



*Keeping
Kathy*

Reynolds Family

KALI HART

KEEPING KATY


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Epilogue

KATY

“We need more ornaments.” My oldest brother, Drew, claps me on the shoulder.

My eyes travel across the crowded room and land on the eight-foot Christmas tree that is indeed looking a little scarce. My heart swells at the generosity of Drew’s employees. Each ornament includes a dollar amount to donate. Anyone can select any ornament they want and donate that money. My kids desperately want to go on this field trip, and the fundraiser is the only way it’s going to happen with all the budget cuts as of late. “Good problem to have, huh?”

“You’re doing a good thing, Katy. A really good thing.”

I give him a quick side hug in appreciation. He’s allowed me to crash his company holiday party with a fundraiser for the school I work at, and no one even groaned when I gave my spiel earlier in the night. “I have more upstairs in your office.”

“Better grab ‘em, then.”

Drew is summoned to the other end of the room, and leaves me with a pat on the back. It’s not surprisingly that his presence is in such high demand. It’s his company, and his employees love him.

I slip away from the party on the second floor, to the elevator. I’m not a fan of confined spaces, but I’d rather ride the little metal and glass box for a minute than travel up eight

flights of stairs. Plus, the spectacular view from his office is enough for me to push through the claustrophobic torment I'll suffer on the ride up.

I try to stare out at the glow of city lights from the elevator's glass wall, but it only reminds me I'm in an enclosed space. I spin around instead, faced with the mirrored walls. "Whoops!" My little red dress needs to be pulled up around the bust area. My curves fill it out in all the right ways, but my boobs are a tad heavy. There's not a strapless bra in the world that'll help me, so they're left to the mercy of this tight dress.

"There." Dress successfully adjusted, I fluff out my sandy blonde hair. I managed to curl it to fall a few inches past my shoulders. All I'm missing is my Santa hat. I either left it at home or up in my car. Oh well. It's not like I brought a hot date to impress anyway.

The elevator dings open a moment later, and I spring out of it.

I'm proud of my brother for building this company into what it is. Yes, there's some extravagance, like his office that consumes half of the ninth and top floor. But to be fair, he designed it that way so he can sleep here if needed. Like me, he's unattached and a bit of a workaholic.

A holiday tune plays softly through the speakers, and I can't help but sing along as my heels clack against the marble floor. At first, I'm hardly humming. But with each step, I grow braver and start to really belt out the song. I've always enjoyed singing, and since I'm all alone up here—you need an access badge for the elevator to even open on this floor—there's no harm in letting loose.

I dance right into Drew's office, still singing—now with my arms fully animated.

It's not often I'm in my brother's office, but every time I am, I fantasize that it's mine. Not that I want to work in the cooperate world—I definitely don't. Teaching has always been my dream. But the views, the space to twirl around in... It's

almost enough for me to pretend teachers make a very generous salary.

At the conclusion of the song, I hear clapping.

My chest clutches in the embarrassment of being caught as my eyes scan the room for the intruder. They land on a tall, built man in dark wash jeans and a blazer I'm certain costs more than my monthly salary. "Who—" But before I can even get the question out, I know the answer.

Wyatt James. In the freaking flesh.

"Don't believe I know you," he says, his clap slowly fading until it stops completely.

Of course he doesn't remember me. Why would he? He's Drew's best friend from college, and the last time I saw him I was sixteen and a lot less curvy. I had the worst crush on him then. He spent a Christmas break with our family, and I constantly fantasized about him sneaking into my room and having his way with me.

"What are you doing up here?" I ask. I'm not about to remind him who I am. I'm not sure why he's in town this time, but it's doubtful he plans to stick around long. Whenever Drew mentions his friend, it's to tell me what country or resort he's headed off to next. Wyatt has always been a bit of a thrill seeker, and he's always had the money to do it in style.

"Drew said I could crash here, in the penthouse."

"But this is the office." I don't know why I'm being so snobby all of a sudden. Maybe it's indignation that he doesn't recognize me. But it's probably irritation that his mere presence can still cause heat to sizzle between my legs.

"Ran out of water." Wyatt combs a hand through his dark hair. The motion reveals that the white shirt beneath the blazer is unbuttoned.

The jealous part of me wonders if he's entertaining a woman up here. "There's some in the fridge." I point, but I also make my way to get him a bottle. I don't know what's come over me, but I feel more out of control now than ever.

The box of extra ornaments I made is on the counter, next to the fridge, reminding me I have somewhere to be.

“You look familiar.”

“Here’s your water.” I shove the cold bottle at his chest, the backs of my fingers pressing against that rock-hard chest. My nipples harden beneath my dress. “I have to get back to the party.”

With the box of paper ornaments, I rush out of the room and practically jog to the elevator. The seconds tick by painfully slow as I wait for it to return to the ninth floor so I can make my escape. At the ding, I hear footsteps behind me.

I’m in the elevator, repeatedly tapping the close door button when Wyatt’s hand covers the door, holding it open. “You’re Katy. Drew’s little sister.”

WYATT

I can’t believe I didn’t recognize Katy. It’s been a few years since I’ve seen her. Hell, I think she was a teenager back then. Off limits with the near ten years difference between us.

“Why didn’t you tell me who you were?” I’m still standing in the doorway of the elevator, my hand preventing it from closing. I’m intoxicated by her beauty. The last time I saw Katy, she was a kid. But she is definitely all woman now. Those curves practically have me panting. My cock twitches in my pants.

“I have to get back to the party.” She holds up a box lid filled with paper ornaments as if that explains everything. She’s trying to dismiss me.

“I’ll come with you.” I step into the elevator, and it’s impossible to miss her gasp. Her chest rises with it. That silky red dress already has me playing fantasies in my head her older brother would not appreciate. Correction. He’d kill me.

Drew will be surprised to see me. He tried to convince me earlier to come down to the party, but I adamantly declined. It's been a long week, and all I wanted to do tonight was relax with some mindless TV. I'd already started to undress when I heard that silky sweet voice from his office singing.

