



Lucky Man

K.L. SHANDWICK

LUCKY MAN

LUVLUCK NOVELLA SERIES BOOK 5



K.L. SHANDWICK



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K. L. Shandwick– The author of the book

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Also by K.L. Shandwick

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SYNOPSIS

Lucky Man

Luck—Some people say you make your own luck.

Since I met Daisy O'Donnell, I'd have to disagree.

When I was stranded in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day all I'd
been looking for was a bed.

If you'd asked me before, if it was possible to fall in love in a
day, I'd have laughed in your face, and called you a hopeless
romantic.

That was before Daisy O'Donnell climbed me like a tree the
moment I walked into her Irish bar.

Being a rock star, this wasn't the first time some fan had lost
the plot and literally fangirled all over me.

One year later, the challenge of finding time for one another is
much the same.

However, by the power of persuasion, my Irish girl, Daisy,
agrees to a short break away with me, little does she know
what I have up my sleeve.

CHAPTER 1



Inhaling the crisp clean air made me feel alive. My skin and throat burned from the freezing conditions as I pulled off my helmet and squinted against the glare of the sun in the blue cloudless sky. I reckoned there would only be about one more hour until nightfall, and two hours until Daisy arrived at the resort.

Felix, my bodyguard, had led the way up to the secluded cabin Donna, my PA, had hired for our romantic vacation, but had left immediately after to retrace his tracks back down to the resort in readiness to meet my girl. Daisy would be tired after her long journey from Dublin to Burlington.

It was a two-mile snowmobile ride from the center of Sugarbush Ski Resort to the secluded cabin on Lincoln Peak Mountain in Vermont. The frosty conditions during the ten-minute ride had almost frozen my balls off, despite the heated seat, but I had been told the ride to the location would be worth it.

I'd been to Sugarbush a few times before, it was a well-known haunt for celebrities and the accommodation was priced accordingly to meet the level of luxury I had become accustomed to.

My breath hitched when I took in the scenery that surrounded the cabin. It looked ‘winter wonderland idyllic’ and would have been a perfect location for any Christmas romance movie. I’d never been anywhere quite like it, despite all my travels, that could compare to the secluded little spot Donna had found. My heart sped up when I figured it created the perfect setting for what I had in mind for my getaway with my girl.

I hadn’t been as excited about anything in years as I was when I arrived at the resort. That excitement only grew in my belly as I took in the cabin and thought about how the next few days may unfold.

The sight of the warm glow of soft lighting inside the cabin window of the rental filled me with delight. I then prayed that the place that we’d call home for the next five days would feel as inviting on the inside. In my mind, everything had to be perfect to help create a special memory I’d hoped would last us a lifetime.

Stamping the snow off my boots on the threshold, I stepped inside the porch of the quaint, rustic log cabin. The door immediately opened and a blast of warm air from a heater over the door instantly stung my cheeks.

“Welcome,” a young girl said and stepped aside for me to enter. As I stepped further into the hallway heat burned my nostrils and lungs. The warmth instantly made me feel welcome.

The young, student-type girl that was there with the keys to greet me shot past me, quickly shoved the thick pine door closed and walked back in front of me. When her eyes met mine, she cast me an awestruck look that told me she knew who I was.

She paused for a moment and stared blankly before she almost reached out, thought better of it and her fingers curled into a fist. “You really are *that* Jamie Fontaine!” she gushed as she slowly pulled her fist to her chest.

“Hey,” I said, ignoring her statement and began pulling off my gloves one by one. I stuffed them under my armpit and clapped my hands to warm them. My fingertips that had gone numb during the last part of the ride. When she didn’t say anything else, I dropped my focus to the floor and noticed her stocking feet.

Noting a small puddle pooling around my boots, I toed them off and when I looked up again, she had turned away and had begun to wander down the hallway toward what I’d assumed must be the family room. I padded over the tiled floor behind her with the underfloor heating thawing my feet with every step I took.

“Kelsy,” she said when she suddenly stopped, turned and stuck her small hand out toward me. I responded by shaking it and she pulled it back like she had been stung. She looked a little dazed as she pulled her sweater sleeve down over it and looked up to face me. I watched her curiously as I laid down my gloves and peeled out of my damp ski jacket. She wandered around to the other side of the kitchen island situated in the open-plan family room and slapped her hands on the granite countertop.

“I managed to source all the provisions the lady asked for. They are stocked in the pantry, refrigerator and wine cooler,” she said as I laid my jacket over a free stool by the island and sat on another to listen. “Tonight’s dinner is already prepped here,” she advised. She opened the fridge door and pointed to

it. “All you need to do is to slide it into a warm oven thirty minutes before you want to eat it.”

“Sounds great, thank you,” I responded, memorizing everything she told me. She looked far too young and fragile to work in such a remote area of the mountain alone.

Kelsy’s eyes wandered around the room as if she were thinking. When she tapped her lips with her fingertips, I realized I was staring at her, she blushed, “What else?” she hummed while her cheeks turned pinker by the minute, and she began to appear a little flustered. “Wood pile has been stocked and the fire’s all set,” she remarked as she pointed over at that. “The matches are up on the mantle. If you text me when you want it cleaned out and prepped again, I’ll come over and do that when you’re out. Otherwise, I can do it when I come by to drop off tomorrow’s dinner.”

“That won’t be necessary—not tomorrow at any rate... for the fire I mean. As for food, if we don’t eat out, we’ll likely order from the restaurants in the resort and my bodyguard will collect it. I can take care of the fire tomorrow. In fact, I think all we need for our stay is fresh sheets and towels for each day, and if we do want the fire, I’ll text you.”

