand still in his, and having every eye on me was nerve-wracking. I kept licking my lips and tried my best to ignore the shiver in my arms.

Shadow greeted me with a sweet smile. My eyes nearly bulged to see him lounging back in his seat, bare-chested and only in jeans, and I might have just wet myself a bit. Arms stretched out across the back of the couch, he had one leg crossed with his ankle over his knee. He was gorgeous—built, tanned, torso carved of stone, not to mention he had a five-o’clock shadow across his sharp jaw.

“You look beautiful,” he said, and

Drowning in the testosterone he exuded, it took me a few moments to find my voice

“You don’t look too bad yourself,” I finally managed and felt my cheeks burning up at my dorky response.

Viper and Daniel didn’t say a word, shadows darkening Daniel’s expression while Viper seemed amused.

“Morning,” I chirped to show them they couldn’t get me down

Whatever relationship I had going on with these four men, if I was going to remain here and accept their help during my first heat, not to mention avoid returning to the Bakewell Institute for Girls until I worked out my next steps, I should get to know them better.

Aspen guided me to an empty couch. “Make yourself comfortable,” he offered, crashing down alongside me.

To my left were Shadow and Daniel, while Viper sat in the middle of a couch all on his own, directly in front of me.

With all their attention on me and my nerves dancing in my body, I lowered my gaze to the delicious spread of food in front of us. A bowl spilled over with chopped fruit, another

with croissants, muffins, eggs, and bacon—my mouth salivated.

Glancing at Viper, sitting across from me, my heart clenched when I noticed his eyes flick down my body. The skirt I wore was fitted and short enough, when my legs crossed, I accidentally flashed him. I'd been in such a rush when the maid called me, I assumed there was an urgent matter, so I grabbed the first thing from the cupboard to get dressed and forgot to wear panties. I almost rolled my eyes at myself. Heat unfurled over me, and my core clenched.

Universe, please, don't let me perfume in front of these too-hot-to-handle Alphas and completely drench the cushioned seats.

Daniel studied me as well, and his narrowing gaze and thinning lips stole any heat I'd felt seconds earlier. The Beta was beautiful, yet he seemed to have turned against me. I missed his kind words when I first arrived at the mansion. Maybe I'd find time alone with him to work out our differences.

Sitting on the couch, surrounded by luscious men, sensuality thundering through me and stole my breath.

"So, what's the occasion?" I said, breaking the awkward silence.

"Aspen and I are going away for a couple of days," Shadow explained as he reached for a slice of watermelon and took a bite. Juices dripped down from the corner of his mouth onto his chin.

Mesmerized, I followed the droplet as he wiped it away with his fingers, then dragged his tongue over his lips. My breath hitched, my nipples pressed hard against the fabric of my dress, and every inch of me tensed.

The Alpha was a lot to take all at once... all of them were. Considering I couldn't even watch them eat without my body burning up, I was in a lot more trouble than I'd assumed. Perhaps getting over the heat wouldn't bring the solutions I'd

hoped for or even allow me the strength to leave these gorgeous men behind.

Maybe coming to breakfast wasn't such a great idea, I thought as a seductive feeling swept over my body.

When he finished eating the watermelon, our gazes met.

“Viper will be here for anything you need.”

I blinked at him, reminding myself of what he'd said and not thinking about how much I'd love to climb onto his lap, wrench my skirt up to my hips, and ride him like a cowgirl.

Aspen's hand on my back made me flinch and snapped me out of my lust-induced trance.

“It's okay,” he whispered as his hazy blue eyes grinning softly. “Your body is going to react to ours. It's natural what you're feeling, and one of the reasons we avoided being in the same room with you all at the same time. Out here, we hoped the scents would be less hard to bear for you.”

Tense, nervous, and turned-on, I laughed involuntarily. These wolves were watching me so closely, they'd seen my reaction to Shadow.

“Was it that obvious?”

“You bet,” Viper answered. “You perfumed just staring at Shadow eating, so my guess is that your heat cycle is speeding up.”

“It is?” My throat went dry, thinking I would go into full-blown heat soon.

Aspen's hand gently rubbed my back, easing the knots forming across my shoulder blades where I always kept my stress.

“Maybe it'll be easier if we all start eating and give her a bit of space to breathe without all the attention on her.” Daniel picked up a slice of buttered toast and held it to his mouth.

“I would like that.” I appreciated Daniel's help, though I wondered why he was suddenly being nice. Looking over to Shadow, I asked, “Where are you and Aspen going?” I wasn't

sure if it was a question they'd appreciate, but their trip sounded important.

Aspen grabbed a plate and started filling it with all kinds of foods, then handed it to me before helping himself.

"I don't want you to be alarmed, but our trip is related to where you're from. We know you've come from the Bakewell Institute for Girls, and—"

"You do?" My chest pumping for air, I set the plate with food on the table with a clank when it almost fell out of my grasp. Inching to the edge of the couch, a desperate urge to escape came over me as the fear they'd send me back there cinched around my throat.

As terrified as his words had made me, I managed not to get up and leave and held Shadow's direct eye contact, lifting my chin.

His shoulders remained relaxed, and he kept eating as though the news he'd just revealed to me wasn't a problem for him in the slightest.

"So, what will you do? Send me back?" I hated that I sounded so weak and that my voice shuddered, but there was a reason I kept that information from them. If I returned, Ms. Bakewell would make my life hell, somehow blaming me for the Alphas taking my virginity, and I'd be spoiled goods. Besides, after my last visit to isolation with Jack, I vowed I'd do anything to never end up at his mercy again.

"Never," Aspen cooed, sliding closer to me, his hand possessively wrapping around my waist and holding me against him.

"I may not have impressed this on you enough, but you are ours now, Trinity," Shadow murmured. "We found you, and you perfumed for us, so letting you go now would be like tearing our hearts out of our chests." His words melted my insides, even if Daniel kept on eating, not even looking my way. Shadow bumped his knee, giving him a sharp glare, and Daniel slipped a smile onto his lips.

“Don’t let the food go to waste. You must be starving,” he said softly, but it was clear he didn’t mean it.

Viper, on the other hand, sat unmoving. His presence was like a blanket wrapped around me, suffocating me, making me feel he wasn’t in agreement with Shadow.

“Then where are you going?” I asked, blinking from one Alpha to the next, finally resting on Shadow.

“You can rest assured, we aren’t going anywhere near the Institute. I have a few contacts who will give me insider information.” Shadow stood and moved over to sit next to me. Taking my foot, he set it in his lap.

With Shadow and Aspen sandwiching me between them, fire ignited deep in my core as though I had harnessed the power of lightning. Our bodies touching in any way was a terrible idea. All I could think about was both their mouths on me, one of them placing their lips between my nether lips, the other sucking on my nipple, while Viper and Daniel watched.

Need pulsing through me as my skin burned with heat, I shot to my feet and moved away from the Alphas to stand across them.

“Maybe it’s best we don’t touch right now,” I gasped. My belly clenched, tightening with a growing need. The breeze washed over me, laced with arousal but minus their evocative, potent scents, and I wanted to scream from frustration. I wanted them to throw me onto the couch and claim me.

Viper’s smirk irritated me because he enjoyed seeing me suffer while Daniel was still eating, as though this was a normal day for him. Shadow and Aspen, though, were attentive, studying me, and looked ready to leap up and grab me back against them.

“Look, Trinity, you have to trust us. I understand we’re all still getting to know you, but no one here wishes you harm. While I try to find out exactly what we’re dealing with, you take it easy and let your body prepare for the heat. That’s all you need to worry about.”

Hugging myself, I chewed on my cheek while goosebumps flared over my skin.

“So you won’t tell anyone I’m here?”

He shook his head, and relief rippled over me.

“Will you also find out about my friends... if they are alright? Adella, Charity, and Frannie,” my words came out in a rush, my pulse thumping louder.

“I will do my best, but no promises,” he assured me, which was enough.

“Thank you. You’ve all been so kind to me as I go through this.” My voice wavered. Everything still felt new to me, which made dealing with four different personalities that much more challenging.

“Little Omega, we are all going through it with you, as it’s impacting us as well. You’re not alone,” Aspen mused, that spectacular smile curling over his lips. “Now, how about you come and have something to eat to keep your strength up?” He patted the seat next to him.

Drawn into Aspen’s enchanting blue eyes and Shadow’s promise dulling the anxiety in my veins, I relaxed. I slid next to Aspen as Shadow got up and rejoined Daniel. Aspen’s warmth calmed me. I picked up my plate as they started talking about which car Shadow and Aspen were taking.

Eating and listening, I quickly realized these Alphas were wealthy. From what I could gather, they owned at least six cars. With that came a spark of hope that maybe, for once in my life, things might go right for me. If they had enough money to buy me from Ms. Bakewell, there was hope for me yet.

“So, are we purposefully ignoring the white elephant in the room, or are we assuming the Omega knows who really owns her institute?” Viper’s voice had me lifting my attention from my chocolate croissant, and my stomach churned at his words.

“What difference does it make to Trinity?” Aspen responded, his voice darkening.

Suddenly, I lost my appetite.

“Well, if she knows,”—Viper shrugged—“she might have some intelligence she can share with us before you head off.”

“What are you talking about?” I asked, my voice shaking.

Viper leaned forward, his bent arms resting on his thighs. “Do you know who owns the Bakewell Institute for Girls?”

“Ms. Bakewell,” I responded instantly. “Why?”

“There goes your theory,” Aspen mocked.

“Is it someone else?” Meeting Shadow’s gaze, panic flared. Was it Jack, the fucking asshole who loved to torture girls and got away with it? “Is that important?”

Shadow glared at Viper, who shrugged.

“You want transparency, then she should know.”

The hairs on my arms stood on end in anticipation.

“Your Institute is owned by the Shchavlev Mafia family.”

“Oh, fuck,” I gasped, panic squeezing my lungs as a shiver gripped me. “So the Mafia will be coming for me? For your pack?” I may have been sheltered at the Institute, but everyone knew who ruled our city of Liberty—the two Mafia families, who were constantly at war.

Daniel took a sip of his coffee, then put it down. “Only if they find out you’re here, which we can’t let anyone know.”

“Are you fucking happy now?” Aspen growled at Viper.

“Yes.” His shoulder curled forward, his lips twisting into a grimace. “Now she won’t make the mistake of trying to call the Institute when no one is looking after her.”

Suddenly everyone was staring at me, and I tossed daggers at Viper for throwing me under the bus. What the hell was his problem? If he hated me so much, why the fuck did he kiss me and take my underwear? What made me more furious was the physical chemistry I had for him... a man who clearly hated me. I decided then that I would keep away from him, and under no circumstance would I ever kiss that asshole again.

“I didn’t know,” I rasped in my defense. “I was worried about my friends. I wasn’t going to tell anyone where I was. But now I won’t contact them. I give you my word.”

“See, how easy a few words could alleviate potential disaster,” Viper winked at me, then stood and strolled across the terrace and into the house.

“Asshole,” I murmured under my breath, but with the grin he offered me, he’d heard me.

Looking at Aspen and Shadow, the world tilted when I thought about the danger my friends would be in if the Mafia interrogated them about my whereabouts.

“I-I had no idea the Mafia owned the Institute.” My voice was barely audible, and I trembled.

“And there’s no reason you should have known.” Aspen curled me into his arms. “It’s going to be okay.”

Was it? Just when I held onto a thin tendril of hope that things might turn out rosy, the universe delivered another blow. Everyone knew when the Mafia was involved, bloodshed followed.

I pressed myself tightly into Aspen’s arms, ready to hide from the world.

Seventeen

S

TRINITY

Silence permeated the air while night spread its wings across my room, promising to drive me to madness if I stayed in my bedroom any longer.

I lay on the bed, feverish and restless. A balmy heat clung to me, though it could just as easily be my heat cycle. I'd showered three times today to cool down and wore a soft pastel pink and almost transparent nightgown, but it was light and all I could bear touching my skin without stirring arousal. So short of walking around naked, I dressed in the flimsiest thing I could find from the collection of clothing Thelma had bought for me.

Two days had passed with no sign of Shadow and Aspen.

Daniel and Viper had kept their distance from me, which was for the best. Considering I was horny as hell or so angry about being by myself when I needed them the most, I was ready to tear someone's head off. The ache flaring deep within me pushed me to find Viper, tie him down, and have my way with him.

Groaning, I pushed up from the bed, and my skin seemed to tighten around me. A low purr slipped past my throat, heat curling around me, caressing me.

My heat was driving me crazy.

I missed the Alphas, which was insane because how could I miss someone I was just getting to know?

Getting out of bed, I padded on bare feet to my door, which I'd unlocked after Thelma brought up dinner. In the

hallway, a light flickered from downstairs, and the voices sounded like Daniel and Thelma.

To keep from going mad, I decided I'd explore the house. Climbing to the next level, which I hadn't checked out, I strolled on silent steps along the dimly lit hallways. I discovered a room with a pool table, as well as two bathrooms. The next three doors along the hall were empty. The fourth one was a bedroom with the lamp switched on.