Now that I'm in the elevator with Katy, all I can think is *mine*. The word whispers over and over in my head. I try to shake it away, but it's not working.

"How long are you in town for?" Katy backs into a corner. I fear I make her uncomfortable, but I remember how she always was a little shy around me. Blushed a lot too if my memory holds true. "Sorry, I don't like elevators."

I press the button to take us to the party on the second floor and let the door finally slide closed. "We'll be down before you know it." The words don't bring the reassurance I'd hoped. Her eyes are still a little wild. I want to gather her in my arms until it's over. But I'd have a little trouble explaining that to Drew.

She inhales deeply, which lift those magnificent tits. I want to cup them with my hands. Massage them until she's moaning my name. Rub my dick between them while she's lying naked on her back. I should look away, but I don't.

"You want me to hold that for you?" I nod at the box.

Her fingers curl around the edges tighter. "I got it."

I lift my hands in surrender. I think it's the elevator that's got her wound up tight. Her eyes keep dropping to her feet, missing the nighttime skyline of the city. "How have you been, Katy?" It's a lame question, but now I'm just hopeful to distract her until the ride's over.

"Fine." Her head lifts, quickly scanning the elevator. "Why did it slow down?"

Before I can reassure her that's not the case, the elevator jerks to a halt. The overhead light flips off and the emergency light flickers on. The illuminated number above the door is stuck between five and six.

KATY

Holy crap on a cracker we're stuck in an elevator. We're really *stuck*. I feel a panic attack coming on. How completely embarrassing. Why couldn't Wyatt just stay upstairs so I could have a meltdown in private?

My thoughts are completely irrational right now as Drew makes a call, but there's nothing I can do to stop them. "We're fucking stuck?" I don't curse much. Part of the whole elementary teacher thing. But when I'm feeling panic creep in, I can't help. "We can't be stuck."

"Katy." Wyatt steps closer to me. Close enough that I can smell his delightful cologne. It's a new scent since his college days. I can't quite identify it, but it intoxicates me. For a solitary moment I forget we're trapped in a death box. He runs his hands up and down my arms.

"I don't like elevators," I whisper again. My breathing is still out of control, but now I'm no longer sure if it's the oncoming panic attack or if it's Wyatt's touch.

"They're working on it," he says.

"They need to hurry up."

"Hey, do you know this song?"

The music that had been playing upstairs is also playing in the elevator. Another popular Christmas song. I've been so

focused on simply catching my breath that I hadn't even noticed until now. "Yeah."

"Will you sing it to me?"

I sputter a laugh, feeling the tension ease ever so slightly. "No."

"Why not?" I lift my eyes all the way up to his own. He's so tall. His muscles even bigger this close up. I feel so tiny. So safe. But the confused expression lingering in those chocolatey brown eyes is genuine. "You have a lovely voice, Katy."

"I don't sing in front of people." When his eyebrow raises on one side, I add, "On purpose."

"Make an exception," he pleads. His hands have stopped moving, but they're still cupped around my arms. I want to close the gap between us, if only there wasn't a small box in the way. I want him to wrap me in his arms so I can feel our bodies pressed up against each other.

"No can do." I can't stop staring at his lips. It makes me lick my own. Who am I kidding? I don't just want to curl up in his arms. The heat between my legs forces me to admit the truth to myself. If I weren't so afraid of confined spaces, maybe I'd be brave enough to let my inner vixen loose.

He shrugs. "I tried."

"How long are you in town, Wyatt?" Maintaining eye contact is keeping me calm. It's also causing slickness between my thighs. I lick my lips again; I swear I hear him growl.

WYATT

If she doesn't stop licking those fucking lips, I'm going to lose any self-control I have left. She's Drew's little sister. But the constant reminder that's been on repeat in my head since the moment I recognized her is quickly losing ground. "Not sure how long I'm staying," I answer to her question.

I didn't plan to be in town for more than a couple days. Just long enough to finalize some business things with Drew. We're working on a charity project together. I only came to sign some paperwork in person. I was planning to be back on the other side of the country by Monday.

But now, I'm thinking I should extend my stay.

"I see." Her eyes drop from mine, glancing around me toward the city view. I want to push her up against the glass, slide that red dress up those wonderfully curvy hips, and take her right there with the view of the city behind us. I've always imagined the shy Katy Reynolds had a naughty side to her.

"What are the ornaments for?" I ask, finally taking a step back. My dick is half hard, already pressing into my zipper. If I'm not careful, it'll be too embarrassing to exit the elevator when it finally starts to move again.

"A fundraiser."

"For?"

"The school I work at." Her shy side has returned, and now she's not saying much. Or maybe it's her panic returning that we're stuck in an elevator. My proximity earlier had either been comforting her or distracting her. Those eyes darkened with desire suggest both.

I should stay on the other side of the elevator. Maybe call down to see what's taking so long, because the quick fix we were promised doesn't seem to be so quick at all. Instead, I reach inside the box for an ornament. Holding it from the string, I let the round paper decorated with paint and glitter spin in a circle. \$25 is written on the back in green paint. "Clever idea."

"There's a tree. Downstairs. It's almost empty." Her sentences are shorter, breathier.

"Look at me," I say when it looks like she might panic again. "Keep your eyes on me."

"Okay."

I reach for the box and set it down at her feet, resisting the urge to lick her inner thigh on my way back up. My hands are aching to feel what's beneath that dress. What kind of panties is she wearing? Red silk ones that match the dress? Black lace? None at all?

I pop back to my feet, because it's more important to keep her distracted than anything right now. Sliding my hand up her dress might distract her. My dick agrees. "What do you do at the school?" I assume she's a teacher, but I've been wrong with assumptions before.

"I teach third grade." A sparkle lights up her eyes at that.

"You love it."

She nods. "Yeah."

Something's coming over me about this woman, even though in some ways we just met. Because the last time I saw Katy Reynolds, she was a kid. Now, I'm meeting her as a woman. Yeah, I stayed with her family for a week seven or more years ago. But she's different now. A woman. *All* woman. It's sexy as hell. "What's your favorite part?"