“Fresh sheets daily?” she asked in surprise before her face turned beet red and my unspoken reason sank in.

“Yeah, skiing makes me sweat,” I said as an alternative to the delicious mess I’d envisioned our love making would make. “I don’t want my girl getting into bed at night with the lingering smell of my sweaty body if I’ve been out skiing and taken a nap.”

“Oh,” she said, her face turning a deeper shade of red and I chuckled because we both figured I was talking bullshit.

“Did you think I meant something else?” I poked, straight-faced because my sick sense of humor enjoyed embarrassing people who made assumptions based upon my reputation. When she opened the door and stared into the fridge again, I figured she was trying to save face.

“D ... do you want me to show you around?” Kelsy asked, quickly changing the subject still fascinated by the contents of the fridge. I grinned as I glanced around the cosy family room again.

“No, I’ll enjoy exploring. Part of the fun is discovering things for myself in places like this. Besides, I have a few things of my own that I’ve brought, so I’ll take my time and unpack before my girl, Daisy, gets here.”

It had felt like an age since I’d seen Daisy and yet it had only been weeks. But from my libido’s perspective it had felt like a whole lot longer. All week long I’d been counting down the minutes until I saw her again. After a whole year of not spending nearly as much time as I’d liked with her, I was done with the toing and froing, and mostly planning when I had to leave her before I’d even gotten to spend a minute of time with her.

I immediately warmed to the thought of what Daisy’s reaction would be when she saw the place. I had anticipated the look of wonder I’d seen in the past when she saw anything new. And how they looked the moment she saw me again after some time apart. Her eyes always glittered excitedly during those first moments when I held her in my arms again.

A short burst of adrenaline sent a bolt of pleasure streaking through my body with that thought and my heart raced. The feeling made me wonder whether there were even enough fresh linens in the whole resort to take care of what I had in

mind for her. My dick stiffened at the thought of finally having her beneath me again.

“There’s a storage cabinet full of sheets and towels in the closet in the hallway and the dressing room of the sauna,” Kelsy informed me breaking into my thoughts and drawing me back to the moment. I’d forgotten about the indoor sauna the cabin had that was listed in the information and nodded.

“Then we won’t need anything from you unless we go out. Maybe I could text you if we do and you could shoot over here.”

“Of course. I get the message loud and clear you want to be left alone.” She averted her eyes and looked a little embarrassed again.

I grinned, turned on the swivelling stool and rapped my knuckles on the wooden dining table. “You got it,” I agreed and looked around the family room again when an awkward pause developed between us.

A smile curved my lips when I took in the massive bouquet of fresh red roses sitting on the small dining table with more fresh petals scattered around it. Their deep ruby color appeared vividly rich against the unwaxed, pine wood table. I considered how hard it must have been to transport those delicate blooms up to the cabin without them being damaged and smirked at the likely ‘fuck celebrities and their stupid demands’ conversation of the person charged with keeping them intact.

I inhaled a deep breath and broke the silence. “Thanks. The place looks great. Everything’s perfect. I’m sure my girl will love it.”

She grinned. “Mr. Fontaine, any girl would love all this. It’s such a grand, romantic gesture to bring a girl to a place like this,” she admitted, waving her arm around at the romantic setting of the quaint cabin.

“Well, if there’s nothing else,” Kelsy stated, turned and wandered down the hallway again. I followed her and glanced out the small picture window next to the door. A few flakes of snow fluttered down past the window creating a fabulous winter scene and I smiled. I loved the white stuff, since snow had been the reason I’d met the love of my life, in the first place.

A look of uncertainty flashed through the cabin girl’s eyes when I’d followed her, so I felt I ought to say something. “Thanks for your help, I’m sure we’ll love it here.” For a second or two she hesitated before she pulled on her outdoor clothing and slipped her feet into her boots. She lingered on the inside of the front door until I realized why.

“Oh,” I said reminding myself to tip her. I stuffed my hand in my back jeans pocket and pulled out my money clip. Thumbing four fifties off the clip, I passed them over. “Thanks again, I’ve got your phone number, so I’ll message you if we need anything,” I confirmed again.

Taking the money, she stuffed it into her pocket, did up the zipper, and proceeded to put on her gloves. “Thank you,” she muttered before she reached for the handle of the door. A huge gust of wind blew a drift of fresh powdered snow straight toward us. And fresh heavy snow fell from the sky. Kelsy immediately huddled over, turned her back on it, and pulled the hood up on her long, padded coat. “Damn,” she muttered. “Go inside, it’s freezing out here,” she ordered.

“Are you sure you want to go out in this?” I asked, concerned about the stormy conditions.

She glanced out at the weather and back toward me. “If I didn’t go out every time it snowed, I would be home from October to May,” she responded and smiled. “Seriously, I’ll be fine. My chalet is just over that hill, and I have my GPS.” I glanced in the direction she pointed and could see nothing. “I know what I’m doing. Go, get inside before you freeze to death,” she ordered.

Dressed only in a thin T-shirt, sweater and jeans I shivered in the minus twenty-degree temperature, so I did as she said, and quickly closed the door.

Moving back to the small picture window at the side of the door, I watched Kelsy trudge a path to her snowmobile, pull down her hood and slip on her helmet over her ski hat. By the time she mounted her ride the trees around us were barely visible. Within seconds she sped off into the distance and the glow of her red lights at the rear of her ski mobile quickly disappeared as heavy snowfall and fog swallowed her up in a blanket of invisibility.