From the moment I spotted Aspen's shirt left on the floor, I knew I'd entered his room. The two windows were open, and wind fluttered into the room. There were unlit candles on every surface, a floor lamp, as well as lamps on the nightstands on each side of his bed. A chair with a red velvet covering sat near the wall of books. A dresser stood to the left of his bed, a chest at the foot. I frowned when I discovered a lock on the wooden chest. I pulled it just in case but gave up when it was obvious I'd need metal cutters to get into it. The man had a right to his secrets, I guessed.

Two pairs of thick black biker boots sat by the door, and when I opened the cupboard and found a leather jacket, I realized Aspen must have a motorcycle.

Leaving the room behind, I moved down the hallway, where I discovered another open door and stepped inside.

There wasn't a lot of furniture. All the clothes were in a closet, neatly hung on hangers, color coordinated. That might be a little obsessive, but it made me wonder if this room belonged to Shadow. He liked to be in control. Maybe a little too much.

My gaze settled on a ring that was far too feminine to be for a man sitting on a silver platter on top of his dresser. None of the men wore jewelry, so the ring must mean something to Shadow. The bare walls surprised me. I'd half expected portraits or photos of his family, but there wasn't a single image.

He was a man who needed little, who wanted a quiet place to rest but didn't need a bunch of things to distract him. *Things* didn't matter to him, which made me think people did. I didn't

think he spent a lot of time in the room, so it wasn't a special place for him. Being around others was what he cared about, and from what I knew about him and the things I'd learned, his pack held the highest value.

As in the previous room, the breeze rushed into the room from the opened windows. Sitting on the edge of the bed, I decided I would confront Viper tomorrow about helping me. Maybe the Alpha had some compassion in that stubborn head of his, and if not, I'd go as far as to ask for Daniel's soothing touch.

The longer I glanced around the room, the more I felt myself sway as a low purr danced over my throat. I missed the Alphas terribly, needing to be touched to stop the burning ache that slammed into me suddenly so intensely, I might have cried out.

Finding myself drowning in desire, I sweated from how quickly I'd burned up, how even the thought of being with Aspen and Shadow, my thighs made a squelching sound when I squeezed them together. I shook my head to clear it, but lust rolled over me again and again. With it came a frustration that had my eyes tearing up from how badly I longed for an Alpha's dick.

"Fuck you, Shadow and Aspen, for being gone for two whole days," I growled under my breath. With the flaring irritation, an idea popped into my head, consuming me until I was on my feet and shutting the door, so I was alone in Shadow's room. I frantically ripped my nightgown off before throwing myself onto his bed.

I squirmed, drawing in one raspy breath after the other as I lay there, lightly rubbing my fingers over my hardened nipples. The prick of awareness that someone could walk in on me heightened the desire tightening my core.

Grabbing one of his pillows, I tucked it between my thighs, all the way up to where I was drenched, and rocked into it, wanting him to smell me in the middle of the night and go crazy with need. I wasn't normally someone to seek

revenge, but my insides were twisting with pain, and the struggle was real.

Yet being in his bed secretly grew alluring, exciting, wild. I swapped pillows, ensuring I gave each one just enough scent, so when he came to my room in the middle of the night, horny as well, I would tell him I wasn't in the mood.

Grinning to myself, I gyrated into his pillow, my fingers pinching my nipples, my mind picturing his huge elephant trunk of a cock pushing into me.

The flare of arousal hit me faster than I expected, and in a heartbeat, the climax rushed through me. I thrashed on the bed, rubbing my pussy against the pillow, a cry in my throat. The raw surge of satisfaction eased the ache just enough for me to breathe easily and a smile to curl my lips. It wasn't close to the complete fulfillment an Alpha could bring me, but it smothered the pain.

My breath caught as I hurried out of bed and fixed the crumpled sheets. A wet patch lay on each pillow, but I figured it was bound to dry by the time Shadow returned. I pulled my nightgown back on, then snuck out of the room, laughing to myself, running down the hallway.

Viper

*S*team wafted off my body as I emerged from the shower, only to find the Omega in the doorway studying me. She had her skirt wrenched up by her hand between her thighs, rubbing herself.

“Oops, was I not supposed to stare?” she purred, not moving or lowering her hand from her between her legs.

Just watching her get off in front of me sent my cock into a frenzy, getting so hard, I groaned from the rush.

“If it's a dangerous game you want to play, then be prepared,” I growled and stepped toward her, water droplets sliding down my body, which she eyed. “Now, should we do something about that greedy pussy of yours?” I asked, my

voice raspy, my heart thumping so loudly, it spun the room with me.

She remained several steps away from me, and still, I inhaled the intoxicating scent of her orange blossom tangled with the sultry smell of her sex. It hung heavy in the air, flooding my senses to where I even tasted her on the back of my throat.

“Is that a promise?” she breathed.

When she made a small moaning sound, I closed the distance between us and pushed her dress up and over her head, wanting her naked. Slick dripped down the inside of her thighs as I pulled her hand away from that delicious pussy.

“You’re soaking for me, aren’t you?”

“You want to fuck me, don’t you, Alpha?”

She retreated from the bathroom, and like a puppet of a string, I followed, unable to stop inhaling the scent that sent jolts of arousal straight to my dick.

“It’s what you want, isn’t it? For your pussy to cream my cock and to scream as I push my cock into your pussy.”

“Well, that depends,” she said with a laugh, then swung around and abruptly ran down the hallway. “If you can catch me.”

My heart thumped, my cock hard as hell as I stared at the Omega darting away from me, her bare ass jiggling, the most beautiful sight in the world. Except that wasn’t the case. The best view was her spread for me, her pink, juicy lips swollen and dripping with my seed.

Running after her, I knew once I caught her, I’d fuck her so hard, the whole house would hear us.

I jolted awake in my bed, my cock bursting with cum, spearing everywhere like a fucking fountain. Shuddering, I grunted, the Omega’s smell suffocating me while my cock pumped as if I plunged into her.

When I finally came to a rest, I lay in bed completely undone, my cock not going down. Not when the dream felt so real, and I longed for her soaking pussy. Her scent grew, and it almost smelled as if she was here, sitting on my face. I wasn't sure if I was losing my mind from working hard to keep my distance from her and clear my head of her arousal and telling myself I wasn't ready for another Omega.

The air was perfumed with her as if I wasn't the only one who'd had a randy dream, except hers trickled through the whole damn house.

How was I supposed to ignore her? After losing Lillian five years ago, I vowed I wouldn't commit myself to another. Sure, I'd fuck as many as I wanted, but when it came to matters of the heart, I was closed off. Problem was, when it came to an Omega in heat who drew you to her like a siren, it was close to impossible to make it a purely carnal pleasure. The link between Omegas and Alphas was linked to the heart, as well as deep-rooted emotions. Something I'd wanted to avoid.

And here I was, waking up with a full-blown climax from her scent.

"Fuck!" I rolled over in bed and covered my head with the pillow. Contemplating going to stay in a hotel, an explosion of pussy smells slammed into me, so strong, so powerful, my cock pulsed, ready to come once more from her fragrance alone.

What the hell!

I ripped the pillow off and came up for air, finding it easier to breathe, which meant... Staring down at the pillow, I pulled it up to my nose and inhaled. The ripe smell of her slick was as thick and heavy as if I had my face buried in her pussy.

"Are you fucking kidding me?" That minx snuck into my room and rubbed her sweet, delicious pussy over my bed to drive me wild. It had everything to do with me ignoring her. A furious hunger rose, a sense of retribution. She did not know what she'd awakened in me.

I roared to my feet, shaking my head, except her scent clung to me. I'd never be able to sleep in my bed again without cumming, and she knew it.

Eighteen

8

VIPER

The cool night air did nothing to ease the fire as I burst out onto the terrace, searching for the Omega. She hadn't been in her room, but it was easy to track her down by her scent. My pulse was pumping, and my cock was still hard from her stunt in my room.

At the other end of the terrace, she stood with her back to me, hair blowing off her face and her thin nightdress fluttering around her legs. She was holding onto the railing and staring into the night. She didn't turn at my approach. Seeing her like this brought back the filthy images from my dream and the things I longed to do to her.

"The stars are so bright up here. I once read that the stars of the Little Dipper might have once formed the wings of the sky's powerful dragon, Draco. According to mythology, the Greeks clipped his wings after some sailors showed that the seven stars of the Little Dipper were better used for their navigational purposes."

"I didn't know you were into stargazing, but maybe I should have since you seem to enjoy seeing them from my room."

She twisted around to face me, the moonlight glinting from her eyes. Under its silvery haze, her beauty shone, which was the opposite of what I should have been thinking.

My gaze dipped from her surprised face to the thin nightdress, which revealed the darkness of those perky tits and

the small patch of hair between her legs. I sucked in a raspy breath, my head cloudy with a need to rut her.

“Wh-What are you talking about?” she gasped.

Bursting out laughing, I paused in front of her and threw my cardinal rule of not fucking another Omega out the window. She had me so riled up, I was going mad, and if she needed me to claim her, oh, I’d give her the fuck of a lifetime she’d never forget.

Sliding my hand to her chin, I lifted it so she looked me right in the eyes. My balls tightened with a hunger to finally taste her.

“I know you were in my room today.”

Her cheeks paled as she blinked at me, confused, then I witnessed her expression transform into someone confident, and she grinned.

“Did you enjoy yourself with my gift?” She rushed her words, and it was clear I’d caught her off-guard. Good.

My hand slid down her arm, holding her to ensure she didn’t get too far.

“If it’s games you like to play, I am the fucking king of games.”

Her eyes narrowed, and she tugged away from me.

“Well, lucky then, my present wasn’t meant for you, but Shadow. I must have mixed up the rooms. But you want to know the truth?” she said, color spreading over her cheeks and fire in her eyes. “I’m glad you got a small taste of what I’d been going through the last couple of days. I get it. You don’t want me here. I don’t want to be here, either, but I’m making do.”

I blinked at her, hurt she’d intended to torture Shadow instead of me, but could I blame her when I’d been a dick to her?

“I knew you’d leave us the moment you got over your heat.”

“You’re doing my head in,” she huffed. “Why would you even care? You’ve made your intentions clear.” Shoving my arm, she pushed past me.

Madness catapulted through me at the emotions and arousal she brought out of me. I snapped my arm out and grabbed her because I sure as hell wasn’t finished. She moved too fast, though, and my fingers caught the thin strap of her nightgown. The abrupt rip of material from my force to drag her back to me bled into the night.

She gasped and grasped her flimsy pajamas that cascaded halfway across her back, revealing scars on her skin. Zigzag wounds crossed her lower back across milky white flesh, and my gut tightened.

Who the fuck did that to her?

My fingers released the fabric, and she quickly covered herself. She twisted toward me, and anger and vulnerability drowned in her blue eyes. Clutching the material over a breast, her cheeks were dusty pink with her blush.

“What the fuck is wrong with you?” Her hand flew toward me, and her open palm slapped me across the cheek.

It stung, but I couldn’t get the scars out of my mind. My heart constricted, squeezing until I couldn’t take a breath, but with it, fury unleashed that someone dared harm her.

“Who hurt you, Trinity? Who the fuck did that to your back?”

Her chin trembled, and she lowered her gaze. Her knuckles were white from tightly grasping the fabric to keep herself covered.

“He’s a nobody. A fucking monster who prayed on girls at the Institute, and no matter how much I’ve wished Jack would just leave us alone, he was getting worse, hurting us more.”

A desperate need to lift her into my arms and tell her no one would ever touch her again slammed into me. The furious need to protect her came at me fast. The only other time I’d felt such intensity was with Lillian, my little red-haired

Omega, who still haunted my thoughts, who, even today, I hadn't worked out how to say farewell to.

The past sank its teeth into me, the grief of her death breaking me over and over. I winced, and before I knew it, I had Trinity in my arms, hugging her, my own agony shattering me.

Hatred flared at how weak I'd become that I still crumbled from the past, yet when I closed my eyes, the color of her pale hazel eyes came to me, along with the last time we'd been together and argued over a fucking stupid shirt I wore that she hated. I'd relived that argument hundreds of times, wishing I'd just taken her into my arms, kissed away the anger, and told her she wasn't driving anywhere without me.

"Hey, are you okay?" Trinity whispered. Tender fingers trailed across my cheek, lifting me out of the grief that dragged me deeper.

Opening my eyes, I embraced Trinity, scared I'd lose her. She fit well with me, and instead of escaping, she melted against me. Warmth radiated from her soft, warm body, and it felt like I couldn't stop touching her, couldn't let her go, and was unsure how to stop myself.

Shaking off the ache tearing through me, I rasped, "I'm fine." I stared down at the gorgeous girl I'd been pushing away because I knew it'd be unbearable to resist her once I began.

She watched me with softness in her eyes and didn't back away. The small gesture of her hand reaching up to mine kindled a spark of hope in the darkness of my mind.

"You just started shaking, and you scared me."

The sincerity of her words affected me. For those few moments, her sweet gaze never left mine.

On the inside, I felt like shit, and a wave of guilt crashed over me that I'd been an asshole to her since she'd arrived at our home. But seeing the marks on her back touched something inside me I hadn't expected.