"Seeing a student light up when something finally clicks."

She's thought about this answer. She's passionate about what she does. My heart is racing. I've met a lot of women. But none of them had any drive or passion for anything except spending my money. "You're kind of amazing, you know that?"

I can't keep my distance anymore. My hands cup her cheeks and draw her lips to mine. She doesn't hesitate to move her own against mine, and even invites my tongue in for a dance. If my cock wasn't completely hard before, it is when she moans into my mouth.

My hands slide up the silky fabric of her dress, from her hips to the sides of those amazing tits. I give her a few seconds to tell me to stop. Instead she pushes her chest out toward me in invitation.

They feel great in my large hands, like they were made just for me. But what I really want is to free them from their prison

—aka the red dress—and feel the soft, silky skin in my fingers. To taste those nipples and tease them between my teeth.

“Do it,” Katy says, her head tossed back against the mirrored wall of the elevator, her eyes half shut in a pleasurable haze. It’s like she can read my mind.

My moment of debate as to whether to unzip her dress or dive in with my hands and free them from the top is interrupted by a loud ding. The lights flash back on, and a robotic voice announces that the elevator is now back in service. We start descending.

Katy’s barely able to right her dress before the doors open, and her brother greets us.

KATY

Shoot, my ornament box is on the floor, and Drew is staring at me with that telling tilt of his head. He's suspicious. Dang. But Wyatt and I haven't done anything. Not *really*. Just a little hot and heavy make-out session in the elevator. Oh, the memory of it. Am I blushing?

"Your elevator quit on us," I say before anyone else has a chance to chime in.

"Quit?"

"Yeah, it went out of service for a few of minutes."

Drew's eyes return to me, sympathy in them now. He knows how much I hate confined spaces. "You okay?"

"Yep." I crouch down to pick up the box of ornaments, all too aware that my dress needs to be hiked up around the bust area again. It's lucky that Wyatt didn't get the girls freed. I don't know how I'd explain that one.

"I'm glad I have you both here," Drew says. "Saves me the trouble of tracking you down individually."

Well, at least he's not *too* suspicious.

"Luke invited everyone over for dinner tomorrow night. Amy's home for the weekend," Drew continues. "You're invited too, Wyatt."

“Me?” Wyatt seems just as surprised as I am.

“I know our mom would love to see you if you’re sticking around long enough,” says Drew.

Wyatt clears his throat, but a cool confident smile spreads across that chiseled face. My nipples stand to attention just that easily. “Yes, I’ll be around. I think I might stay in town a few extra days.”

“Sounds great!” Drew claps him on the shoulder. “I’ll text you the address.”

My brain searches desperately for some excuse—any excuse—that sounds believable. What happened in the elevator can’t happen again, despite how much I want it to. My three minutes in heaven will get me off for weeks to come when I’m lying in my bed alone. And that has to be enough. Wyatt and I are from two completely different worlds. They don’t mix. “Sorry, I can’t make it. I need to turn in the fundraiser money.”

Drew just gives me a blank, disbelieving stare. “Surely you can do that Monday?”

I *am* doing that Monday. But no one else needs to know that. “Thanks to your generous offer to let me hold it during your party, I have quite a bit of money I don’t want to sit on. I’d feel better turning it in tomorrow.”

“Our sister will kill you if you miss this.”

He’s not wrong. Amy—the youngest in our family—has always had a flare for the dramatic.

Before I can ask what we’re celebrating this time, Wyatt looks at me and asks, “Surely you’ll be done before dinner?” Mischievousness dances in his eyes. He has to know how bad of an idea this is.

“Maybe. It’s a lot of driving back and forth.” Refusing to look Wyatt in the eyes, I maneuver around him. Our arms brush, and shivers spread throughout my entire body. It’s time to get far, far away from Wyatt James. “Excuse me. I need to get these up on the tree.” I hurry out of the lobby, quick as I can in these heels. The ornaments slide back and forth with the

sway of my stride. In seconds, I'm hidden by the turn of a corner. Wyatt will likely be trapped with Drew for a bit. Long enough for me to hang these and make my escape.

WYATT

Katy slipped away from me, the sly fox. Maybe she's worried what her brother will think. Hell, I am a little. But Drew and I go way back. He knows the kind of man I am. Once I commit to something, that's it.

And Katy... she's worth keeping.

"Stick around and enjoy the party," Drew says to me. "See you at dinner tomorrow?"

Though my original plan was to be on a plane by tomorrow afternoon headed for my next adventure, I say, "I'll be there." Something about Katy has me wanting to skip the Bahamas trip I had planned and stick around.

Once Drew slips back into the party, called over to a crowd the second he steps into the room—he always was Mr. Popular—I set immediately to find Katy.

Luckily there's only one Christmas tree, and it's at least eight feet tall. The gold star on top stands out from across the room. I shuffle through the crowd, determined to talk to her before she tries to sneak out on me. I'm still not convinced that she'll show up to dinner at her brother's house tomorrow. The thought of not seeing her again is more than I can handle.

Something has come over me.

Something has a vise-grip on my heart.

Someone named Katy Reynolds.

I didn't fly halfway across the country to get tangled up with a woman. It was only supposed to be about the charity collaboration with Drew. But now that I've run into Katy, I can't help but think fate is trying to tell me something. It feels like she was always mine, and the thought has me so confused.

Clear of the crowd except for a man pulling off an ornament from the tree, I'm disappointed to find Katy missing. She had to hang those ornaments with lightning speed. The footstool propped up off to the side reveals how she reached those highest branches without the assistance I was planning to offer.

I spin around in a full, slow circle. That red dress isn't one I can miss. It's bright, sexy, and clings to her curves in all the best ways. I've thought about fucking her in that dress. The flash of that very fantasy forces me to adjust my pants. The blazer isn't enough to cover the bulge that's started to grow again.

She's managed to escape, and it's twisting me up inside. I search the entire room, tearing through the crowd like I lost my most valuable possession. I ignore the questioning stares, and politely excuse the questions.

She's gone. That's all there is to it.