The sound of silence was deafening as I stared out at a suspension of faint sparkles of iced moisture that hung in the air like suspended glitter but saw nothing of the incredible Christmas card scenery that had welcomed me on my arrival. It wasn’t unusual for ‘whiteouts’ to happen in the mountains, when the combination of heavy snowfall and fog reduced visibility to zero.

My chest tightened at the thought I’d endangered Daisy by bringing her all the way up here in such conditions and again when I wondered if the sudden change in weather would

prevent Daisy from reaching me. I took my cell phone out, glanced at the time and saw a text message from Felix.

Felix: The Eagle has landed. ETA @ resort in one hour.

Daisy had arrived in Burlington and was on her way to the resort. Part of me wished I'd insisted Felix had gone to pick her up instead of some random resort driver. However, I laughed when I read how he'd referred to my girl. He'd called Daisy my 'bird' because I had been flying to Belfast when a diversion had led me to her in the first place.

I texted him back.

Me: Don't you dare take chances bringing her up here in a whiteout.

Felix: Love you, boss, but not so much that I'd put my life on the line in a snowstorm.

Felix: If I go down, I go down fighting, not frozen stiff on a mountainside. We'll wait for the storm to pass before we set out.

Felix: According to the locals the latest snowfall is set to pass around the time Daisy gets here. Don't worry, GPS will lead us straight back to the cabin.

I cursed the snow, then immediately took it back because if it hadn't been for the white stuff, I'd never have met my gorgeous, Irish girl in the first place.

CHAPTER 2



A ntsy and unsettled, I decided to waste some time finding out where everything was and unpacking my luggage. My impression of the cabin only got better when I realized that the second bedroom and bathroom for Felix were situated on the opposite side of the family room from ours. And that there was a separate entrance door to the cabin from there as well.

Usually being somewhere so secluded wouldn't require me to have my bodyguard to stay with me. But on this occasion, it had made sense to keep Felix nearby because I figured I'd need him for other things. It also made perfect sense that there were two exits from a house made of wood, that had three open log fires.

Felix's room was completely self-sufficient with a small kitchen, a mini fridge, microwave, and tea kettle. There was also a large wall-mounted TV, a comfortable couch, a small fireplace, and a large king size bed. Best of all, with the thickness of the mature logged walls, we still had enough privacy to prevent Daisy from feeling too inhibited.

After noting his mini kitchen had also been stocked with Felix's favorite protein bars, shakes, breakfasts, and snacks, I

headed back through the family room and found my luggage in what I realized was our master suite.

Our bedroom was situated down a small hallway off the far side of the family room, next to the kitchen area and past the large indoor sauna. Our room had the same layout as Felix's—minus the kitchen. In its place was a wall-length log burning fireplace. Then there was a huge plush couch in front of that, and a custom-made bed. Ours also had a floor to ceiling wall of windows, which I'd been assured by Donna gave a panoramic view from our vantage point on the mountain down to the valley of the Sugarbush resort below. In that moment I figured I'd have to take my PA's word, because right then the visibility outside was zero.

As I lit the fire in the bedroom, I heard a text alert on my cell phone and scurried back to retrieve it from my jacket.

Poppy: Don't be mad but I had to pass on your cell number to Lorraine Masters in the event there are questions. I've told her you are abroad and she must only text you. I said that you would call her back when you could.

Poppy, I had roped Daisy's sister in to help me to spring a massive surprise on my girl. Lorraine Masters was the person she'd hooked me up with to make it happen.

Me: it's okay. I figured there may be some last-minute questions. Thanx.

I got why she had to do it, but I sighed and made a mental note to check in with her to reduce the likelihood of her contacting me.

Lifting the largest of two pieces of luggage already delivered onto the big bed, I flipped open the suitcase and saw the Fleur de Mal lingerie, Agent Provocateur and Kiki de

Montparnasse lingerie gifts I had brought with me. I lifted the boxes out and gently laid them on the bed.

Lifting a Fleur de England Signature box out I smiled as I tapped the box and imagined how Daisy would look wearing what was inside on a particularly special occasion. My mind was stuck on this mental image as I replaced the box back in the suitcase. Daisy knew lingerie was my not so guilty pleasure and that I took great delight in seeing her dressed in a sexy satin chemise, her body draped in silk, or when she wore some see-through lace.

There was one other medium sized, square box inside. It had been gifted to me by a lingerie company after my band had played at one of their catwalk events. Leaving it inside, I closed the case, stood it the right way up on the floor and wheeled it inside a closet.

My plan for our vacation was vague for the first couple of days while Daisy and I took time to reconnect, so I wanted to make sure the cabin felt romantic.

When she recovered from jet lag, we would do a spot of skiing and a few other fun snow related activities, but I'd brought Daisy to Sugarbush for a very specific reason.

After stowing the other boxes safely away in a drawer, I unpacked my clothes, and took a quick shower. After freshening up, I pulled on a fresh T-shirt with my jeans, and checked the time again on my phone. Needing something else to occupy my mind, I headed back into the family room and lit the fire.

My heart skipped a beat when I considered that Daisy would be with me soon. The view from the window in the family room would be the same as the one in our bedroom, and when I stood up and looked out of the window, I saw the

clear, breathtaking view of the resort's lights twinkling brightly in the distance below me.

“Thank you, God,” I said aloud as I took in that the snow had stopped and visibility on the mountain had been restored. I noted that the ski runs on the far side had been reopened and the flood lit paths were already teeming with skiers and snowboarders again.