From that moment we'd rushed her into our car at the Glass Slipper Ball, I told myself I didn't owe her anything. I didn't want my life tied to hers unless there was some way to exploit it for the pack's benefit. Things should have remained that way. After losing one Omega, I didn't have it in me to risk falling apart again. If I had to go through that again, it would kill me, but ignoring the Omega was no longer an option. I realized that the moment I saw her scars.

"We all have skeletons in our past." I motioned with my chin to the night, to the world beyond the guarded walls of our compound. "We don't live in a nice world, and I suspect everyone has a horrible story to tell."

"That doesn't excuse the monsters out there."

"No, it doesn't, sweetheart. Now, how about you tell me what part of the Institute Jack works in, or better yet, do you know where he lives?"

She half-laughed as my thumb caressed her arm where I held her.

"That's really cute."

"I'm completely sincere. By sunrise, I'll gut the fucker where he sleeps." The anger pouring over me felt familiar, a sensation I was comfortable with, and I embraced it quickly to cover my sappy emotions.

"I fucking hate the guy, but I could never wish death on anyone." She slid out of my arms, her warmth replaced by coldness, and it took all my strength to bring her back against me again.

She was grasping the thin fabric to keep herself covered, so I removed my shirt and handed it to her.

"Put this on."

Accepting it, she turned away from me and let her nightgown cascade down her body. She quickly pulled my shirt over her body, but not before I stared at her gorgeous bare ass and the full impact of the marks on her back. They extended the width of her back in lines as if someone had

whipped her. The shirt fell to her knees, and she turned toward me once more with a lopsided grin.

“Thank you.”

My hands twitched with fury I hadn't felt in a long time while my insides crumbled.

“I'll take you back to your room,” I suggested.

“No, please. It's so hot in there, and I hate being alone. Out here, I have all the stars to keep me company.”

Taking her arm, I walked to the outdoor couches, and we sat on the largest one that easily sat six people. She tucked her bent legs beneath, pulling the fabric of my shirt to cover her knees.

“I'm sorry he hurt you and left those scars... and I'm sorry I've been acting like a fucking jerk. You might laugh at me, but this is the first time I've apologized in a very long time.”

“Do you have an aversion to it?” she asked, mirth behind her words, staring at me from behind her eyelashes.

“Apparently so.” I chuckled, still trying to get hold of my out-of-control emotions. The hunger to rut the Omega grew inside me, as did the idea of carrying her into my room and locking us up together for a week, keeping her to myself.

“Who hurt *you*, Viper?” Her voice danced on the light breeze, drawing my attention.

Not too many things surprised me, but when it came to this Omega, she specialized in it.

“Considering we're talking about asshole people and all that,” she continued. “I saw an anguish in your eyes that only comes from pain.”

Staring out into the darkness around the compound, I couldn't recall the last time I talked about my tragedy.

“I wish I could say my story resulted from physical pain.” My heart hammered with grief and confusion the more I let my thoughts linger in the past.

“You don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to.” She leaned closer. “We can just look up at the stars and try to find more constellations.”

Before I could respond, she shuffled to lie back on her half of the couch, her knees hanging off the edge of the couch, my shirt riding up mid-thigh, grabbing my attention to her creamy white flesh.

I wasn’t one to miss out, so I laid back across the rest of the couch so the tops of our heads were touching. I wasn’t exactly a small guy, so my ass was squished up against the arm of the sofa, and my legs dangled awkwardly.

We lay there, looking at the canopy glinting with stars while silence swept between us.

“Thelma once told me I was on my way to becoming a villain,” I admitted.

“Are you serious?” She burst out laughing and shifted around to look down at me, flashing me a grin. “Why?” Then she flipped back down onto her back, shaking the whole couch.

“I’ve held on to the grief for so long, it’s made me cranky and dark. She insists villains are born out of tragedy and that I was doing an excellent job of ending up as one. She’s always had a wild imagination.”

“If it’s any consolation, I don’t see you as a villain, even if you’ve been an asshole to me.”

“Ouch.” I reached a hand up and over my head, accidentally placing my palm on her face, which left her giggling and pushing me away. Intentionally, I tenderly ran my fingers along her cheek. “I won’t argue with you. You’re right. I am a certified moron to let the loss of one Omega block me from seeing a potential new one.”

“You lost an Omega?”

Studying the sky, I spoke freely. Not seeing her facial expression, it was easier to pretend she wouldn’t judge me.

“Lillian and I were together for eleven months. We were bound together, and she was going to be mine forever. Shadow had Daniel, and Aspen was still on the lookout for his Omega, though even back then, he was making noise about us finding one for him and Shadow to share.”

“How did you and Lillian meet?” she urged.

“Believe it or not, it was a blind date. When we first got together, she had shown no signs of becoming an Omega, but I fell head over heels for her, regardless. Then a week into her showing her first signs of becoming one, her hair turning a pale violet, and we had a stupid argument. She took off angrily in her car and got into a traffic accident.” My words came out robotically while I suffocated on the emotions I barely kept down.

“I’m very sorry, Viper.”

“You know what the hardest part was? That she didn’t pass right away, and I couldn’t even tell myself that she went quickly. That stuff fucks up with your head.”

“Viper, God, I’m so sorry...”

Flashes of the past pulsed over me, blinking like a blinding light in the back of my eyes, then I was suddenly there.

“Where is she?” I croaked, pouring out of the car like liquid. I’d lost all feeling in my body the moment I received the call about Lillian. She didn’t have long and kept asking for me. I choked on tears, every step frantic, every breath like blades slicing me apart. I didn’t know what to expect, but I was breaking apart like glass shattering.

The cop took me to the part of the street that had been partitioned off by bright police tape attached to two trees. I ducked under it, flashes of car lights and voices around me, but I desperately swept the street at night for any sign of Lillian.

Her white sedan came into view, jacked up on the side of the curb and on its side, but there were three other cars smashed up. The carnage of twisted metal, the broken glass,

and the throbbing light of the paramedics were playing with my head.

When the policeman stepped aside from in front of me, I saw her slumped forward from her waist over the front of the hood, pinned between the car and a tree behind her.

A painful grunt spilled from my throat.

I wasn't sure what I was seeing at first because my tears were falling so fast. A quick glance at her car showed no broken window or windshield. She would have had to get out of the driver's seat, then another car lost control and slammed into her. I tried my best to use my logical mind to make sense of what happened to avoid dealing with the devastation in front of me.

My legs stopped moving, my body shaking so heavily, my knees were about to give out.

"She doesn't have long," the policeman murmured in my ear. "She's asking for you. Go, son, before it's too late."

On quick feet, I moved to her side, my throat choking up, tears burning my eyes, and selfishly, all I could think about was how I was supposed to say goodbye. I wasn't sure I could do that.

I startled out of my memory, gasping, my eyes damp, and something warm curling up against my chest.

Trinity was kneeling beside the couch, her arms wrapped around me, her cheek pressed to my chest.

"You know it's not your fault." The quietness of her voice comforted me.

Opening my mouth to respond, my throat constricted, and I choked out a small, muffled cry. I clamped my eyes closed to hold back any damn tears, loathing myself for not saving Lillian, for not being strong enough after all these years.

I wasn't sure how long we stayed like that or when she crawled on top of me and cradled against me, both of us

holding each other, but when I finally opened my eyes, the first threads of sunlight spread across the sky.

My eyes stung. I must have passed out from exhaustion. My sweetheart breathed deeply as she lay asleep, curled up on top of me. Her warm breaths rushed across my neck, and while the old part of me insisted I removed her from my life before she trickled into my soul, I suspected it was already too late.

Nineteen

L

TRINITY

“Read a book, and I’ll bring you some juice.” Viper motioned for me to relax in the living room, which was a nice change from my bedroom.

I had woken up in his bed, plastered to his body, and I decided that was my new favorite way to get up in the morning. I still had to process everything we discussed up on the terrace, but Viper had shown me a different side to him I hadn’t expected. And for once, he hadn’t growled at me. I also started to better understand the reason for his growly attitude toward me. I wouldn’t say it was vanishing, and he’d get over it, or that I had a clue what I’d do with this pack, but for now, I appreciated the small gain that Viper actually opened up to me about something.

An abrupt pounding on the front door, and I flinched. Viper turned his attention away from me.

“Who the fuck is that?” he barked.

Clearly, he wasn’t asking me. Pulling out a walkie-talkie from the back pocket of his dark-blue jeans, he started toward the hallway that would take him down to the door. “Mike, who is that at the door? Who let them past the main gate?”

“It’s Roman. Said he had some business to take care of with you.” A crackly voice came over the speaker. The words made Viper look up with a flash of worry that was quickly hidden, then glared my way.

“Go to your room. Now. Lock the door.” His voice grew dark, then he spun on his heels and marched to the door. A

sense of urgency thickened the air, and considering my recent discovery of who owned the Institute, my thoughts flew to panic that someone from the Institute had found me. So, of course, I jolted down the hall and upstairs... pausing breathless at the next floor and glancing down where I had a narrow view of the main foyer, curious who it was.

My pulse was thumping in my veins, my hands gripping the railing tightly as I leaned forward, listening, needing to know who it was.

The creak of the door sounded, then there was a rush of light over the foyer, which I could see from my vantage point.

A smell akin to burned coffee wafted up the stairs. What the hell was that? I put my hand under my nose to stop the stink. It was awful, and I cringed.

“Why haven’t you bought anything this week, Viper?” a guttural male voice said, followed by loud footfalls entering the house.

“Because we have other sellers to buy from, Roman. You aren’t the only supplier. Now, how about you pull your fucking self together and tell me why you’re charging in here like a bull?” Viper’s voice was brimming with fury.

“My merch is the best on the market, and you know it,” the man responded. “I want to find out why I’m playing second fiddle to some of the synthetic pills out there.”

I stiffened.

Pills?

The coffee fragrance grew darker, more bitter, and it became apparent. I smelled the intruder’s scent, growing stronger, overpoweringly so.

“What’s that?” the man asked brusquely.

“What’s what?” Viper asked, irritated.

Someone inhaling deeply filled the silence.

“There’s an unmarked Omega in this house. Did you buy one at last? How did you bastards get so lucky?” Footsteps

grew louder, and I practically threw myself back against the wall to avoid being seen. “Can I see her? She smells so sweet.”

“Don’t worry about the Omega,” Viper growled. “Now, how about you head off? When we need something, we’ll contact you.”

Someone was coming up the steps. My pulse charged as I ran to my room, where I shut the door and locked it behind me.

Pressing my ear to it, my whole body shook, and I bit down on the corner of my lip nervously. The irony of the situation wasn’t wasted on me. When I first arrived, I attempted to escape the compound, and now look at me, hiding to keep anyone from finding out I lived with this pack... to protect them and myself.

When had I grown so close to them that the thought of being dragged away terrified me?

A fist suddenly pounded on my door, and I jumped back, my heart hitting the back of my throat. Dust flew from the hinges at how hard it slammed into the door. What the fuck was his problem? At this rate, he was going to break down the door.

“I can smell you, Omega. Don’t you worry. If these idiots haven’t marked you, I’ll be happy to do it. Let me in, little pig.”

What the hell was wrong with this guy? I glanced around the room, desperately trying to find a weapon, but the only thing that looked remotely heavy was the small lamp on my nightstand. I pulled it loose from the power supply and held it over my head, ready to bash him over the head if he burst through the door.

“Get away from her, fuckhead,” Viper growled, and the pounding on the door ended.

“She’s unclaimed, Viper. I can claim her if you’re not man enough to do it. Or have you gotten yourself an illegal acquisition you’re storing away to sell? By the sweetness of

her slick in the air, she'll fetch a high price, and I'm willing to pay anything to take her off your hands."

Someone snarled, then loud slammed into the door, shaking it on its hinges.

I screamed, dropping the lamp, which smashed onto the wooden floorboards, cracking in half and barely missing my toes.

Jerking my head up, I stared at the door. My ears perked, and my knees trembled.

"She's a fucking illegal Omega, isn't she? Let me fuck her, Viper, and no one needs to know." I heard what sounded like a fist meeting flesh, then the man grunted, followed by another thump against the door.

"You fucking piece of scum, talking about her like that," Viper snarled, and all I could hear were the thundering sounds of a fight, the thumps of hitting the walls, the wet squelching sounds from being punched over and over.

Gripping my middle, the dull throb of my pulse banged inside my skull. When everything fell silent, I moved from my frozen spot, shaking so hard, even my teeth chattered.

I wanted to open the door and find out what had happened, but I wasn't an idiot. When Daniel's voice streamed from the hallway outside my room, I closed the distance to the door.

"He's not a threat anymore, Viper. Let him go. Fuck man, he looks blue," Daniel cried out.

A chill ran down my spine. Was the guy dead?

Reaching for the doorknob, I couldn't bring myself to open the door with my trembling fingers. Dread flashed in my mind—blood, a dead body—carving through me and leaving me on the verge of breaking down and crying.

Daniel was saying something, but I couldn't make it out.