I don't for a minute believe she was being honest about her fundraiser chore tomorrow. It may have been a few years since I've stepped foot inside an elementary school, but I don't remember one being open for business on a Saturday. She's trying to keep her distance, and I need to find out why.

Completely out of ideas, I do the only thing I can think of to show Katy I care about her. I take every remaining ornament off the tree. I wait for the cashier to add up the total, then tell her if Katy wants to collect, she'll need to call me for the check.

KATY

The good news is, every single ornament—to include ten one-hundred-dollar ones—was claimed last night.

The bad news... I have to talk to Wyatt to collect most of the money.

I groan into my pillow, irritated by that sexy dream I'd had. Me naked, spread out on the bed. Wyatt—also naked—propped between my legs, licking my pussy until I screamed his name. I woke up all hot and bothered. It took me less than a minute with my own hand and visions of his hard, sculpted body before I was seeing stars.

“He’s not playing fair,” I say to my pillow. Like it might have some wisdom to impart.

If my class didn't need the fundraising money so badly to take that field trip—or I could match what he is about to donate—I wouldn't bother calling him at all. Wyatt James was always quicksand for me. I know better than to get too close.

I stare at the number scribbled on the paper in front of me. I have to call. It's two-thousand thirty-eight dollars. If I don't, I know he'll try to make it a thing at the dinner tonight. My little sister has already called and made me pinky swear I'd be there. I know Amy. She'll hunt me down if I go back on my word now.

Before I can chicken out, I dial his number. Butterflies buzz in my stomach. This is ridiculous. I'm not a kid anymore.

"You found me." That silky, smooth voice sends chills up my arms. It's the same voice from my dreams last night.

"You didn't have to do that, you know." But I'm kind of glad he did. My class will be over the moon to hear that I raised the entire five thousand dollars in one night for their zoo extravaganza trip.

"Of course I did," he says. "How else would I see you again?"

Any semblance of being touched by his gesture vanishes in that simple statement. He doesn't care about the fundraiser at all. It's a harsh reminder that his priorities and mine are completely different. I push aside my fantasies of Wyatt in my bed and remind myself he will leave again to chase the next thrill. Soon. "Where do I have to pick up the money?"

He lets out a deep, rumbling laugh. My traitorous nipples stand to attention. "Babe, I'm coming to you."

On impulse, I stretch the blinds with two fingers. Next to my junky heap of car, I spot the red Ferrari. Flashy and impulsive, just like Wyatt. I watch him step out of the car, eyes drawn to those sexy jeans and leather jacket. He's got a bad boy vibe going on today. It turns me on. I can't help it.

Catching my reflection in the window, panic sets in. I haven't showered this morning. I'm still in my pajama shorts, a t-shirt, and no bra. My hair is in a messy bun knot at the top of my head, and I've barely had the good sense to brush my teeth.

The knock at the door doesn't give me time to fix any of that now. I swallow and open the door. "I should've known you'd find this place on your own." I try to sound confident. Dare I say a little flirtatious. But my words come out breathily.

"I have my resources." He winks at me before his eyes drop to my chest. The generously sized girls are roaming free at the moment. His eyes darken, and good grief it forces me to squeeze my thighs together.

“Do you have the check?”

He brushes past me—his bicep grazing the side of my breast—and closes the door behind him. As much as I tell myself I want him out of my house, my body is telling me just the opposite. At that soft touch, my nipples are screaming for his attention.

He leans against the doorjamb leading out of my cramped living room and into the narrow hallway. “You didn’t think you were going to get it *that* easily, did you?”

I’d hoped, but secretly I want this prolonged. With all the exotic places Wyatt James has traveled, and all the beautiful model-thin women who have no doubt thrown themselves at him, it’s hard to believe he’d ever be interested in someone like me. But the bulge in his jeans suggests he is.

As those intense eyes continue to assess me, my desire for Wyatt—one I’ve harbored for years—takes over. Before I can talk myself out of it, I close the distance between us until I’m little more than a feather’s width from his steel chest. “What do you want me to do?”

I’m pushed up against the wall half a second after the words leave my lips. His body covers mine, and his attraction to me is no mystery. His cock wants loose. I grab for the zipper of his jeans, but not before he’s shoved my shirt up.

“Your tits are even more amazing than I dreamed about last night.” He gropes them hard with his fingers.

I moan. I can’t help it. The thought that Wyatt dreamed about me too turns me on. I’m drenched between my legs. A wicked thrill shoots through me as I anticipate him discovering that I’m not wearing panties.

My fingers fumble with his zipper as the sensation of his skin on mine is making me come undone. I shove my hands down the waistband of his boxers. I gasp. My hand hardly fits around his girth.

“Fuck, Katy,” he growls into my ear. “My dick loves your hands on it.”

Massaging his length in my hand, I feel the precum slide through my fingers. I want him inside me, and I'm not sure I can wait much longer. "Fuck me, Wyatt." Maybe today—maybe right now—is all I get with him before he's off in another country relishing in luxuries and exotic women. If now is it, I want a naughty memory to keep with me.

"Turn around," he says against my ear before he bites it.

WYATT

I've been hard for Katy since the moment I woke up. Nothing would calm my dick down, not even stroking myself raw in the shower this morning, imaging how glorious those tits would look without any fabric in the way.

Hands on the silky smooth skin above her hips, I spin her toward the wall. "Put your hands up."

With a wicked flash in her eyes, she turns around and braces herself. Fuck, I could cum right now just from that look.

I slowly slide those cute little booty shorts down her wonderfully curvy ass and let them drop to her ankles. She kicks them away, spreading her legs for me. I shove my jeans the rest of the way off and practically rip my boxers away.

"Are you clean?" I ask. I have to know, but more than that, I want to know if she's been with anyone else recently. *She's mine* a voice whispers in my ear. *All mine. Only mine.*

"Clean. On the pill."

"Good. I want to feel you without anything in between us, Katy."

She nods against the wall. "Yes." Her lower back arches and her ass lifts toward me in invitation.