It was barely 5:30 pm. but it felt more like 9:00. A text chimed on my cell in my hand and my heart flipped over when I glanced at the screen.

Felix: on our way.

Those three words instantly became my three favorite ones of the day. It had taken me some persuasion to get Daisy to agree to five days away, but I had been determined to get her alone without other distractions so that we could hash out our future together. My aim for the end of the week was to add permanency to us as a couple.

Dating from a distance had its challenges for most couples, but when Daisy's long shifts in her pub and my rock star status were thrown into the mix, what we'd found together should never have stood a chance—and yet, here we are.

Taking the dinner out of the fridge, I turned on the oven and placed the three Pyrex dishes inside. Filling the electric kettle, I switched this on and took the box of Yorkshire tea bags I'd requested, opened one and dropped it into a white porcelain cup. One thing I knew for sure, Daisy would feel parched from the difference in altitude, and would need a hot drink after riding behind Felix up the mountain.

At some point as I waited, I'd begun to behave like a caged animal, pacing back and forth near the door in the hallway, and

periodically stared out the same small picture window beside the front door. Eventually the strong beam of a headlight shone in the distance, and a couple of seconds later the snowmobile carrying the love of my life sped toward me.

CHAPTER 3



“*B*ejesus, I almost froze my nuts off getting up here,” Daisy said through chattering teeth. She shivered as she stood in the hallway with her helmet still on her head.

I chuckled at her ballsy comment as I closed the door, turned and undid the strap under her chin. I pulled the helmet off, expecting to see her beautiful, smiling face but her face was covered by a soft, white thermal snood tucked right up near her eyes. Tugging it down, I felt shocked when I saw how red her nose and cheek bones were. What concerned me the most was that her lips had turned a dark shade of mauve.

“Damn, baby, look at you,” I exclaimed, anxious at her condition and quickly stripped her out of her ski jacket, thick ski pants and snow boots Felix had provided her with for the journey up here.

“What... the f... feck is that temp... temperature out there?” she stuttered out.

I chuckled again to hide how worried I was about her condition and noted how icy her hands felt when her hand brushed my bare neck. By then she’d stopped shivering and when she didn’t respond when my body jerked, I suspected she had become hypothermic.

“Let’s get you by the fire. I already put the kettle on, and I’ve got your favorite brand of tea,” I babbled but was deeply worried about her. I quickly scooped her up in my arms and strode toward the family room. “Felix.” My guard obviously sensed the urgency in my tone when the door from his room burst open and he stood in the doorway.

“Get in here and make Daisy a hot drink while I try to warm her up,” I demanded.

“Christ,” he muttered, as he then strode past me in his socked feet, still wearing his wet ski suit stripped down to the waist. He brought the kettle to a boil again, grabbed the milk from the fridge and prepared Daisy’s hot drink. Meanwhile after sitting her down in front of the fire, I ran and found a thick blanket, covered her with it and pulled her into my lap on the floor. With the heat of my body and the blanket around her, I rubbed her legs and arms to bring heat back to her body.

“Daisy? Talk to me,” I barked. My tone sounded sharp, but Daisy’s response didn’t reflect the usual snarky response I’d have gotten from her in this instance.

“Mm?” she mumbled and snuggled down further into the blanket.

“No, baby, you can’t go to sleep,” I said, tapping her thigh harder and shaking her a little. Felix dropped down beside me and held the drink to her lips. “Take a sip of tea,” I coaxed. “You did cool it a bit?” I asked Felix at the same time.

“Yeah, it’s got plenty of milk in it and a few little packs of that sugar I found in the condiments tray,” he replied.

“Good. Come on, baby, it’s your favorite tea all the way from Yorkshire, England,” I coaxed again. “Fuck, this is all my fault,” I cursed as my chest tightened in distress. I took a

deep breath to calm myself because I had to think straight. “Come on, baby, drink,” I urged and kept feeding Daisy the warm tea. Slowly she thawed out and became more coherent, but my heart continued to pump a mile a minute until she looked at me and smiled.

“Wow. I made it,” she mumbled groggily when she stared into my eyes with a line creasing her brow.

“Damn, I’m so sorry, baby. That was a stupid decision I made to expect you to ride up here in sub-zero temperatures after such a long journey. I didn’t even let you acclimatize to the altitude.”

Felix looked relieved and cracked a small smile. “She’d have been fine, except she told me she had felt sick on the flight. She only told me she hadn’t eaten right as we were heading up here,” Felix informed me.

At least we had a reason why she hadn’t been able to manage her temperature. Plus, I could have bet the temperature had dropped several degrees since I’d traveled up to the cabin in daylight.

“Something smells good,” Felix muttered and glanced toward the oven. Next to protecting people, food was my bodyguard’s biggest passion. In fact, I felt sure if it came to a choice of a night with a hot woman or an all you can eat buffet, Felix would have chosen the latter.

“Yeah, I haven’t even checked what it is, but you’ll be eating with us tonight. You’ve been running around all day, and you need to rest too.” I glanced down at Daisy again and although she had come around quite a bit, I was still concerned about her.

“Maybe we should get you into the sauna or the tub before dinner... warm those bones of yours. The combination of travel, the cold and nothing to eat have taken a toll on you today.”

“She should drink some more tea first,” Felix suggested and nodded toward her again. Felix had obviously picked up on the lack of conversation and Daisy’s usually exuberant greeting toward me whenever we’d been apart. They were telling signs that all still wasn’t well in Daisy’s world.