"Grow some fucking balls and help me," Viper snapped. "We need to get him out of here now, then I'll dispose of him."

Hearing the tap of footsteps fading away from my door, I twisted the knob.

There was no sign of Viper or Daniel, only the light from downstairs bouncing off the trail of blood drops following a path down the stairs.

Crimson stained my door and the wall, there were bloody handprints and chunks of what looked like hair were on the wood floorboards, and the stale smell of coffee that stunk of death.

My throat trembled, my muscles shivering as I fought the urge to scream.

Viper had killed the man to shut him up, and it scared the hell out of me, but what worried me worse was that I fucking adored Viper for doing that for me... for us. If he hadn't, the guy would have raped me, then told everyone I was here. Then they, the authorities, would come for me, and I'd be returned to Bakewell.

Fuck that. And fuck that asshole who smelled like bitter coffee.

My stomach clenched.

The destruction, the devastation I'd have caused left me shuddering on the inside.

There was no turning back. My fate was entwined with this pack, and until we came up with a solution to avoid all of us completely fucked up, I had to work with them to keep us all protected and concealed.

I lifted my head to look at the bloody aftermath and knew what I had to do. Sprinting downstairs, I raced into the kitchen, where I'd seen a bucket and cleaning chemicals. Thelma wasn't around. I hurried back to my floor and began scrubbing the blood off my door, the walls, and the floorboards.

What Viper did was for all of us, and we were all responsible for keeping ourselves protected. I didn't know how long I'd been at it when the creak of the floorboards behind me alerted me to someone's presence. I glanced over

my shoulder at Daniel coming up to join me. His eyes grew wide as orbs.

“Trinity, you don’t need to do that.” He threw himself at me, grabbing me by my arm and lifting me to my feet.

“No, I do. We’re all in this together. Viper protected us, and I’m not above cleaning spilled blood.”

“You’re not afraid of what he did?”

“Of course I am.” My laughter was strained. “But I’m more scared of what would happen if that jerk had gotten his hands on me or told the authorities you had me living here.”

“Leave this.” Daniel wrangled the bloody rag from my hand and dumped it into the red water in the bucket. “I’ll have the maids clean this up in no time. You need to rest.”

“What about Viper?” I glanced downstairs.

“He’s gone to get rid of the evidence.”

Ice filled my veins, though it shouldn’t have since I knew what he was going to do. I’d heard their conversation, yet I felt like I was living an episode of Dexter.

“You’re very brave and smart to know this wasn’t your fault,” Daniel said softly, running his hand along my cheek and staring into my eyes. “I can see why Shadow is so smitten with you.”

Lifting me into his arms with ease, his touch was so calming, so soothing, I melted against him.

“I’ve missed you,” I whispered. “I’m sorry for whatever I did to make you upset with me.” He pressed my face back against the wall of his chest. I lingered there, letting his gentle breaths soothe me. Daniel was so good at this.

“You don’t owe me an apology.” He carried me upstairs to the next level, where I’d found the Alphas’ bedrooms, then set me down in the hallway. “I want to apologize to you.”

“You do?” That was the last thing I expected. My thoughts went back to the day he helped me to orgasm, then practically laughed at me, then ignored me ever since.

A blush on his cheeks, he looked as though he was in pain.

“I’m sorry I let jealousy take me too far. I shouldn’t have treated you that way. I hope you can find a way to forgive me because, believe it or not, I like you. I meant to talk to you about it but struggled to make the first move. Then I saw you scrubbing blood, and I felt like a bastard for treating you so shitty when I’m the one with the issue.”

“I wouldn’t say that.”

“My whole life, I’ve been afraid of losing the one person who brought me happiness when I had lost so much. I knew Shadow was going to get an Omega, had mentally prepared myself, but when you finally arrived, and I saw you with him, I felt like I was losing my mind, and it went too far. That voice inside me was driving me crazy, and I was so angry, so needy.”

Wincing at the agony in his words, I touched his arm. His apology was consuming me. My mind was still caught up in the incident back in my room, but this was steamrolling over me.

“I’m working at taming my jealousy. I don’t want to lose my family. I’ve known Shadow for so long, I don’t know how to be without him. Will you help me? I don’t want to leave.”

My heart broke for him, and at that moment, I hated myself. I’d been so caught up in my problems, I didn’t stop for a moment to think of what impact my arrival would have on the others. I squeezed his arm.

“Daniel, I never wanted you to leave Shadow. I accept that you’re with me, and you’re part of this pack. I’m the lucky one if the four of you would ever accept me.”

There was a quiver in his arm beneath my touch. His pain was my pain.

“I could help you with your pain,” he offered.

“And maybe you, me, and Shadow can talk about this together, so you know I have no problems with you and him still having a relationship. It would kill me if I ruined it. I see how much he adores you.” I’d never felt an inch of jealousy of

what Shadow and Daniel had, but I felt blessed I could be part of it.

“You have no idea how good it feels to have talked to you about this.” Daniel smiled, and the heaviness in his shoulders eased. He dragged me into an embrace.

I held onto him as he embraced me in his strong arms, the heat he radiated calming my frantic heart rate and earlier panic. If anything, it felt like a part of my life was closing, and the unease from the tension Daniel had caused me became smaller.

“I have something for you,” he whispered.

I pulled away, smiling that I had my friend back.

“What is it?”

He took my hand in his and pushed open the door, revealing a smaller room where a huge king bed took up most of the space. Pillows of every size lined the top and edges, and fur blankets of varying hues of oranges, burnt yellows, and dusty pinks covered the mattress. A netting that was so thin, it looked like it might be made of fairy wings was hanging from a loop dangling right over the bed. Every wall in the room was covered in shelves of books, vases of flowers, some with bowls of fruit, and pineapple decorations were everywhere. Some pillows were shaped in that form, and the lamp threw out light from its pineapple-shaped body. A two-person beanbag also resembled the blown-fruit. And did I mention there were two bedside tables with stacks of chocolate blocks?

I burst into tears, my heart unsure it could take such kindness.

“You made me a nest,” I whispered between sobs.

“Oh, Trinity, the room was meant to make you laugh, not cry,” he said cheerfully as he led me into the room by my hand. I twirled on the spot, sobbing, staring at the beautiful room that was a dream come true.

“I’ve never had anything that was new or just mine, and you’re saying this is all mine?”

“Get into bed.” Daniel chuckled, and I loved hearing him sound so happy. “It’s the softest thing you’ll ever feel.”

I didn’t know where to look first. Part of me wanted to run and check all the books, but I threw myself onto the bed and moaned.

“OMG, it’s like I’m floating on a cloud.”

Collapsing onto my back, my arms and legs spread out, I wasn’t close to touching the edges... it was that huge. A thought came to mind about how I could fit on there with all three Alphas. With that came a tingle deep in my core, the flare of arousal that didn’t need much more than a thought sometimes.

Daniel crawled into bed with me, then flopped down next to me.

“Will you accept my peace offering?” he asked coyly, twisting his head to face me, his eyes glistening.

“Are you kidding?” I teased. Rolling over to him, he collected me into his arms. “I was never angry with you. Well, except for the smartass trick you pulled in my room when you pretended to help me orgasm. You made me so embarrassed.”

“I’m sorry,” he whispered, his voice pinched with pain. “I have an idea. Let’s pretend that never happened, please.”

I glanced up at him and smirked. “Deal.”

Just then, the door swung open so abruptly, Daniel and I both jolted up to a sitting position.

Shadow and Aspen walked into the room, taking everything in.

“Gorgeous nest,” Aspen purred. “I can’t wait to test it out.”

“Where’s Viper?” A furrow creased Shadow’s forehead. “And whose blood is all over the walls and floor outside your room, Trinity?”

Twenty

2

SHADOW

“I ’m going to skin Mike alive,” I snarled over the phone, having found out the shit that went down in the mansion from Trinity and Daniel since Viper was still out. I paced our living room, my boots striking the floorboards with each step.

“I’ve taken care of it,” Viper grunted. “Mike won’t allow anyone past our front gates. Period.”

“Fuck yeah, he won’t. And where the hell are you? How long does it take to bury a body? It’s midnight!”

He paused, breathing heavily over the phone.

“So you heard.”

I ground my teeth. “I need you back here, and I want to know everything. Aspen’s already watching all the security cameras to ensure no one saw anything.”

“Is Trinity alright?”

“She’s fine,” I snapped.

The sound of gravel crunching over the phone told me Viper was driving, hopefully returning for us to debrief. My trip with Aspen had taken two days longer than I’d anticipated. All to end up being a fucking waste of time because it turned out our contacts inside both mafia families were either dead or overseas and unreachable. Took me days to find that out, leaving me fucking furious. Time was stolen from me. I’d have preferred to spend it with my Omega and Beta, keeping them safe.

“We’ll catch up in the morning. I’ve got something to finish up here,” he said adamantly.

“Viper—”

He hung up.

“Fuck! What the hell is he up to now?” The bastard was unpredictable at best and way too comfortable eliminating people and disposing of their bodies than I was comfortable with.

The silent house and darkness pressed down on me.

Aspen had vanished into the shower while Daniel was asleep in our room, but my mind was locked on Trinity after finding her in a nest, having made up with Daniel. A blessing amid all the other hell surrounding us.

Distance from her had made me crave her, long for her to the point, I barely slept during my trip. The growing bond between Alpha and his Omega didn’t impact just her. Alphas went through change as well as our bodies built a bond with hers. As such, long distances apart brought a painful ache deep in the pit of my gut, which felt like someone had scooped my insides out with a shovel.

I moved through the dark house like a shadow, only pausing outside Trinity’s new room, reaching for the knob when her faint moan from inside called to me. Walking in hurriedly, my heart in my throat, my cock hardened as the instant wall of sweet Omega smell embraced me. It clung to the back of my throat, and my nostrils flared to take in more of her orange blossom smell tangled with her slick. Absolutely intoxicating.

She was writhing on the new bed, completely naked, the cushions strew around her and on the floor, and the moonlight streaming in from the open window behind the bed illuminated her creamy body.

Silvery light followed the contours of her curvy breasts and gorgeous thighs, which were squeezed together. Then my attention slid to her tiny waist and lowered to her small strip of

pink hair between her legs. It glistened with her arousal. My luscious Omega was ripe for me, stirring in her heat cycle.

Her eyes flipped open, and she lifted her head toward me, making a whining sound.

“Hello, Omega. Have you missed me?” I said, strolling to the side of her bed and undoing the buttons of my shirt.

“Shadow,” she purred, rolling onto hands and knees, then slinking toward me like a panther.

Waves of arousal came over me at her beauty, at the thought of sinking into her tight hole from behind.

She rose onto her knees in front of me, her chest rising and falling, her pink hair messily framing her beautiful face, strands draping over her shoulders onto her delectable breasts.

“You left me for so long,” she whined, getting to her feet on the bed so she was at eye level with me. “I hate you for doing that when I needed you and Aspen the most.” Her arms were stiff by her side, her chin trembling, and I braced myself for her to take out her anger on me if that was what she needed.

“I won’t give you any excuses because you deserve so much more, but let me do one better. I’ll show you how much I missed you, too, how my dreams were filled with you, how my cock hurt because of our distance.”

Thrusting out her chin, her brazen expression was undermined by her chest pressing toward me. Her nipples were so tight, I couldn’t keep my eyes off them while I unclasped my cufflinks.

“Do you like what you see?” she asked defiantly.

“Is that a trick question?” I asked casually. Unbuttoning my shirt, I pushed it off my shoulders and down my arms, letting the fabric drop to the floor, then toed off my dress shoes, never breaking my stare.

I caught her gaze trailing down my bare chest, her hands twitching with a need I wish she’d follow through with, but I wouldn’t rush her. She was pissed at me, so I let her play her

game, watching how absolutely adorable she was, thinking she held any power to keep us apart.

“Well, that’s a shame, isn’t it?” she stated more than asked. “I don’t need you or your huge erection. I did just fine the last few days, so you can leave my room.”

I couldn’t stop my surprised laugh. Even more reason I had to have her. The way she watched me unbuckle my belt, tugging the flesh of her lower lip between her teeth... fuck me, but her hunger was going to destroy me.

Unzipping my pants and pulling them open, my heavy cock flopped out.

The Omega drew in a harsh inhale, a small groan in her throat, and her body swayed forward of its own accord.

“Tell me again, Omega, would you like me to leave?”

Her gaze dragged from my dick back up to my face, and she bit harder down on her lip. The image of her struggle sent jolts of desire down to my cock.

“Don’t fight me, sweetheart. I would never intentionally hurt you by staying away, but I’d hoped that in my absence, you and Viper might have grown closer.”

Her expression pinched, and her shoulders sloped forward

I tilted my head to the side, eager to drag this beauty into my arms. Dropping my pants, I stepped out of them and grabbed them off the floor before setting them on the side table, then placed my shoes away from the bed.

Returning to the bed, she’d fallen back down to her knees and was rubbing her breasts.

“Just so you know, I don’t forgive you just yet, but...” She licked her lips once more.

“Go on,” I teased. “Say it.”