I plant my hands on her hips and position myself at her entrance. I tease her with the tip of my dick, and nearly lose it at how wet she is for me. One of her hands drops from the wall

and reaches between her legs until it finds my cock. She slides it along her cunt, using it to play with herself.

“Fuck, Katy. I’m not going to last like this.”

Her fingers push my dick to her entrance. “Then get inside me.”

The Katy Reynolds I remembered was shy. Always blushing when I was around. Always running off and hiding from me. But *this* Katy isn’t shy at all. Fuck, it’s hot. I want inside her. I want to claim her. *Mine. Only mine.* “Only my dick, Katy.”

“Only yours.” Her voice is husky.

“I mean it. Your pussy is mine.”

“Yours. All yours.”

I plunge inside her all at once until my balls smack against her ass cheeks. She gasps, then moans. I can feel my dick lightly pulsing inside her. She’s so tight. I pull all the way out, and dive inside her again.

“More,” she cries out.

I pump into her like my life depends on it. Until I feel her pussy clench around my dick and start to convulse. Unable to hold myself back a second longer, I cum inside her sweet, warm pussy. Claiming her. “Mine,” I growl into her ear, holding my dick deep inside her as hot ropes of cum fill her. “You’re *all* mine.”

KATY

Wyatt left two hours ago, after our third round and a nap we both desperately needed. My body is sore in the best way, and I'm hanging out on cloud nine. I know he's leaving soon, and I've come to terms with that. But I'm not a bit sad about what transpired.

He had to meet Drew for a business meeting. He wouldn't tell me about the charity deal he's working on with my brother, no matter how much I pressed him. For a man who flaunts his wealth with flashy sports cars, expensive designer suits, and talk about traveling all over the world, he sure is humble about his charity work.

I try to ward off the thought as I reluctantly shower, washing away his scent. Once he leaves, it's possible I'll never see him again.

"Can you bring a dessert?" Amy asks me on the phone as I'm getting dressed.

"Sure." I'll have to pick up something from the store, because my kitchen cupboards are bare. Grocery shopping one was one item on my to-do list that did not happen today, but I'm not about to admit that to my baby sister. She's nosy and would ask too many questions.

"Something banana? Jason just loves banana desserts."

“Got it.” I’m not thrilled that she’s still with Jason. No one in our family has ever thought much of him. He’s too self-absorbed. Someday, I hope she’ll come to her senses and dump his sorry butt to the curb before things gets too serious.

“I heard Wyatt James is coming tonight.”

I squint my eyes shut and take a deep breath. Amy discovered my little crush on Wyatt when he stayed with our family all those years ago. She was too young to understand much, but obviously old enough to remember it. “Yeah I heard that too. Drew invited him.”

No way I’m telling her I had three rounds of mind-blowing sex with him today. She’d never be able to keep that secret in front of our brothers.

“You should go for it, Katy.”

“What?”

“Wear something sexy.”

I could play dumb, but I’ll lose at that game. I know what she’s implying. “I’ll see you in an hour.” I hang up the phone before she can go on about this anymore. This morning was a lot of fun, but I don’t for a second think Wyatt is coming home with me tonight. Or any night ever again. But it doesn’t stop me from taking *some* of my sister’s advice.

The silky red top feels too much with these skinny jeans and boots. I love my curves and don’t mind showing them off, but even this feels too much for a family dinner. My mom’s raised eyebrow says as much as she goes in for a hug. “Heard you raised the whole lot in one night.”

“I did, thanks to Drew’s office party.” I can’t help but smile at that. Even if Wyatt doesn’t realize what his donation is for, my class will be ecstatic to take their trip to the zoo. We’ve been focusing on exotic animals this semester. Since the school cut back its budget on field trips of any kind this schoolyear, the only way we’re allowed to take our classes on them at all is to raise the money ourselves.

“Katy!” Amy throws her arms around my neck in a strangle-hold as she hugs me. I haven’t seen my baby sister in almost a year. She’s been finishing up college. “You took my advice,” she says into my ear, quiet enough that our mom doesn’t hear.

“Where’s Drew?” I ask mom when I pry my sister’s arm off me. Mostly, I’m curious where Wyatt is, because his flashy red Ferrari was missing from the ensemble of cars lining the street when I arrived.

“He’ll be here shortly with Wyatt. Something about paperwork to finish up.” Mom shakes her head as she makes her way toward the kitchen.

I spot my other brother, Luke, outside at the grill. Britt, his new wife, on his arm. They’re adorable. So in love with their little shared glances, genuine smiles, and playfulness. I feel a tiny ache in my heart. It’s not jealousy. I love Britt, and I’m so glad my brother is happy. But I wish I could find the same thing.

The front door bursts open, and Wyatt and Drew appear. Suddenly I’m choked for words. The events of this morning flash through my mind. Mixed with the overflow of love I’m witnessing outside, it’s confusing.

“Katy, good to see you again.” Wyatt sends me a wink and a wicked smile. It makes me want to sneak him off down the hall. Before I can say anything, I catch Drew looking back and forth between us. I have to turn away before my red cheeks give everything away.

As my mom wraps Wyatt in a hug, I duck in the bathroom to splash cold water on my face. I was a fool to think I could pretend like nothing happened between us this morning in front of everyone. At this rate, the secret will be out before dinner hits the table.

There’s not even a gentle knock at the door before it opens. Wyatt slips inside and locks the knob behind him. He doesn’t say a word. Just steps up to me until our bodies are pressed together. He digs his hands into the hair behind my neck and

kisses me. I invite his tongue into my mouth, relishing in the feel of him pressed up against me.

“I missed you,” he says.

The words, whispered so intimately against my ear send shivers throughout my body. I want to believe that they could mean something. Instead, I allow myself to slip into this fantasy a little while longer. Soon, it'll just be a memory. “I missed you, too.”

“Dinner's ready,” I hear my brother Luke call.

“We better go before they come looking for us,” I say. My brothers don't need to know that anything happened between me and Wyatt. It'll be a secret I treasure on the loneliest days.

Wyatt kisses me again until I can't breathe. “Just so you know, we're *not* finished.”