“A warm bath sounds good,” she muttered as Felix stood, moved over to the kitchen, and made her another cup of tea.

When Daisy became less spaced out and was nursing her cup in her hands, I had Felix start the faucet in the tub and turn the oven down low. The delicious smell of Italian food hung in the air as I pulled Daisy to her feet and walked with her into the master suite bathroom.

“The oven is set to warm,” Felix advised. “I’ll be back in my room unless you want me to set up for dinner.”

“Thanks, I’ll give you a shout when she’s out of the tub and you can set whatever it is out on the table.”

“Come on, baby, let’s get your bones warmed and then get something to eat inside you.”

CHAPTER 4



Daisy slumped back in her chair, looking a hell of a lot more like herself, and yawned. “That was delicious. I didn’t realize how hungry I was. One good thing about running a pub is I’ve trained myself to eat at any time, day or night, which is just as well since it’s about 4:00 am back home right now.”

“You have no idea how good it is to see you,” I confessed, lifting our entwined hands and pressing a kiss to her knuckles.

“I bet you weren’t saying that earlier when I gave you my dying swan act the moment I got here.”

I chuckled. “You were a beautiful dying swan, but you frightened the living shit out of me.”

“Just keeping you on your toes, Mr. Fontaine,” she muttered. She flashed me that gorgeous toothy smile of hers and my heart melted all over again.

“We should get to bed,” I suggested. “Not to have sex, although that had been a burning desire before you almost died from the cold on arrival.”

“I don’t think I could...” she began.

I chuckled. “I’m not into near necrophilia,” I joked, making light of her hypothermic state again. “I just want to

hold you in my arms and lie in the dark by the light of that fabulous fire in there.”

“Sold,” she agreed as she sat wrapped in the pajamas she’d brought and a thick terry cloth bathrobe from the sauna. I stared at the still half full lasagna dish and had a mind to leave it, but I figured maybe Felix would eat it, so I covered it up in shrink wrap and put it in the fridge.

Daisy stood and began clearing the plates from the table.

“Stop. Leave it. I’ll stack those in the dishwasher in the morning.”

“Listen to you all domesticated,” she teased as I took the plates from her hands and set them down by the sink.

“Only when I have the right motivation,” I shot back. “I’ll say and do anything necessary to get you into my bed.”

“Is that right? Well, I’ll have you know I’d lick those plates clean myself right now if it means another hour in bed beside you in the morning,” she countered with a smile as I switched off the light and led her down the hallway and into our bedroom.

“No way. That tongue is far too talented to waste on a couple of dirty plates especially when I have such a deliciously dirty body for you to use your tongue on instead.”

“To be sure, I’ll be exercising my right to do that, but you’d best wait until the morning. I’d hate to give a lacklustre performance what with you being a rock star an’ all,” she replied in her sexy Irish brogue. Chuckling, she took off the heavy bathrobe and began to walk toward the bed. I caught her by her wrist, spun her around and pulled her into my chest.

“Not so fast,” I mumbled as I smiled down at her. “Where do you think you’re going in these?” I asked, tweaking the

elastic on her velour pajama bottoms. I slipped my hands inside and grabbed two handfuls of her ass. “God, you feel good in my arms,” I admitted as she stared affectionately up at me, but with tired, drooping eyelids.

“Are you talking to me or my arse?” she asked, in her usual quick-witted way.

“Both,” I replied with a grin. “You’re not getting into my bed with these grannie clothes on.”

“I’ll have you know these are all the rage in Dublin this winter,” she shot back as I pushed her away from me and caught the hem of the thick, long-sleeved top. I’d seen her naked already in the bath earlier, but at the time I’d been so concerned about her safety that I hadn’t considered her sexy body at all. Too tired to argue, Daisy lifted her arms like a child and let me take it off.

“That’s better,” I said, sliding my arms around her silky skin and pulling her tight to my chest. The room temperature was hot since the fire had been burning for hours and the underfloor heating extended throughout the cabin.

“I need to lie down,” she mumbled in a tired, gravelly tone.

“And you shall, as soon as I disrobe you from these little passion killers,” I remarked, sliding my thumbs in either side of the waistband of her pajama pants, then slid them down her legs. “Lift,” I said tapping one ankle and then the other. Daisy stepped out of them and as my mouth was near her pussy, I pressed a soft kiss to her bare mound. “Get into bed before I lose my restraint,” I muttered as I flung the heavy duvet back to reveal black satin sheets.

“Seriously?” she mumbled when she saw them, but I heard her amusement in that one word. I slapped her playfully on the ass as she climbed onto the bed and settled on the other side, facing me.

“Indulge me for one night at least,” I replied. The satin sheets were more than a little cliché but I figured what the fuck, it was for Daisy and she deserved every little romantic gesture I could think of.

“Back to high thread count plain ol’ cotton ones from tomorrow on. I just wanted our first night here to be special,” I said as I stripped naked and curled up beside her. A strong wave of love washed over me when I moved her closer and held her skin to skin for the first time in weeks.

“You smell delicious,” she faintly whispered already half asleep.

“Not half as edible as you do,” I replied as I ran my nose up her neck and inhaled the smell of her familiar shampoo, the light, fruity perfume that she always wore, and the unique blend of a scent that was all her. A deep sigh of contentment left my lungs, and I settled her head under my chin.

My eyes flicked to the small window. The night was bright due to the fluffy white snow falling down from the sky all around us. I sighed contentedly, because I had my girl all around me, and I didn’t feel disappointed that we never got that first night full of passion that I had envisioned would bring our first night to a close.