Despite her narrowing eyes, she held her words back. She breathed heavily, and my cock twitched at the sight of her breasts jiggling from her fast inhales.

There was only so much a man could take in front of a naked goddess, especially one who smelled like heaven, and I'd been craving for days. Taking a step forward, I combed my hand through her hair.

"I've missed you terribly, my stubborn Omega."

She didn't seem to be listening. She made a whining sound, and my heart clenched. I reached to bring her closer, but she dropped down in front of me and her spine curved forward as her mouth clamped over my cock hungrily.

Hissing, I unleashed the starved desire within me with an explosive grunt.

Her head bobbed, working me deeper and making a satisfied mewl.

As much as I would like to let her suck me off, that wasn't what she deserved after our time apart. Sliding my hand to the back of her neck, I pulled her back, and my cock slipped out of her mouth with a popping sound. Frowning, her eyes lifted to mine.

"I was enjoying that," she moaned.

Lifting her into my arms, the gorgeous thing weighed hardly anything. One hand on her back, the other on the back of her head, I kissed all over her face, my lips gliding to her neck, where I drew in a sharp inhale.

The scent of her sex flaring over me, my dick punched forward harder, eager for our sweet Omega.

"I'm sorry, Trinity." I trailed my hand along her cheek until I was cupping the side of her head, a move that surprised her based on her wide eyes. "I didn't mean to make life hard for you."

She pressed up against me, rubbing her breasts on my chest, her hands over my biceps, fingers dancing over my muscles.

"You're lucky I'm in a forgiving mood, but I'll only let this pass this once. You better make it up to me because the heat is making me crazy."

“You got it, sweetheart. I can’t get your perfect pussy out of my head, and tonight, I’m going to fuck you hard, knot in you, and fill you with cum until you lose your voice from begging me for more. There’s no one else in this world who can make me feel like you do.”

When I lowered my fingers between us, down to her drenched, swollen lips, which had been waiting for me, she trembled in my arms, and her legs spread with need. “The emotions you bring out in me, the arousal, is unforgivable, and there is only one way to repay them.”

I pressed two thick fingers into her pussy so fast, she cried out.

Trinity

His lips crashed down on mine as his fingers pumped inside me. I had assumed I held onto a thread of control, but I’d been kidding myself. Heat surged through my body, every inch of me shaking, while I kissed back the ridiculously delicious Alpha.

I’d lost the ability to think straight as lust plunged through me, stealing my breath and control.

The need for sex built inside me, an unbearable pressure that left me swaying against him, my hands clutching his round shoulders. I held my face close to his, letting him kiss me, and gave back as much as he offered. My hands moved over his hard, broad chest, the skin on fire.

He broke our kiss as quickly as he drew his fingers out of me, the action making a drenching sound. My slick was already slipping down my inner thighs from how far I’d been driven to insanity with need once Daniel and Aspen left my room. The touch of desire came so fast, it made even the act of walking impossible, leaving me a hopeless mess on my bed.

But with Shadow in my room, everything was about to change.

“Don’t stop, please,” I pleaded, the deep ache in my gut continuing from the emptiness inside me. “Each time the heat returns, it’s more intense and hurts so much worse.”

“You’re getting closer, sweetheart.” He swept me into his arms and laid me on the bed. Leaning over me, he took a nipple into his mouth while his left hand ran up the seam between my spread legs.

I loved when he replaced the sucking with long strokes of his tongue while he watched me like a starved wolf. Tracing my hand down his back, as far as I could reach, I felt how his muscles knotted up beneath his skin. His scent—jasmine blooming in the night—poured from him and invaded my senses.

“I want to hear you beg for my cock. I want you to absolutely lose it, screaming for my dick. Then I’ll rut you, sweetheart.”

When he looked at me as if I was the only person who would ever truly matter to him, it took my breath away. I reached for him again, needing to kiss the man who held me in awe. I wasn’t anyone special, but his eyes said differently.

Our mouths clashed, and he tasted me, tangling his tongue with mine, like a man who worshipped me.

“You’re about to crawl out of your skin, aren’t you?” he murmured. Smirking, he climbed onto the bed and on top of me. “Move with me, Omega. Take me with you when you lose your grasp on this earth.”

Clutching him, my hips moved frantically, surging up as he pressed down between my thighs. There was no pause before he pushed his cock into me, spreading me. I groaned, my head thrown back at the titillating sensation that was pain and arousal rolled up together.

He fucked me, starting slow and building until we were perfectly in sync. Even our breaths matched. Our eyes locked as he thrust in and out until I was slipping over the edge into an abyss of carnal pleasure. I screamed as my body burst with an orgasm, and I savored every moment of it.

He gave one final surge, a powerful thrust that shook my entire body as my walls closed around his swelling knot. His cock pulsed inside me, sending me back into another tailspin of pleasure, desire rising through me once more.

He stared at me, growing inside me, our bodies joined, shaking, grinding.

“This is everything,” I whispered with a moan.

“Tonight, I promise you at least four orgasms if you don’t fall asleep on me.”

His devious grin challenged me. I was learning that Shadow was a competitive Alpha who never did a job half-heartedly.

“I’ll hold you to that, Alpha.”

Twenty-One

ℒ

TRINITY

After a night of being fucked by Shadow and hardly getting any sleep, one would think I would be a zombie on my feet. Yet I was bouncing on my toes, brimming with a new surge of energy, even if the sweet tingle of my pussy still ached from Shadow's cock. It was a beautiful reminder of what it felt like to be adored by a god of an Alpha.

With a sense of clarity, it confirmed the longer I went without sex, and my heat came over me, the more control I lost over every inch of myself.

Shadow had woken me up with a kiss beneath the sun's warmth that spilled over my bed, then led me into the shower. *Meet you downstairs in the kitchen*, he'd said. He had helped me through the heat all night long.

Skipping down the steps, I reminded myself that these extreme high and low emotions would pass once I broke my heat, but I was also feeling something else... an impact the Alphas had on me.

Was it love? Admiration for them protecting me? What did they call that in the old movies? Puppy love?

No, it wasn't puppy love. That faded, and I couldn't imagine my feelings dwindling. What I felt was far more than a crush. I turned and stared at my reflection in a mirror I passed in the hallway. Wet, pink hair was combed off my face, and my eyes appeared wild and lighter than I remembered them. A light blush stained my cheeks, and my lips looked swollen and redder. Shadow had kissed me roughly last night.

Running my fingers over my mouth brought back memories of his lips on mine. I'd give anything in the world to have him in my bed every night.

I fixed the thin-strapped tank top that looked skewed across my shoulders and brushed my hands down over a pair of jean shorts, the light clothing aiding in my constant heat.

Back to my thoughts, I strolled down the hallway, thinking what I felt had to be more than puppy love. It was a grown-up emotion—gratitude, yes, but also the conviction that the men would protect me, no matter the cost. I'd never in my life experienced such care and devotion.

Stepping into the kitchen, everyone was there, sitting on stools around the middle island, pawing at plates of food. Thelma set a large plate of pancakes in front of them and greeted me with a welcoming grin.

“Morning, and good to see you out of your room. Now take a seat and eat. You need the energy.” She wiped her hands on her apron, which she removed as she approached me. “I have a tea date with two friends. I need to hurry now.” Her smile was contagious in the best possible way. She waved as she hurried out of the kitchen.

Turning back to the four men, Aspen was tapping the stool next to him eagerly, and I sauntered over to climb up. Before I was comfortable, he'd already filled my plate with a bit of everything, just as he'd done up on the terrace days ago.

A girl could get used to being waited on by such a gorgeous Alpha.

“How was your sleep, sweetheart?” Shadow asked, pushing a glass of juice in front of me.

“If she got any sleep from what I could hear,” Aspen teased, nudging me with his shoulder before leaning in closer. “Eat up, little Omega, while the food's still warm.”

There wasn't a speck of jealousy from him. He seemed more amused, which was a relief because I couldn't deal with more drama.

“I missed you while you were gone,” I whispered to him.

“I know you did,” he bragged, then kissed me on the lips before returning to his eating. My cheeks burned up, and I lifted my gaze to Daniel, who was grinning at me. Shadow pushed a strand of hair out of his face in such a doting manner, my heart soared, painting the perfect family picture for me with the level of affection they had for each other. I understood more why Daniel had panicked about me being with Shadow and was scared he’d lose him.

Everyone was eating while a small TV in the corner of the room played the news, talking about a large storm front coming in the next few days and telling us to prepare for potential flooding.

When I finally turned to look at Viper, who sat at the end of the counter, popping a grape into his mouth, his green eyes were on me. I couldn’t ignore the fierceness behind them and wanted to know what he was thinking.

The time I’d spent with him on the terrace and him sharing his heartache with me hadn’t left my thoughts. I wanted to speak to him about it, especially after he killed Roman outside my room. It was a relief that the man was gone, but anxiety knotted in my stomach that his absence could bring others to the compound, looking for him.

Viper just sat nonchalantly, throwing grapes into his mouth, studying me like he had no plan in the world to share anything else with me. He had a strange expression on his face that confused me... Did he blame me that he had to kill?

“Eat up,” Shadow said.

I lowered my plate and went right for the extra-crispy bacon, my mouth salivating before it touched my tongue.

“It tastes even better with maple syrup,” Aspen suggested, lifting the bottle toward me. “It goes great on eggs, too.”

“You’re a monster,” I mocked him. “No one adds maple syrup to their bacon and eggs.”

“I do,” Daniel said.

“And me,” Shadow added, but Viper kept silent.

“Well, then I’m sharing breakfast with demons because that’s just wrong.” I laughed, sliding my plate away from Aspen, who was squirting the sugary liquid all over his food.

After a few mouthfuls and everyone watching the news about the upcoming storm, I muttered, “Was there anything you found on our trip, Shadow and Aspen?”

Shadow swallowed the food in his mouth as Daniel hopped off his seat and proceeded to make a latte in the fancy espresso machine.

“Unfortunately, my contacts proved useless, but the trip wasn’t a complete waste,” he said, eyeing me as he shifted in his seat while Aspen leaned closer, the heat of his body warming me. The way he studied me and touched my thigh was distracting.

“Oh yeah? What’d you find out?”

“I discovered that your friends, Charity and Adella, are safe at the Institute.”

I might have squealed. “Oh, you have no idea how good it is to know you’ve found out about them.” Sure, they may not be in the safest of places, but better off at the Institute for now than kidnapped and killed by Alphas like Roman.

“But no one has heard anything about your friend... Frankie, was it?” Shadow added.

“Frannie,” I corrected him, trying not to let his update deflate me. I twisted the napkin in my lap, because, for all I knew, he was asking for someone called Frankie and got the completely wrong information.

It was impossible for me to play it cool and not feel like I might burst into tears at hearing about my friends and how much I missed them, wishing they could be here with me.

“From what we heard, your friends still haven’t shown signs of being Omegas and are safe,” Aspen murmured, his hand sliding across my lower back.

I blinked away the tears. “I really miss them, and it’s difficult to know they’re still stuck there.”

Daniel returned, placing a cup of frothing hot coffee in front of Shadow. “Would it be that hard to find a way to get her friends here, too?”

Shadow’s jawline clicked, and a sharpness flared over his features.

“I wish I could say that was possible, and maybe later on, there might be a way, but right now, there’s a lot of commotion about your disappearance.” He stared right at me, and my stomach dropped.

“What do you mean? Ms. Bakewell is looking for me?” My voice quivered.

Shadow pushed his plate aside, which Daniel quickly collected, and leaned toward me from across the table. “They’re saying you were stolen from the ball, and several eyewitnesses confirmed it. No one could recall who took you, though, so that’s our saving grace.”

I blinked at him, my heart thundering in my veins.

“What does that mean, then?”

“The Russian mafia is involved, and everyone is putting out search parties for the missing Omega.”

I gasped, and suddenly all the food in my stomach threatened to come back up. I was off the stool and pacing before I could think of what I was doing.

“This is really bad. If they catch me, they’ll sell me to old creeps to share, then what happens to you? They’ll...” I couldn’t even bring myself to say the words.

“We’ll be fine,” Viper finally spoke up.

For a while there, I’d forgotten he was even in the room with us.

“You can’t be sure of that,” I answered

“Viper’s right,” Aspen agreed. “We’re fine. The concern is not us but keeping you safe and with us.”

I wasn’t a fool and knew they were trying to placate me, ensuring I wasn’t scared. Shadow’s darkening eyes said it all.

“The solution is that we increase our protection around the compound, and we all stay low until this blows over,” he said firmly.

My insides were taut and about to snap. “Am I going to be on the news? I’ve seen missing Omegas broadcasted on all the channels.”

Shadow shook his head. “They wouldn’t want to bring bad publicity to the Institute and reveal they lost an Omega.”

“Come finish your breakfast.” Aspen offered me his hand. “I promise I’ll never let anyone take you from us.”

I rejoined them just as a news event caught my attention on the TV. I couldn’t hear the words with Daniel and Shadow chatting and my heartbeat pounding in my head with trepidation of the trouble the pack was in, but I read words scrolling across the bottom of the screen.