WYATT

We're hardly ten minutes into dinner when Katy's youngest sister drops a bomb on us all. “I'm moving to New York with Jason. Next week.”

After that announcement, arguments erupt from all of her siblings. Her boyfriend couldn't even be bothered to show up tonight, and leaves Amy as a lone target. I can't help but feel a little sorry for the youngest Reynolds sibling. But her family makes several valid points about her impulsive decision. All of which she defends and dismisses.

The empty spot beside her at the table doesn't go unnoticed by Katy, as her eyes keep landing on it. Her fists clench and unclench beneath the table. Whoever this boyfriend of Amy's is, no one seems to like him.

Amy throws her napkin down onto her untouched plate and storms out.

Katy goes after her, but is left standing in the overcrowded driveway with her arms wrapped around her as her youngest

sister speeds down the street. I follow Drew and Luke out the door, but I'm not quick enough. They're in Drew's Corvette and chasing after her before I can even offer to make a call.

"It's not safe for her to drive," Katy says to me, turning into my open arms like it's the most natural thing in the world. "I'm worried about her."

"C'mon." I take her hand and walk her to my car. Katy's in no shape to drive. She's shaking too much, and tears are on the brink. "We can look for her, too."

Katy nods, then slips into the passenger seat of the Ferrari I rented. I have to admit, she looks damn sexy in that car. *As my wife*. The thought flickers through my mind before I can silence it. I never thought I'd settle down. Never even considered having a serious relationship. But Katy has me rethinking everything.

"Where do you think she would go?" I take Katy's hand and squeeze, waiting for her to think.

"Probably that jerk's house." She gives me the address, and we speed off down the road. It's the opposite direction that everyone else went. But if Katy loses her brothers, hopefully we'll find her.

"Are you okay?" I ask her at a red light.

"I shouldn't be surprised. Amy's always doing something impulsive. The day she doesn't we should be worried." She lets out a half-hearted laugh, but I can still sense the dread in her voice.

"You think she's making a mistake?"

"I know she is." Katy sighs. "But if we don't let her make it, she'll never learn."

We're still two miles from our destination when Katy's phone dings. "It's Amy."

"She okay?"

"She's staying with a girlfriend tonight." Visible relief comes over Katy as her shoulders drop and the tension lines that had been etched in her forehead ease. "We can go back."

“Or we can go for a drive?” I should take her back to her brother’s house, but I can’t help it. I brace for her to fight me on this. She’s guarded, and I can’t blame her. With the lifestyle I’ve led my entire life, I can’t expect her to trust my intentions. Not yet.

“Okay.”

Shocked by her answer, I don’t give her time to change her mind. I squeeze her hand and speed off to a quiet moonlit ledge with a spectacular view of the city lights. It’s the perfect place to confess that I’ve fallen madly in love with her.

KATY

It's a bad idea. A terrible idea. But my lips couldn't seem to form the word *no*. So here we are, racing through the dark roads up into the hills, weaving our way on the outskirts of the city. I have to admit, a part of me is thrilled by it all.

"Do you only drive fancy sports cars?" I ask.

He winks at me, causing the heat between my legs to ignite instantly. "Only sometimes. Are you opposed to fast cars?"

"Nope. This one's pretty sexy, I have to admit." And so is the driver. But I keep that detail to myself. Wyatt James doesn't need anyone telling him what he already knows.

"Think you could get used to riding in a car like this?" He pulls into a deserted graveled lot that overlooks the city. It's illuminated by the glow of the nearly full moon.

Avoiding his question, as it sparks much too intimate a fantasy that could never be reality, I ask, "Where are we?"

"Special spot. C'mon." He hops out of the car, leaving me with a tightness in my stomach I don't care for. How *special* is this spot? How many other women has he taken here? I try to shake the thought, remind myself that he doesn't even live in this city.

"It's beautiful," I say.

"It's mine."

“What?”

“I bought it.” Wyatt leans against the car, drawing me into his arms, his chest to my back.

“When?”

“Today.”

I want to ask why. But with the kind of money Wyatt has at his disposal, he doesn't really need a reason for impulsive decisions like buying a piece of land in a city he never visits. Instead, I nestle my bottom into his groin. Things are much less complicated when I stop thinking.

“You better not start what you can't finish, Katy.” That deep growl in my ears has become my favorite thing about him. I'll hear that in my dreams forever.

I turn and kiss him hard. Nothing sweet or tender in the way our lips collide. Knowing my sister is safe for the night is enough to allow me to let my wild side free one last time. It's the only way to keep any pesky feelings under lock and key. “How do you want me?” I purr.

He unzips my jeans and shimmies them down my legs. “On the hood of the car.” Before I can kick off my boots, he says, “Leave them on.”

The hood has cooled enough that I'm not at risk of burning myself when I lay my back on it. Wyatt grabs my ass cheeks with his hands, and his head appears between my legs. I lock in my ankles around his neck. We did a lot of things this morning, but this was one fantasy that had gone unfulfilled.

“I need to taste you, babe.” His face disappears between my legs. His teeth rake my lace thong to one side, and his mouth makes quick work of my cunt. It's so intense the second the tip of his skillful tongue touches my folds that I nearly buckle with ecstasy.

I want to spread my legs apart, but they're trapped by my jeans and locked behind his head. I'm seeing stars in only seconds, and it's not the night sky overhead. His name escapes my lips over and over as his tongue works magic on my clit. I grind my hips into his face, gyrating to his rhythm.

Relishing in the gentle scrape of his two-day stubble between my thighs.

My body explodes with a pleasure I've never quite experienced. My pussy convulses, but Wyatt doesn't move his mouth when I become sensitive. His lips are pressed against my folds until I completely come down from my high.

He pulls me up from the hood of the car and helps me adjust my jeans. My legs are like overcooked noodles that don't want to stand on their own. "You taste so sweet." I'm wrapped in his embrace before I can step away. I hate to admit how wonderful, how safe it feels here. My head is nestled against his muscular pecks, and I never want to leave.

"Wyatt?"

He looks down into my eyes, and it's enough to make my pulse race when it finally just calmed from the incredible orgasm. "Yes, babe?"