CHAPTER 5



Waking to a warm, wet mouth teasing my genitals might have been the best wake up call I'd ever had. I gradually became conscious and basked in the sensation of the featherlight licks and soft sighs that greeted me beneath the sheets.

“Can’t sleep then?” I asked, sensing it was still dark outside without opening my eyes.

“It’s nearly lunchtime at home,” she muttered from between my legs.

“That would explain your hunger,” I teased, shifting sleepily, and slipping my hands under her armpits. “Get up here,” I ordered. I enjoyed the sensation of her limbs sliding across mine as she settled at my side, under one arm with her head on my chest. “God, I missed you, Daisy,” I said with a strong note of meaning in my tone.

“Not as much as I missed you,” she argued as she nuzzled into me.

“You’re seriously going to have a ‘my dick’s bigger than your dick’ conversation before I’m vertical today?” I teased.

“Your cock isn’t horizontal that’s for sure,” she remarked, wrapping her fingers possessively around my morning wood

and giving it a delicious squeeze.

I opened my eyes and rolled on my side to look at her face. The sky was indeed still dark outside but the reflection from the snow into the room gave off just enough light to see her face clearly. “You gave me a fright last night,” I stated honestly.

“Oh, my bad, wrong holiday. I didn’t mean to scare you. I must have gotten Easter and Halloween mixed up this year,” she said making light of the danger I’d put her in.

“Not everything’s a joke,” I mumbled, “You scared me, I don’t know what I’d have done if ...” I trailed off not willing to let my mind go to any scenario where she wasn’t around.

Daisy shifted onto her elbow in response to my serious tone, still gripping my cock in her other hand. “It was my own fault. I should have respected the cold, and figured that food was important for keeping myself warm. Plus, I’d barely drank anything because I had felt sick on the plane. So, I was likely dehydrated before I had even gotten on that snowmobile to come up here. Anyway, I’m fine this morning.”

I rolled her over and settled her beneath me, my body between her legs. “Okay, I’ll let you take half the blame, but only if you agree to saying yes to everything I have in mind for us this week.”

Daisy cocked a brow at me and smirked. “And what exactly would that entail? I’m still a tad innocent when it comes to you rock stars entertaining yourselves.”

“I’m thinking we should ditch Felix for today at least, stay right here in bed and let me try out all the dirty, filthy, delicious fantasies that have been running through my mind during the past few weeks without you.”

“And at the beginning of day two would I be expected to walk at all?”

I laughed. “No, you’ll have skis. You’ll only need to remain upright, baby, the snow will take care of the rest.” I dipped my head and ran my tongue up her neck until she squeaked with shock.

A shiver ran down her spine and her smile widened. “You’ve got an answer for everything, haven’t you?”

“Well, not everything because I’ll be asking a couple of questions during the week as well... then I’ll be able to boast about that.”

“Questions? What quest—”

My mouth took hers in the first real kiss we’d had since she arrived and instantly all our joking foreplay stopped. “Oh,” she moaned into my mouth as we broke for air and my tongue delved deep again.

“Mm,” I hummed in pleasure at the sensations wreaking havoc in my veins as a surge of hormones burst to life. I broke the kiss and moved down to her neck. My teeth nipped and I sucked her as my body physically shook at my restraint.

“Holy shit,” she breathed.

I tried to take it slow and peppered kisses down her neck, collarbone and over each breast, where I lingered to massage her beautiful breasts in my hands and dusted each pebbled nipple with my tongue. “Fuck, I’m not gonna last long this morning,” I muttered as my hand slid between her legs and found her pussy slick and warm with desire. Moving back to her mouth, I kissed her and swallowed her erotic moan when I slid one finger and then two into her entrance.

“I want you, Jamie,” Daisy whispered, and I lifted my head.

“What do you want?” I asked as I probed for specifics.

“I want you inside me,” she mumbled in a desperate tone.

“In a minute, I need to taste you first,” I replied shakily as I moved down between her legs and spread them wider for access. I pressed my nose against her clit, closed my eyes, and inhaled her scent deeply. My cock jumped with interest when her sweet, sexy nectar registered with my brain. “Fuck,” I said through a breath as I slid my tongue between her seam and pumped my fingers inside her.

“Please, Jamie. I need you,” Daisy begged louder and grabbed a clump of my hair. The moment I heard her saying that, I was done.

Shifting swiftly, I switched places with her and lay down on the bed. “Get over me, baby,” I ordered, as I fisted my cock with one hand and helped her climb astride me with the other. “Wait, condoms,” I mumbled.

“No. I’m on something now,” she replied, positioning herself over me. I stroked my cock at her entrance.

“Feck, Jamie, I’ve been desperate to see you again,” she admitted, as she wriggled over me and tried to take me in.

“Shh. Slow it down, beautiful,” I urged positioning her with my cock lining her seam. “I need a minute,” I said chuckling. I felt too excited, and I was afraid I’d come the moment she took me inside her.

“Oh, now who’s the tease?” she whined and undulated her hips until I held them firmly to stop her.

“Christ, Daisy,” I muttered and pulled her down for a kiss until my heart rate settled a bit and the threat of coming receded. When I slid my hands from her hips and over the globes of her ass and began rocking her pussy against me, she took the hint and broke the kiss. She reached behind her, grabbed hold of my cock and rose to her knees to position me at her entrance.

“Are you ready for me?” she asked in a sexy, seductive tone, sounding playful.

“Baby, I’ve been ready for you since the moment you agreed to come here.”