Jack Seilen, the caretaker at Bakewell Institute for Girls, was discovered this morning outside the grounds. His body had been divided among three garbage bags found on the curb.

The room tilted around me as flashes of my time in the isolation cells at the Institute popped into my vision—Jack paying me a visit and whipping me with his belt and all the atrocities he’d done to all the girls there.

My veins turned to ice, and my attention jerked to Viper, who was getting to his feet.

He wiped his mouth with a kitchen towel and set it down, wearing a tight grin on his mouth when he glanced at me. Then he walked out of the kitchen.

He did it. Oh my fucking God, he’d gone and killed Jack at the Institute.

I couldn’t move as coldness seeped into the very essence of my being. With it came fear for Viper and what could happen to him if the Institute discovered he killed Jack. I should fear him, too, but I’d never felt scared around him.

“Little Omega, are you okay?” Aspen asked.

I couldn't think, couldn't process anything. Pushing against the table, I got off the stool.

"I-I have to speak with Viper."

Rushing out of the room, I thundered down the hallway, taking in the living room and backyard, searching for him. As I darted past a corridor, something caught my attention, and I retreated to find Viper walking into a room.

My steps quickened behind him, and I burst into the room that ended up being an indoor theater. Two rows of lounge chairs faced an enormous wall-to-wall screen. My mouth might have fallen open in awe, but I shook that away, turning toward Viper, who was fiddling with an electronic panel on the wall.

"Are you looking for me?" he asked.

Unable to help myself, I marched up to him.

"You did it, didn't you?"

He twisted his head toward me and grinned, not even trying to hide that he killed a man in cold blood.

"Is that a problem?" he asked finally.

My voice croaked when I attempted to speak. When I tried again, it came out shaky.

"I told you, I don't wish death on anyone. Karma will come to everyone when their time is right."

He hit a couple of buttons on the panel, and the lights dimmed while the screen lit up.

"If it's easier for you, call me Karma."

Collecting my hand, he led me to a two-seater couch. My feet stumbled alongside him, my head swirling, my cries of terror muffled in my chest. It wasn't that I grieved Jack. The man was a fucking psychopath, but Viper had butchered him without a glance of remorse.

Should I be scared of Viper?

“Watch a movie with me.” He urged me to sit next to him, then pulled me against him, our sides pressed up close. “It’ll distract you.”

I couldn’t take my eyes off him, staring at him as darkness moved around in my head because of the blood spilled.

“You took two lives because of me,” I said nervously. “Do you normally kill people when they piss you off?”

His words came to me about Thelma telling him that he was turning into a villain. Did she know about him killing people? Which begged the question—how many people had he killed? My throat burned with the unasked questions.

I found his gaze amid the dancing shadows as the movie started and saw the intense protectiveness behind them.

“For those I care about, I’d fight tooth and nail to protect them. I’d eradicate the whole fucking city if it kept you safe, Trinity.”

My heart lurched in my chest, and I watched him, surprised that I wanted him even more. What was wrong with me? Was I the problem that I was attracted to someone like Viper? That I swooned because he was protecting me from the horrible people out there.

He trailed a hand across my cheek, and I leaned against his warm touch, my own fire igniting, then he kissed my nose.

“Let’s watch the movie and don’t overthink it. I want you safe, and the only thing that stands between them from getting to you is us. I won’t let that happen.” He held me possessively.

Torn. Broken. Scared.

All emotions that should have had me running away from him, but instead, I melted against his side. The world was dangerous, too dangerous for new Omegas like me. The streets were filled with monsters who’d use me, break me, then kill me.

Did that excuse Viper’s actions or me not running screaming from him?

I sat there for a long time, unsure how to answer that... unsure I wanted to face the truth.

Instead, I kept telling myself that Charity and Adella were as safe as they could be since the fiend preying on girls at the Institute no longer posed a danger to them.

Breathing easier, I eased into the couch without discomfort. Maybe that made me a horrible person, or maybe I finally accepted that to survive, blood had to be spilled.

For the first time, I had a pack in my corner, willing to do that for me.

Twenty-Two

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TRINITY

That evening, Aspen joined me up on the terrace, a place I gravitated to more and more over the couple of days. Sometimes, the mansion left me feeling claustrophobic, but I could sense something inside me changing.

An urgency ticked inside me as my heat cycles rolled over me more frequently. Shadow and Aspen took turns staying with me each night, so I didn't wake up alone, embracing me, which sated me into a peaceful slumber without the need for sex and knotting. Though some nights, I needed my space, and they slept on the floor or outside my room. I adored them for the attention, but my growing heat was scaring me, and visiting the terrace calmed me.

I flopped down on a couch while Aspen got the barbecue fired up. The smell of the steaks left me salivating. Sitting back, I curled my feet up and stared at the sun sliding behind the dark clouds.

Aspen's blond hair fluttered in the breeze when he kept looking at me over his shoulder as he flipped the meat. Dressed in knee-length shorts and a tee, his muscles were more obvious, every inch of him was firm and strong.

My issue was I was falling head over heels for these Alphas, beyond the heat and our natural calling to one another. When I stared at Aspen, I wondered what it would be like to have a boyfriend like him, to spend the rest of my life with someone who adored everything about you. Men like that were in books and movies, but here I was in a strange paradox

of being attracted to my kidnappers and wanting so much more than being boned by them.

“You doing alright?” Aspen turned toward me, and when he took a step in my direction, a sizzling hot storm of pleasure rippled over me. I loved the way his gaze traveled over my shorts and tank top, loved how his eyes smiled at what he saw.

“I’ve never been better,” I explained, pushing aside all other thoughts and my dread because the constant worry wasn’t helping me. “I needed time away. I can’t stop thinking of all the things that could go wrong, or that to remain safe, I’d have to stay in this compound for the rest of my life, never seeing the world beyond the walls again.”

He collapsed down on the couch next to me, making the cushion beneath me bouncing. Reaching over, he clasped my chin with his fingers, angling my head to face him, and his soft stare intensified. My insides melted at his sensuous, gentle touch, which was close to hypnotic. Leaning in closer, I was swallowed by his earthy, fruity scent mixed with his arousal. I breathed it in, not even realizing I was doing it until my nose rubbed across his collarbone.

I held onto him, my fingers digging into his arm, my nerve endings about to burst. There was something utterly intimate but also terrifying about how quickly I lost myself to him.

“This is all temporary, trust me,” he said, a purr hanging off his words as though he was fighting the urge to flip me onto my back and fuck my brains out. The thought sounded incredible.

He pulled back slightly, much to my protest, but he was right. If one of us didn’t stop—it was clear it wouldn’t be me because I was too weak—the meat would burn.

“Yeah,” I murmured, pulling back, acting like I didn’t just sniff him and try to hump him. “And how do you know that?”

“The Mafia won’t spend manpower searching for one Omega for too long, especially when they have more important things to deal with. Give it a while, and things will quiet down. Shadow’s working on getting you a new ID and

papers, along with documentation to prove where you came from before we bought you.”

“I really hate that word ‘bought.’” It was a sad reality that Omegas were cornered and couldn’t just meet someone and fall in love normally. I guess the only women who gained such liberty were females who never turned, though I couldn’t exactly say their life was easy.

His features softened, and he kissed my nose. “I know, but we need to appear to be playing by the rules to avoid any suspicion drawn to you. Now, how about you tell me more about what it was like when you lived at the Institute? From what we learned on our trip, everything was aboveboard, and the girls there were treated like goddesses.”

I almost choked on my laughter.

“You’re kidding me, right? When we were young, we slept in dorms, in rows of bunk beds. When we were older we were put into larger rooms, but we still shared four to a room.” I paused, thinking about Frannie with a pang of guilt, and sent out a silent prayer that she was safe. “If Ms. Bakewell didn’t think we should know about something, she makes sure we don’t find out, including what to expect if we turn into an Omega.”

“That’s fucked up.”

“She did it to all of us. And get this, her version of science isn’t what I read about in the books I found outside of the school or in the abandoned parts of the school.” I giggled at the memory of my friends and me sneaking in there to learn about sex and whatever else we could find out. “There aren’t a lot of books left in there now, but we found a few. Some had real science in them, not what she wants us to believe.”

“You’d have been better off in an Omega training academy. Why didn’t they take you to one of those?” Viper’s fingers stroked my arm.

The memory of my time at the Institute leaving me furious at Bakewell.

“Because I wasn’t left with the authorities. I was dropped on her doorstep. She didn’t report my existence for a long time, and by then, I’d settled in, so the state didn’t take me away.” I shrugged, not sure what else to say. “I don’t know a lot about the law, but I get a payment from the government every month. She takes most of it for our room and board, but she leaves us a little. The state would take away her operation license if she didn’t leave us a little to get what we absolutely needed throughout the month, like toothpaste and toilet paper, although she sells those to us at a price that is much higher than I saw in the shops I went into.”

“Bitch,” he growled, the bridge of his nose creasing. “This is why you’re never going back there.”

“She’d sell me off to the highest bidder in a heartbeat now that I’ve become an Omega.” Breathing heavily, I shook off the crawling sensation sliding up my back. “I don’t want to talk about me. What about you? I saw in your room that you had hiking boots. So, you like outdoor activities like balloon riding.” I grinned, sticking my tongue out at him playfully.

He leaned in, but I noticed the way he studied my lips as though he contemplated stealing a kiss but he looked over at the grilling meat.

“I dabble in rock climbing, but knowing that you’re afraid of heights, I’m willing to try anything new if you’d join me.”

“What else do you enjoy?”

“Painting.” Redness stained his cheeks. “I don’t show it to anyone, but it’s something that calms me when I can’t get outdoors. I get all in my head some days, and well, painting fixes that. I paint out whatever it is that’s bothering me, and the problem goes away.”

“Really? I want to see them.”

“Maybe soon,” he said, getting to his feet and moving over to check on the meat. “I’m working on something now, and it’s not quite ready.”

Heat came over me so suddenly, it startled me. I lounged back, fanning myself with my hand when Aspen glanced my

way.

“Want me to get the fan?”

I shook my head. “The breeze is enough, but I just wish this fever would break already and leave me alone. What I really need are painkillers.”

“Not sure I’d recommend you take anything to mess up with the cycle.”

Unease settled deep in my gut at the thought of us taking those pills at the ball, making me wonder if that had forced my heat cycle to start.

“The other night, Roman, the guy who visited while you and Shadow were away, mentioned something about a delivery of pills to Viper. What was he talking about? I realize I never asked what business you three ran to own such a mansion.”

He made his way back to me.

“Nothing major. Just an import business of all kinds of things. I mostly look after the storage and distribution, while Viper deals with new merchandise.” He spoke quickly, then reached over, his fingers dancing over my arms, distracting me.

“All you need to focus on is lots of rest and sex,” he said with a grin, which left me falling into his azure gaze.

“Of course, you’d say that.”

“It’s been scientifically proven that an Alpha’s knot inside an Omega calms her down and reduces the pain and heat. So maybe that’s all you need?” He playfully lifted his shirt as if he was going to strip.

My eyes were glued to his eight-pack, the smoothness of his chest, and his muscles. God, maybe it was a mistake for him to show any flesh because a trickle of slick spurted into my panties.

“Hey, don’t be cruel. Put that away.”

Awareness must have tugged at him because his demeanor turned to a sex beast before he cleared his throat and pushed

his shirt down. His quickened breaths raised the hairs on my arms and made my nipples pebble.

“Is the food ready yet?” Daniel hollered from somewhere in the house.

Aspen grinned at me. “Maybe after lunch, we’ll take a visit to my room.”

There was no joking in his voice, especially not when the bulge in his pants became noticeable.

I smiled, feeling at ease with him, despite my grinding need for sex. It would come back at some point, leaving me a mess as it had when it first started, but for now, the relief seemed to keep the worst of it at bay.

“Will my heat get worse? If I don’t sleep with any of you, I mean?”

“From what Thelma says, it will. You could spike a very dangerous fever if you don’t get any relief. It’s rare, but it can happen. You’ll get more desperate as it progresses.” He admitted with a look that told me he was sorry to say it.

“Damn, I was kind of hoping since I’ve been knotted by two of you already, it would calm it down a little.”

“Once your heat breaks, you should have a long break before it returns.”

“It returns?” My eyes bulged out of my head. “What the hell!”

“It’ll be less intense, but it ensures you are bound with your Alphas. Apparently, it ends once you hit your fifties.” He looked at me with sympathy.

“You mean I have thirty years of this crazy heat and constantly being horny?” I groaned and slid lower on the lounge.

“On the bright side,” he said, scooping the cooked meat onto a large platter. “After your first heat, it’s safe to take suppressants to dilute the intensity, though that reduces the chances of you falling pregnant. Some Omegas like that and use it as birth control.”

Looking at the sky, the darkening clouds brought the promise of an oncoming storm.

“I can see how they might be a lifesaver, but everyone knows taking them supports the mafia and their crimes.” Said me, the person who had convinced my two friends to take masking pills to make us appear more like Omegas so we could get into the Glass Slipper Ball. We’d bought them from the dodgiest man on the street, who clearly worked for one of the mafia families, and he tried so hard to peddle us different drugs to get us hooked, no doubt.