"Let me return the favor."

WYATT

Katy's lips feel so good wrapped around my cock. The seat is back as far as it'll go, and she's taking in every inch with each pump of her glorious mouth. She's the only woman I want sucking my dick ever again.

The thought should startle me, but instead, it reassures me that I've made the right decision. I'm going to keep Katy no matter the cost. The thought of her with someone else should I leave her behind is enough to make me see red.

I lose myself to the dizzy spell she puts me under as the blood rushes and my dick begins to pulse. "I'm going to cum, babe." She doesn't stop. She speeds up, and it's all the invitation I need to blow my load into the back of her throat. She smiles up at me as she swallows every last drop.

I'm in love.

I just have to figure out how to tell her.

“Katy, that was something else.” I wipe away a bead of sweat from my brow. It wasn’t hot in the car before, but the windows of the Ferrari are completely steamed up. It makes me feel like a teenager doing something bad.

She wipes away a single drop of cum on her lips and sucks it off her thumb. That wicked look in her eyes is back. It’s so fucking hot.

“I love you.” The words blurt from my mouth before I can stop them. It’s not how I imagined telling her, and it’s certainly not the right timing. I wanted to take her out to a fancy dinner. Spoil her rotten. Make sure she felt special. I wanted to *show* her my feelings. Not just spit them out like this.

“C’mon, Wyatt. You’re just saying that.” She rolls her eyes at me with that disbelieving smile of hers. She thinks I’m kidding. That maybe I just love how she sucks my cock.

“Come with me, Katy.”

“What?”

“I leave for the Bahamas tomorrow. Come with me.”

She sits back in the passenger seat and pulls both her hands into her lap. Her eyes dart everywhere but at me. “I can’t do that, Wyatt. I have to be at school Monday.”

“Call in sick.”

An incredulous laugh escapes. “I can’t do that. I *won’t* do that.”

This isn’t going like I planned at all. I know Katy’s teaching job is important to her, and that she can’t just go with me on a whim. But selfishly, I want her to anyway. I don’t want anyone else, just Katy. I want to show her a life of luxury and ease. “I’ve been picturing you on a yacht all day. You belong there. With me.”

“Take me home, Wyatt.” Her voice has grown cold now, and I fear I’ve crossed a line.

I could argue with her, make her understand how much I care. But tonight, with that icy glare in her eyes, she's not going to hear anything I have to say.

So I do the hardest thing I've done in as long as I can remember. I take Katy home and let her walk away from me. I just hope I can fix this.

KATY

The nerve of that man! I toss and turn all night, frustrated by how easily he dismissed what's most important to me. I can't just leave a classroom full of students on a foolish impulse to what? Spend a week on a fancy yacht surrounded by model-thin women in thousand-dollar bikinis? It would take less than five minutes for him to realize just how out of place a woman like me is in his extravagant life.

"I saw that you left with Wyatt last night." Britt, my brother's wife and my best friend, stares me down from across the booth in Maple's Diner. She's bribed me out of my house with free pancakes.

"Yeah." I poke at the blueberry stack, wishing my appetite would return. "I heard he caught a flight this morning, too."

It takes about thirty seconds of debate before the dam inside me breaks, and I spill the entire ordeal to Britt. I know I can trust her not to say anything to my brothers. The last thing I want to do is cause any rifts between Wyatt and the rest of my family. I'm the one who let him into my bed.

"Do you love him?" Britt asks.

"What?" She can't be serious. Sure, I knew Wyatt from years ago. But I haven't seen him since that break he spent with my family. A couple days isn't enough time for me to fall in love with anyone, let alone Wyatt James.

“It’s that look in your eyes.” Britt points her fork at me. “You might be able to lie to yourself, but you’re not lying to me.”

I sigh, knowing it’s pointless to argue with her when she’s convinced of something. “I don’t fit into his life, Britt. He’s on some crazy expensive yacht, surrounded by beautiful women who are all probably models or actresses. He won’t even remember me a few days from now.”

“Don’t be so hard on yourself.”

I remind her that he wanted me to call in sick for a week at school. “He doesn’t care about my teaching career. He doesn’t care that it’s important to me. That teaching is part of who I am. He just wants me to fit into *his* life.”

I wait for her to tell me I’m wrong, but the only thing she extends my way is pity. “I’m sorry, honey. I really am. I thought you two had a genuine connection. We all did.”

“What are you talking about?”

“At dinner. Everyone could see it.”

My reflection in the window tells me I turn as red as the ketchup bottle on our table. “Everyone?”

“I also heard he funded over half of your field trip.”

I drop my fork, completely giving up on breakfast now. Britt’s only trying to help. When she doubted my brother Luke, I was the one who talked her through it. But this isn’t the same. Wyatt has always lived his life a certain way, and he won’t give it up for an elementary teacher. “Let’s just go. I need to get my lesson plans finished for this week.”

WYATT

I’ve spent most of my adult life traveling the world, staying in expensive hotels, rubbing shoulders with some of the richest men in the world. But this is the first time it’s ever felt empty.

The thrill of chasing the next business deal in some luxurious setting is lost on me.

Because Katy isn't here to share it with me, none of it matters.

If another skinny woman in a barely-there bikini tries to flirt with me, I might actually jump overboard. I don't want any of them. I only want my Katy. She should be here, beside me.

Before the next girl can successfully make her way across the deck in those ridiculous stilettos, I hop up from my seat and retreat to my room.

I try to lay down. Relax. I don't have another meeting for an hour yet. But I can't seem to turn off my mind. I start pacing, wondering what I can do to win Katy back. She belongs with me. I know it in the depths of my heart. We're supposed to spend a lifetime together.

Teaching. It's the most important thing in Katy's life.

I keep pacing the room, searching for clues.

The answer hits me like a ton of bricks to the stomach. I can't believe I didn't realize it sooner. I know how to keep her. I know how I'm going to keep my Katy.

KATY

It's been two weeks since Wyatt left, and there's still an emptiness inside me. I'm staring out the window as my class reads in silence. We'll be leaving for our zoo fieldtrip within the hour, so there was no point in teaching a formal lesson. They're all too excited.