“Oh, and I’ll be doing plenty of coming here,” she joked until my hands grabbed her hips and I pulled her steadily down my shaft.

“Feck me,” she muttered, arched her back and groaned loudly.

“Damn, you feel good,” I confessed as I guided her back and forth over my hips. We moved slowly at first, rocking at the same pace, our eyes locked in an intense loving stare as we reconnected with one another. It wasn’t the high passion, break the bed kind of sex we usually had after some time apart. This felt different, I was convinced we both knew that as we tried to make it last as long as possible.

“I missed you so much,” she whispered. “God, this feels incredible.”

I couldn’t disagree as she began to move more urgently. She closed her eyes, leaned further back, and placed her hands on either side of my legs, on the bed. The slight change in position drove me deeper inside her. “Holy fuck, that feels unbelievable,” I muttered as my eyes fluttered closed and I ran

my hands up the front of her body. Cupping her tits, I pinched one nipple and then the other.

“Ah, oh, feck,” said Daisy after she let out a loud gasp.

“I know right?” I agreed as I lifted my head and took one of her nipples into my mouth.

“Oh, Jamie,” she mumbled when I sucked hard.

When she began to move faster, I laid back down. “Fuck me, baby,” I ordered and slapped her ass. As soon as the words were out, Daisy picked up her pace until I felt her squeeze me on the inside and knew she was going to come.

Stilling her hips, I opened my knees and drew her toward me. Digging my heels into the mattress for purchase, I pounded her hard and fast just how she liked it. The heady combination of having my girl all around me, on top of me, and being able to feel her warm, silky skin under my hands filled me with a fresh wave of desire and pleasure on a scale I’d never experienced before her.

“Oh God, Jamie,” she cried out as her legs shook and her body began to spasm.

“Holy fuck,” I muttered as her pussy clamped tight around my cock and took my breath away. Pulling her down against my front, I linked my fingers and held her tight as I pumped hard from beneath her and wrung out the last of her orgasm.

My heart clenched tight as I watched her face close to mine in the throes of ecstasy, her mouth open one minute, and her teeth biting her bottom lip the next. I wasn’t surprised when I felt my balls tighten and creep up in response to the eroticism of Daisy coming all over me. A few moments later it felt as if my brain had melted. The indescribable sensations

flowing through my veins made me powerless to resist blowing my load in one pulse after another.

“Fuck me,” I blurted, stunned. My heart pounded as I stared up at her love-struck face. *She’s so fucking beautiful and all mine.*

“Give me a minute,” she joked back in a mumble as her eyes fluttered closed and she passed out in my arms. I chuckled because I loved jet-lagged Daisy. One minute she was raring to go, the next she was fast asleep.

I glanced toward the window, it was still dark outside, and I was still inside Daisy, her body trusting in its acceptance, mine unwilling to leave hers. The fire in the hearth may have gone out sometime during the night, but I’d never felt warmer with the woman I loved on top of me.

Daisy began snoring lightly and I smiled. Seconds later I felt myself slip out of her, then turned so I lay beside her, not wanting to lose the contact between us. As I lay listening to the cute little noises she made, they must have had a hypnotic effect on me because one minute I was lying listening to them, the next I’d fallen back to sleep.

CHAPTER 6



I woke up with a start and my hand immediately reached out to Daisy's empty side of the bed. The sheets were cold indicating she'd been up for a while. Rising onto my elbows I glanced out of the window and noted it was snowing heavy again.

Throwing back the covers, I got up and wandered naked to the picture window. Unlike the night before, I could see down to the valley and the resort below.

"Ah, I missed you and I was just coming to wake you," Daisy said in her sweet, Irish tone and I turned to look at her. She looked gorgeous with her short blonde bed hair tousled exactly the way I liked it, and her bright eyes widened when she glanced down at my body.

"Oh, and do you like what you see?" I asked, wiggling my hips so that my semi hard dick bobbed in front of me.

"Well, a girl has to have some perks hanging out with a rock star, wouldn't you say?"

"Oh, he's perky alright. All the perkier for seeing you in fact," I joked.

Daisy chuckled and shook her head. "Jamie Fontaine, you have an answer for everything," she teased.

“Nearly everything,” I corrected. “Not only do I have answers, I have questions as well. I’m not a one-trick pony, you know.”

“Yeah, and what’s the next sentence to that? You’re hung like a horse not a pony?”

I laughed and wandered toward her, took the cup of coffee from her hand and sat it on the nightstand. “Come here. I feel as if I’ve been waiting for this day to come, for forever.”

“Well, a few weeks anyway,” she mumbled out of the side of her mouth when I’d scooped her into my arms and pressed my lips to hers.

“It felt like forever to me,” I argued, sliding my hands to her ass and pulling her flush against me.

“And my belly thinks it’s been forever since it’s had anything decent to eat,” she remarked, resisting me.

“You had dinner last night,” I reminded her and tried again to kiss her.

Daisy moved her head further out of reach. “Yeah, but my body clock is out of sync because it’s dinner time back in Ireland.”

“What time is it?”

“12:30 pm. Felix has gone down to the resort to bring something up for lunch, he should be back any minute. That’s why I came to wake you up.”

“Damn you should have woken me when you got up.”

“Which would have been ten minutes after you passed out, I guess,” she replied.

“You’ve been up for hours without me?”

“I have. I couldn’t sleep and there were these huge animals looking in the window.”

“Animals?”

“Yeah, like deer but not... bigger. Elk or Moose or whatever you want to call them. There were two of them staring in the window. They were huge, much bigger than deer... bigger than a car.”