“Yeah, a lot of Omegas take them, though they aren’t supposed to, according to the government.”

“Of course not, then the government can’t control and sell Omegas or make asshole Alphas happy who want their Omegas as nymphomaniacs. I don’t want to be like that or take illegal drugs. I’ve seen a few girls at the Institute overdose on them and end up in the hospital.”

Aspen nodded his agreement, then said, “Food is ready. Grab a plate and help yourself.”

As if on cue, the raucous sound of voices came from behind me, and I twisted my head to find Shadow and Daniel joining us. No sign of Viper yet. Maybe it was best to focus on food and allow my hormones to regroup and my desires to calm.

The day wore on and turned into night. The guys settled in the entertainment room downstairs to talk about urgent business matters while I went up to my new room on the third floor. My mind was whirling with doubt, fear, and so many unknowns about this pack, who I placed my life in their hands. Part of me wanted to run from all the dangers around me, to hide in another country where no one could track me down, except it wasn’t exactly easy for an Omega going into heat to go anywhere without detection.

With each passing second, a new wave of arousal and purring sent me into a new spark of heat, but this seemed different. I craved the Alphas' smells all over me, to feel like I was drowning in their scents. I couldn't even explain the desperate need that choked me. I could barely breathe with the need, yet I couldn't bring myself to burst into their room like a needy Omega and rub my body against them. It would end up in an orgy.

Goosebumps danced up my arms the more I paced in the hallway when the solution came to me in a flash. It was so simple, I almost laughed at myself for not doing it earlier.

Running down the corridor and into the first bedroom, which happened to be Aspen's, I threw myself toward his clothes strewn on the bed. Lifting the shirt he'd been wearing earlier to my nose, I drew in a sharp breath, and my stomach trembled from the musky-sweet scent of his desire. The smell enveloped my senses.

I grabbed the cover from his bed, tore it off, then brought them back to my room and decided the bed could do with more. Going into the next rooms, I fetch more items from Shadow's and Viper's rooms. I was like a mad woman, running back and forth. I was even muttering to myself as I nudged piles of clothes and blankets into a thickly layered nest on my bed.

Crawling into the nest, the scenes were so sexy, so overpowering, my body hummed, and I purred. I shifted and rolled around on them, yet it wasn't enough. Something was missing.

I turned sharply when my door opened, and Viper strode in.

"Trinity? What's going on? I saw you darting from my room into yours." He eyed my nest, made of cushions, blankets, and the Alphas' clothes.

"Nothing, nothing, just...building. I need more." I pushed my hair out of my face, my cheeks hot. Putting my hands down on my hips, I looked at what I'd created so far. It was...

a mess. If I had more, I could build a small mountain and crawl into the middle of it to feel secure and embraced.

“You’re so adorable creating your nest,” he purred and shut the door. “Do you want me to go get more of my clothes and blankets?”

“Do you have more that has your scent on it and hasn’t been cleaned?” I demanded, looking back at the mess on the floor around my bed. Tears stung my eyes as I looked back at him, and the ache in my gut deepened. “Do you?”

“Not a lot, but I can wear them and rub them on me for you, honey.” He walked to me slowly, his hands out. “Or better yet, how about I climb in there with you and take care of you?”

He cupped the sides of my face, and suddenly, his lips were on mine. The soothing kiss, his intoxicating scent, and the hunger burning inside me curled around me like a warm coat. That was what I needed... an Alpha in the nest with me.

“You’ll help me, right?” I was out of my mind with need, anxiety, and confusion as my urge to build became more powerful with every second that passed. Yet my lips tingled with his taste and how I needed more.

I was frantic, filled with an energy I didn’t understand, and was almost afraid of my behavior.

“Breathe, sweetheart,” Viper suggested, his thumbs stroking across my cheeks. “I’m going to make all the pain go away. I promise.”

Picking things up again, I moved them around, trying to make a circle that would hold my pack once we were all on the bed. It wasn’t working and looked more like a garbage heap. I sank to my knees, crying with frustration.

Viper gathered me into his arms and let me sob into his shirt as he carried me back to my bed.

“I know exactly what you need, Omega, and I’m going to give it to you,” he whispered.

I lifted my head, surprised by his offer, seeing he'd been the most reluctant to be with me, but after our night on the terrace, he'd changed and treated me differently.

“Please, I can barely stand it.” My response came out on a purr.

Twenty-Three

ℒ

TRINITY

Viper stripped off my clothes as I writhed on the bed, lost to the escalating heat.

My eyelids lowered when he touched my breasts, palming each one, in turn, feeling their weight and teasing the nipples.

“That’s so good.” I lay in my own little nest, with Viper alongside me when I needed him most. I watched the play of emotions across his face as he peeled his shirt up and over his body, unveiling a sculptured body I’d been dying to touch, to taste. Studying the way he shuffled out of his jeans, revealing he went commando, and offering me instant access to his huge cock made me salivate. He wasn’t completely erect just yet, but it was already so massive, I feared when he was hard, he’d be as thick as my wrist.

Why did these Alphas have such massive trunks?

Almost instantly, slick slipped out of me, warming my inner thighs.

The starved Alpha licked his lips, staring down at me on my back as he knelt next to me. Even in my dazed state of lust, I knew his attraction to me came down to my heat cycle, the same with the other two Alphas. Their instinct demanded they claim me, fuck me, and knot me.

Was I any different in my addiction to them? Except lately, I’d been feeling something so much deeper than pure animal hunger for them. I was worried when we all finally came to

our senses, they wouldn't reciprocate the same feelings... especially Viper.

My mind was a jabbering mess, alarmingly so, considering how fast I was losing myself to Viper.

"I'm going to make you mine," he purred, leaning forward and kissing me with the full force of a predator celebrating victory.

He always had this way of kissing me hard, leaving my lips bruised. I moaned for more, anything to stop the internal pain that sharpened the longer I went without him inside me.

Green eyes burned through me as his tongue licked my mouth. "I've never tasted anything so delicious."

This gorgeous man with sharp cheekbones, a square jawline, and messy, dark red hair ran his mouth down my neck, taking small mock bites and making fast travel to my breasts, where his teeth scraped over the flesh.

He sucked and bit me just hard enough, not to break the skin but to leave me writhing on the bed as more slick oozed from between my legs. Electric bliss raced over my body as my hips rocked for more.

Viper slipped his powerful body over mine, brushing my hands up over my head and clasping my wrists together in his left hand. He worked his way down my neck to tease each nipple once more as my hips ground against his, and I spread my legs for him to settle between them.

His cock pressed against my fire, but he held back, teasing me, letting me rub myself on the tip of his dick. Raw lust squeezed my insides, and I panted, on the verge of screaming, when he kept dipping into me ever so slightly, then back out.

"I can't take much more of your taunting." I pouted.

He grinned evilly, and I understood then the kind of man Viper was. His devotion was cemented, but he gave nothing easily. He'd make me work for it.

"If you don't get inside of me, right now, I might just die from wanting you. I've waited long enough." I tried to speak

calmly, even though my brain was running at ninety miles a minute. “Please?”

“You don’t need to beg for me, sweetheart. I’m already yours, but I also don’t intend to rush this. I need to savor and taste what has been driving me crazy since you arrived at our mansion.”

Drawing in a fast breath, I tried to relax while a jolt of desire tugged at my nerve endings. His scent swept over me, sweet and musky, and every inch of me prepared to be fucked by this Alpha. The sheer passion and waiting were tearing me apart.

He pulled back, releasing my hands. “Turn over.”

I liked the sound of that and did as he instructed. His fingers slid down the length of my spine, along the crack of my ass, and down to my entrance, testing me, stretching me as he thrust two fingers into me. My back arched, and my hips lifted as those fingers slid deeper inside me. I laid my head on the pillow and grasped at whatever I could reach, moaning loudly and deeply. And he hadn’t even got his cock inside of me yet.

“I love how wet you get for me, but we can do better, right?” he challenged. Just when I found my voice, he pumped his fingers into me so fast, I screamed. The whole bed trembled beneath us as he worked me, driving me to the point of insanity.

Deep guttural emotions rushed over me for this Alpha, a heightening pleasure that froze time, so only the two of us existed. When I looked at him over my shoulder, his expression became my favorite thing.

Satisfaction beamed from his eyes as he watched himself finger me ferociously, sending my body into jolts of shudder. He never paused his assault, only fingered me faster, then he did something crazy. He slipped in a third finger.

“It’s not going to fit,” I whined. I squirmed, but he groaned and rubbed my ass as he spread me, stretching me.

“Believe me, it’ll fit but I need to prepare you to take me.”

Sucking in hurried breaths, I tried to twist around for a better view of exactly how big we were talking when he was completely erect. For my efforts, he slapped my ass, and the stinging strike sent a sizzling tingle right to my pussy.

I cried out, and my core dripped as he worked three fingers into me. The sensation was searing and delicious, though awareness of what was coming scared me. My breaths came hard and fast as he thrust into me over and over. My hips bucked, and I garbled sounds that weren't words, just expressions of pure delight.

"Viper," I gasped when he withdrew his fingers, protesting their loss, but he ran a calming hand down my back before he pushed down.

"You are fucking spectacular. Your pussy is my new addiction."

Swallowing hard, I attempted to speak over my dry throat, but only a purr came out.

"Tuck a pillow under your stomach, sweetheart. This is going to be deep. I'm bigger than the others, and if we don't do this right, it will hurt." My muscles tensed while my pussy pulsed with more slickness at his promise. So, I did as he told me. "Put your chest on the mattress. That's it... now tilt your hips higher and breathe."

When something wet, warm, and extremely big touched my entrance, my eyes grew wide, and I gasped, looking back at him.

"Viper?"

He pushed inside of me. Even with my slick, he had to take it extra slow. His growl filled the air as the head finally slid into me, and I exhaled when I sensed him press deeper.

"How can you be this huge?" I could barely catch my breath.

"You're welcome, sweetheart," he half-laughed, half-growled.

Searing heat swept over me, making my shaking body eager to swallow his massive cock.

Over and over, he waited for me to open a little more before he slid in farther until I could have sworn I had something the size of a baseball bat inside of me. Just as he promised, it didn't hurt, and instead had me floating toward the heavens.

His body shuddered as his growls heavier, and his fingers dug into my hips.

“Stop fighting me, gorgeous. Relax and let me in.”

Exhaling, I focused on the desire swirling in my gut, and when he finally slammed all the way into me, he growled with satisfaction. Viper pulled out, then thrust back in. Picking up the pace, he thrust harder, and I moaned so loud, I was certain they heard me in the next county.

His grip on my hips tightened as he plunged into me. He did it again and again, faster, until both of us were moaning, and my body wasn't mine anymore.

“You look so pretty taking my cock.” His fingers teased my pussy as the weight of his body pushed me into the mattress. Flat on my stomach on the bed, Viper lay on top, pinned between my legs, fucking me with his lips on the curve of my neck and shoulders.

“That's it, gorgeous, take my cock, suck on me, spread for me. Show me how you're going to be mine as I claim you.”

He circled my clit with his other hand, his pace increasing to the point, I screamed, and before I knew it, an orgasm was wracking my body.

I'd lost all grip on reality from being so tightly packed with his cock and my orgasm rocking through me. Clarity had vanished as I rode on arousal and adrenaline. Viper completely owned me.

He hammered into me with a loud grunt that sent a shiver up my spine, his cock pulsing inside me, spilling his seed and flooding me with his cum. In that perfect moment, when we both soared with a climax, his teeth sank into my flesh. A

slight panic came over me at the harshness of his bite, which broke the skin.

I cried out as the cocktail of euphoria and pain whipped through my body. Every inch of me quivered while Viper pulsed, swelling inside me. His tongue lapped up my blood while his cock was engorging and knotting.

I was almost afraid he'd split me in half, but my walls opened, then closed around the thick knot, clamping down on it as he kept spurting his Alpha sperm into me, spraying my inner walls with his thick fluid.

I came apart harder, stronger than I had before until I'm certain I lost consciousness. Nobody could take the amount of pleasure they'd given me without losing something. I think I'd forgotten how to breathe, but when I came around, I was locked to Viper, cradled in his arms while he spooned me from behind, still embedded deep inside me.

"You're perfect, Trinity," he whispered in my ear, wiping sweat from my brow. "I never expected you to be so exceptional, but I understand now why Aspen and Shadow have gone so crazy over you." He brushed the back of his fingers down my arm, leaving a delicious line of shiver in their wake.

"Did I pass out?" I asked drowsily, slightly confused.

"Just for a moment. You reached the ultimate place for an Omega—your Nirvana."

When I glanced over my shoulder, he was grinning, rather pleased with himself

"Oh." I tried to remember if I'd read anywhere about orgasming so hard that you passed out, but exhaustion swept over me, and my eyes kept closing.

"Sleep. I'll be here when you wake up, sweetheart. You're not going anywhere, not now that I've made you mine."

The sharp pain at my neck pinched as his words whirled in and out of my mind, making no sense until I lost the fight to sleep.

Twenty-Four

ℒ

TRINITY

The next morning hummed with the pitter-patter of rain striking the window.