It's because of Wyatt's generous donation that we're able to go to the zoo at all. I don't even know if he knows that, though. Donating the money was just an excuse to see me. It didn't mean anything special to me.

He tried to call me a couple of times, but I was too proud to answer him. I deleted his voicemails in the heat of the moment. Now, I'd give anything to retrieve them. To hear his voice again.

"Ms. Reynolds?" One of my students raises his hand from the front row.

"Yes, Charlie?"

"Who's that?" My eyes follow his pointed finger to the classroom door. A tall man in a sharp black suit stands with his back to the glass slit. My first thought is *Wyatt's here*. But that's ridiculous. Wyatt is probably in France or Greece. Maybe my brother has come to surprise my class. It was his employees, after all, who supported a sizeable portion of the fundraiser.

“I’ll find out.”

The moment I crack the door open, I know it’s Wyatt. His musky, manly scent hits me so suddenly that I’m not prepared for my nipples to harden. I pull my cardigan tighter across my chest to hide the peaks.

“Wyatt, what are you doing here?” I close the door behind me, because a room full of third graders has gone from dead silent to a dull roar of whispers in seconds. Soon, they’ll be insatiably curious and unruly.

He’s talking to the principal, and suddenly I’m on high alert.

“It’s all settled, Mr. James.” The two men shake hands at whatever deal they’ve wielded.

My eyes dance between the two of them, trying to figure it out. If Wyatt came here to arrange some time off for me, I’ll lose it. Absolutely lose it. He tried once to overstep his bounds. But if he tries it again by going behind my back... “Wyatt?”

“Mr. James has made quite the generous donation today, Ms. Reynolds.”

So he came to be recognized for his portion of the fundraising money? *Unbelievable.*

“I hope the kids will enjoy it,” Wyatt says, his voice smooth and charming as ever. “It’s not much.”

“Not much?” The principal looks taken aback. “Most of these kids have only seen limos in movies. You’re giving them an experience of a lifetime.”

“Limos?” My eyes trail down the hallway to the glass double doors. I see the stretch of black parked outside. “How many limos?”

“Enough to transport your entire class to the zoo and back,” says Wyatt.

“What?”

“They’re also getting a special behind-the-scenes tour today,” the principal adds. “Isn’t that wonderful?”

I want to feel outraged that Wyatt used his money and connections to arrange this. But the kids... they’ll be so excited. They’ll talk about this trip for weeks to come. “Don’t suppose those limos come with snacks?”

“Ten different kinds.” Wyatt takes another step closer to me, his hand touching my elbow. “I hope you don’t mind, Ms. Reynolds, but I’m coming with your class for the day. As one of the chaperones.”

“Uh, sure.” The thought of spending the day with Wyatt—in my own element of all places—scares and thrills me.

“Can I steal a moment of Ms. Reynolds’ time?” Wyatt asks my principal. Charlie has his nose pressed against the glass behind us, and three other kids are stretching their necks to see over the top of him. I can hear chaos erupting inside.

“I need to see to my class—”

“It’s no bother,” the principal says to me. “I’ll see to them. I’m overdue for a visit anyway.”

Wyatt takes my hand before I can object, and in seconds we’re outside. I count six limos lined up in the school bus lane. “This is too much, Wyatt.”

“Why?”

I find I can’t quite form an answer to that question. Maybe the only thing *too much* about it is my stupid pride. “Shouldn’t you be in Rome or Brazil or someplace more exciting?”

He shrugs. “Maybe.”

I never thought I’d see him again. When I told him to take me home, and he didn’t so much as try to leave me with a goodbye kiss, I assumed the fun we’d had was just that. Some fling. Another notch in his bedpost. Nothing special. “I don’t understand.”

“I was wrong to ask you to leave with me so impulsively. If you’re with me, you don’t need to work another day in your life. I got so caught up in the dream of having you by my side

for the rest of my life that I didn't take your dreams into account."

The rest of his life? Surely I heard that wrong. "Teaching is my purpose. It's everything to me."

"I know it is. That's why I'm moving here."

"What?"

"I'll still need to travel from time to time, but I can't stand the idea of being away from you another day." Wyatt draws me into his arms, his hand cupping my cheek. "They're breaking ground on that plot of land I bought. I'm building us a home, babe."

"Us?"

He kisses me with such passion, such desperation, that I want to believe him. I pull back. "You're sure about this? I'm not like those other women, Wyatt. Not the kind you're used to be around on all your high-class trips—"

"And I'm so glad. Because none of those women are you."

"What are you saying?"

Wyatt kneels before me, pulling a ring box from his jacket pocket. "I'm completely in love with you, Katy. I can't imagine my life without you in it. I want to start a life together. Marry me."

My class is standing outside the door, wide eyes and smiles. Some might not know what's happening right now, but some definitely do. "Say yes!" Charlie shouts.

Wyatt winks at me. "You heard the kid."

"Yes. Yes, I will marry you."

I'm swept up in the strong arms I've missed so much. Some of the kids cheer and others let us know just how opposed they are to kissing in public. But I don't care. I passionately kiss the man I'm going to spend the rest of my life with in front of them all.

EPILOGUE

WYATT

It's been three wonderful years married to the woman of my dreams, and I still can't get enough of her. I love seeing her in her element and drop by her classroom at least once a week to surprise her and the kids with something special.

But now that it's summer break, we're enjoying the beautiful ocean breeze off the coast of Greece. Katy's holding our sleeping daughter in her arms. Both my girls are wearing the most beautiful smiles.

"Do you need me to lay her down?" I ask my wife.

She hands her to me and raises up on her tiptoes to give me a kiss. "Lay her down, then come lay *with* me."

It doesn't matter where we are, my dick twitches in my shorts at that invitation. I watch Katy strut away in that golden swimsuit that accentuates those amazing curves, covered by little more than a sheer sarong. Once I set our daughter in her crib, I'm going to bury my dick deep inside the woman I love until she's crying out my name.

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