I was alone in my nest. Viper had promised he'd be here when I woke up, and instead, emptiness spread over me.

The heat cycle must be speeding up, considering I was already pining for Viper. The hot sting of his absence was a combination of pain-pleasure—him gone combined and the most incredible sex.

By the time I climbed out of my bed and stumbled into the shower, my sleepy head cleared. Dressing in jeans and a plain white tee, I ran a brush through my pink air and felt semi-normal for a change.

I had no idea what happened to me yesterday because sex with the other Alphas didn't completely knock me out as it had with Viper. With him, it was as if he'd hypnotized me to focus on him and nothing else. The intensity scared me a little in how quickly I let myself fall.

Padding out of my room on bare feet, I rubbed the curve of my neck, and the skin felt bumpy where he'd bitten me. Talk about turning into an animal. He lost control last night, and I absolutely loved seeing him that way.

As I turned the corner of the hallway, I ran right into a solid chest. The delicious scent of pumpkin pie wrapped around me, and I grinned. I bounced back from the impact, but Viper's strong arms lifted me off my feet as though I weighed nothing. Just being pressed up against him had my pussy

clamping down and my stomach twisting into knots. I craved him all over my body. Even with the ache deep in my core, I could easily go another round with him.

“You weren’t meant to wake up just yet,” he purred, then stole a small kiss. “I wanted to be there when you woke up.”

Placing my arms around his neck, I finally noticed his wet hair, how fresh he smelled, and his crisp, clean clothes.”

“Well, you snooze, you lose,” I teased. “Just means we need another fun night.” My spine curved instinctually toward him, and I took another great inhale, unable to get enough of his smell. The Alpha was scorching hot, with his long lashes, thick eyebrows, and the intensity in his green eyes seemed to almost glint against his dark hair.

“That’s a promise.” His grip loosened, and I slid down his body to my feet, where he collected my hand into his. “Now, seeing that you’re awake, let’s go down to grab breakfast before you lure me back to your nest.” He arched an eyebrow, that teasing glint that drove me crazy swirling in his eyes.

His thumb stroked the back of my hand as we headed down the first set of stairs. My body swayed toward him as though we were two magnets drawn to each other. Each time I bumped into him, he chuckled and glanced down at me with admiration, which I didn’t expect from him.

In truth, what I noticed was that while each Alpha had me tripping over my feet to be with them, each one had their own way of being obsessed with me.

Aspen was like the sweetest teddy bear who couldn’t get enough of hugging me. He might look terrifying, but to me, he was the most adorable Alpha I’d ever met.

Shadow, on the other hand, was dominant when it came to how he treated me. He needed to have the upper hand to keep me guarded, and I fucking loved that.

Then there was Viper, who looked at me with a possessiveness that might border on being stalkerish. I couldn’t explain the exact reasons because it was the small things. His hand holding mine tightly and close to him, the

way he constantly checked on me even though I was right next to him, and even the way he made love to me was all-consuming.

If I found myself locked up in his room one day, I wouldn't be surprised. He gave off that vibe while desire glowed behind his gaze. A tinge of fire ignited in my chest in response.

“Have you decided about staying with us?” he asked, taking me completely off guard. The irises of his eyes thinned, almost covered by dark pupils, and behind them lurked the predator I suspected lived inside Viper.

A flash of heat on my skin and sweat breaking on my brow reminded me I had a real decision to make.

“To be honest, I haven't given it a lot of thought, what with constantly being horny and trying to get you Alphas to be with me.” I gave him a lopsided grin, certain it wasn't what he wanted to hear.

“It's alright. It will all come together for us.” He paused on the platform between the two sets of stairs, cornering me against the railing. “But I need to know if you're sore. I'd intended to wake you by kissing your sweet pussy to chase away the pain.”

These Alphas spoke so freely about my body, it always left me blushing. I'd never discussed my body so openly with anyone before arriving at their compound. Now, I have three Alphas constantly eager to lick and fuck me. You'd think I had a golden pussy with their obsession.

“It's a bit sore, but I like the way I feel. It reminds me of how incredible you were.”

Pushing a strand of pink hair behind an ear, he leaned in to kiss my neck, then inhaled deeply.

“Fuck, Trinity. You smell like candy. I want to keep eating. How about you drop your pants, and I lick your delicious cunt until it no longer hurts?”

I choked out a laugh, my hands on his chest, well aware that if I gave in even a smidgen, he'd have his head between

my legs in a millisecond.

The closeness of his mouth to mine reminded me how swollen my lips felt from his kisses, and the way his chest pressed up against my pointed nipples was not helping the situation... and he knew it.

“I really would love some food first,” I suggested.

Excitement flashing in his eyes, he swept me into his arms and charged down the stairs.

“Well, there’s only one solution. I’ll carry you everywhere until your pussy stops hurting.”

I laughed at his madness, and still, my muscles rippled, and my legs clenched together from the vibrations dancing over my clit. If I remained with him another second, I’d succumb to his sinful stare. Wriggling out of his grasp, I ducked under his arm. As I skipped down the rest of the steps, he charged after me with a playful expression that could land me with my pants down around my ankles.

“I’m coming for you,” he teased.

Squealing with excitement, I thundered down the hallway, then burst into the kitchen with laughter just as Viper zipped in behind me. He crashed into me from behind, his arms around my middle, lifting me off the cold floor.

That was also the same moment I locked eyes with Shadow and Aspen, their expressions solemn. Both sat at one end of the kitchen island, picking at their eggs and toast, looking like we’d intruded on a heavy conversation. Daniel was busy with the espresso machine, glancing at me with a sorrowful smile.

All the happiness I’d felt earlier evaporated from my body.

“Everything okay?” Viper asked, setting me back down on my feet.

“It’s best you’re here,” Shadow said. “We have some news for Trinity.”

My stomach sank, and I hated the darkness in his voice and how he tried to smile but failed miserably. Something

uncomfortable lodged in my throat.

“What happened?” I asked, going to the empty chair beside Shadow while Viper sat on my other side. Aspen was on his feet, moving over to the stove, then he handed me a plate full of steaks, fried eggs, and hash browns. I looked at the breakfast, then up at each Alpha at the table as Daniel placed a cup of coffee in front of me.

“I’m not eating until one of you tells me what’s wrong.”

Shadow cleared his throat. “My contact looked into the Institute and the missing Omegas. He said that there are no records of your friend Frannie being sold to an Alpha, and Ms. Bakewell wouldn’t reveal her paperwork to anyone due to the privacy act.”

I felt sick to my stomach. “Frannie just vanished one night from the Institute after her hair changed color, then Ms. Bakewell refused to talk about her.”

The corners of Shadow’s lips pinched tightly.

“So, what you’re saying is she was sold illegally.” I grasped the edge of the granite counter, my knuckles white, my veins cold as ice. Frannie would have contacted us at the Institute to confirm she was safe otherwise. But then I couldn’t help thinking about my situation and how I hadn’t told my friends about being safe, wondering if they were just as worried about me? I had to get word out to them soon but first I had to find out about Frannie.

It was terrible news but not bad enough news for the grimness that had met me when I rushed into the kitchen.

“Okay. What aren’t you telling me?”

Shadow swiveled toward me, his hands taking mine, the pain behind his eyes bringing my tears forward. “I’m really sorry, Trinity. I wish I could take this away from you and protect you, but I don’t think you’d ever forgive me if I did.”

Tears sprung to my eyes, and the thickness in my throat stung. I knew what was coming. It hung in the air like a noose.

I couldn’t breathe.

Viper held me from behind as Aspen got up from his seat to come to my side.

“Frannie’s dead, isn’t she?” The words burned on my throat.

He nodded, and at that moment, the world was ripped out from under me.

I stared at him for a long moment as if someone had hit pause on my life as I replayed every moment I’d experienced with Frannie.

They were excruciating to watch, and in my head, I begged for them to stop, but I also needed them. To remember the friend who’d wished for so long that she wouldn’t become an Omega, who loved too hard, who laughed at the craziest things, who cried when we finally gifted her a camera because she wanted desperately to become a photographer. Her words floated in my mind...

“The camera lenses are the eyes of the world, capturing a moment in time that can never be forgotten. Beautiful things, secrets, and even the ugliness of our world. Those are the most important, so no one forgets love can’t grow in the darkness.”

A sob tore past my throat, and I covered my face with my hands, no longer able to hold back the emotions that ripped me apart. I remembered her high-pitched laughed that made many cringe, and I swore I heard it now. Deep inside, I wanted to scream at the injustice and that I hadn’t done enough to find her.

Something ugly rose through me, a hatred and sadness that truly broke me, and I had no idea how I was ever supposed to keep going.

I felt the heavy scents of the Alphas who circled around me, closing in, embracing me, holding me, but it was becoming too much, too claustrophobic.

Her laughter seemed to sing in ears again...

I lifted my head to look at Shadow through teary eyes. “Where did they find her?” I rasped, my voice barely a whisper.

“That doesn’t matter.” Shadow was shaking his head and reached over to wipe the tears from my cheeks. “Remember the beauty of your friend.”

“No, I have to know, or it’ll drive me crazy. You have to tell me.” I clenched my hands by my side.

When he said nothing, I wriggled out from them, tears falling. I trembled so hard, my legs barely kept me up.

“I need to know, Shadow. She was my friend.”

“She’s right,” Viper added.

Aspen’s face blanched while Daniel curled in on himself on the other side of the counter.

Shadow climbed to his feet, approaching me and towering over me.

“Let’s go for a walk,” he suggested, offering his hand.

“No,” I screamed as I wiped my eyes. “Just fucking tell me.”

With a sigh, his shoulders deflated. “This morning the police found her in a dumpster in an alleyway. I’m so sorry.”

I sucked in each breath that refused to come, my chest rising and falling too quickly, the world seeming to tilt around me.

Guilt slammed into me, claiming me, and I wished I would have come to my senses the moment Frannie disappeared from the Institute.

Glancing up through teary eyes, the three Alphas approached me, heartache in their eyes, but they didn’t understand. How could they...

“I can’t do this right now.” I recoiled from them and ran out of the kitchen, my bare feet slapping the stone tile flooring. I didn’t even remember where I was going, but soon found myself out in the backyard, charging past the pool and beyond the treeline at the rear of the property.

I wanted to keep running.

To never stop.

To somehow escape the heaviness burying me.

“She can’t be dead. She can’t.” I choked on another sob.

Each breath grew raspy, and an agonizing ache settled beneath my ribcage.

Dropping to my knees, my lungs were crushed by grief. Frannie couldn’t be dead, she couldn’t. Not after everything we’d gone through.

Dread crept over me, threatening to swallow, while moments with Frannie came to mind. Her laugh when Charity tripped, her crying after she was released from the closet, and her elated scream when she got her camera. How she set up elaborate backdrops with our bed blankets, snapping photos of us in funny poses. I missed her so much, it felt like I was splitting in half.

I’d met Frannie when I was four. She’d been brought to the Bakewell Institute for Girls a few months before me. Charity and Adella had been there since they were newborns, but Frannie and I were different. We’d had families at some point. We’d clung together as we grew, and Charity and Adella became our sisters. Once we were placed in our own dorm room together, it was natural that we all became closer.

When one of us ended up in the closet, the others would come and keep her company, trundling back to our beds before the morning alarm woke us up to be counted by the keeper of our home. We’d whisper to each other through the door, three comforting one or one at a time. Those nights when I was locked in the closet, they kept me from losing my mind by keeping the results of solitude at bay. The fear would leave, and I’d focus on the sliver of light at the bottom of the door until it disappeared. For an hour or two, the terror would come, then I’d hear bare feet and know the girls were coming to chase away the fear.

Grief didn’t leave. It strangled me, making it harder until my cries were silent. Even when hands wrapped around my shoulders, I was too hysterical to stop the screaming.

I only stopped when something struck me in the back of the head so hard, the world blinked with stars, and I fell forward on all fours. Groaning from the pain, I pushed myself back up. The world was dancing as the corners of my vision darkened.

Someone tall stood in front of me, and I wrenched my head up.

Blue eyes set in a square, stoic face glared down at me. I didn't recognize him, yet those eyes looked familiar. Eyes that brought up memories of my mother crying, of bruises that shouldn't have marred her beautiful skin.

A past I'd purposely long forgotten.

“Hello, girl. It's time you returned home.”

Panic rushed up and over me, coming so fast, I couldn't move as he pulled something out of his suit, then leaned forward and jabbed it into my neck.

I cringed at the sharp bite.

Darkness stole everything too fast, and I slumped forward.

When I woke up, my head was throbbing with pain. I jerked to get off the bed and found a velvet-lined cuff around my ankle.

And it wasn't my bed.

I was in a gilded room with no windows, and I had no idea where I was.

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Found Omega

KNOT MY PACK OMEGaverse



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About Liora Rose

Liora has always been an avid reader who loves all things reverse harem and omegaverse. She decided to give writing a try and Hidden Omega is the result of her passion.

She lives in Australia with her husband, and when she isn't writing, she's either playing video games or has her nose stuck in a book.

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