I chuckled at her comparison, “Damn. That would have been a sight to see,” I admitted. I’d seen Elk and Moose a few times in the distance but never up close.

Right then we heard Felix in the kitchen.

“Felix is back. Put some clothes on and come get something to eat.”

“Give me five, I’ll jump in the shower and be right out,” I informed her.

Daisy gave me a peck on the cheek and a firm slap on my ass. “Don’t be long, I’ll miss you.”

I grinned as she tore herself away from me and headed for the door. “Daisy?” She turned to look at me. “You sure you want to eat right now? Not come to the shower and wash my back?”

“If I come in there, I’ll be washing more than your back and you know it, you dirty boy. Look at the weather out there. Unless you’re planning a mountain trek in that snow, we’ll be back in here before I know it.”

“I need to up my game because I guess you know me too well,” I said, amused.

“I’ve told you before, Jamie Fontaine, I’ve got your number, and you’ll be hard pressed to get one over on me

anymore.”

Little did she know I'd been planning for weeks to do just that.

CHAPTER 7



For once I was grateful that Felix had a huge appetite and had scored a delicious spread of breakfast pastries, buttermilk pancakes, sausage patties and a half gallon of orange juice. There were plenty of other supplies in the fridge and pantry, so Daisy made scrambled eggs and toast to go with all of this.

Felix piled up his plate, then made himself scarce. After eating, as he left to go snowboarding alone, he informed us he'd bring dinner back with him this evening. He'd already taken an order from us from a French restaurant menu we'd found in the welcome pack.

The vibe in the cabin felt domesticated with me setting a new fire in the sitting room and bedroom and Daisy stacking the dishes in the dishwasher from our brunch. Afterward, we both snuggled up on the couch with the roaring fire blazing in front of us, and the sunlight sparkling off the snowy backdrop from the window behind us.

"Doesn't this feel perfect?" she asked after a few minutes of comfortable silence between us listening to the logs crackling in the fire.

"Almost," I admitted. My response made Daisy look up at me, frowning with concern.

“What’s missing?” she probed with a furrowed brow.

“That it won’t last,” I said with a note of melancholy in my tone.

Daisy stiffened and her gaze grew intense. “Us?”

I scoffed. “Baby, we’re lifers. There’s no one else in this world that could make me feel like you do.” As soon as my words were out all tension left her body and she sagged heavier against me.

“Then what do you mean?”

“This. We have five days—four days now, since yesterday was such a blow out,” I corrected with a heavy feeling in my heart again about what happened to her.

“Oh, this holiday you mean?”

“Yeah, the vacation, but I hate how it feels like it’s ending before we’ve had the chance to enjoy being together.”

She nodded. “Yeah, I know what you mean. Leaving you behind in Paris after Valentine’s Day was tough, and scary,” she admitted.

My gaze ticked over her face in thought. “Scary because people knew about us then?”

“Yeah, I didn’t know what to expect. And to be honest, it’s taking some time to come to terms with people turning up at the pub looking for you.”

I rubbed her upper arm and squeezed her against my side. “But you have Rooney there with you in the event of any trouble.” Rooney was a guard I’d hired to keep Daisy safe at home and work.

“I do, and let me tell you, it’s weird having a stranger show up at your door and move into your spare bedroom.”

“Funny, you never said that when I showed up,” I teased with a wink.

Daisy’s eyes searched my face for a long minute and then she smirked. “You know, if I live to be one hundred, I’ll never get over that.”

“I know I won’t. It was probably the weirdest, yet most wonderful fan encounter I’ve ever had.” We both laughed at the memory of how she fangirled in those first few moments we met until our gaze grew serious again. “How long until Poppy finishes college?” I asked.

“Two months. It can’t come quick enough.”

“And the next pub opens when?” I asked.

“October,” she replied, deadpan.

“I’m due out on tour again at the end of June for five weeks, does that mean you’ll be able to come with me?”

A wide toothy smile spread on her face as she sat up straight and twisted her body from our side-by-side position to look at me. “It does, and for the whole five weeks,” she responded excitedly. “As long as I can deal with any issues for the second pub via zoom and the phone, I can be anywhere you like.”

“Anywhere I like, huh? Now I’m *really* excited,” I teased as my heart squeezed at how this past year of separations had felt. “But it doesn’t feel like enough,” I mused.

“I know what you mean, us living apart. But we’ve made it work until now and starting by the end of the year it’ll get

much easier for us to be together... I mean I'll be able to visit a lot more."

She'll be doing a lot more than visiting, I hope. I sighed to still my racing heart about the plan I had in mind and prayed she'd love what I'd arranged.

"Still, we need to find a more permanent solution to our situation," I said, wanting to broach the serious subject of us long term.

Daisy shifted in her seat and perched her ass on the edge of the couch signaling her full attention on the matter. She placed her hands on either side of my face and held it firmly. "What's wrong with you. You don't sound very happy, Jamie."

Her statement took me by surprise because although I felt in love and happy, she was right. I felt restless about our living arrangements. It had been over a year since I'd started to fall in love with my girl, and every month apart from her had felt like a year. It wasn't a situation I wanted to let linger until one of us got fed up and forced an ultimatum on the other.

"I am happy. You're my life, baby. But I'd be happier if I could have you with me all the time," I admitted.

"Trust me, you'd get sick of me if I was there twenty-four-seven," she remarked making light of our current situation. She dropped a hand from my face and linked her fingers in mine.

"No, I wouldn't," I quickly countered. "Do you think you'd get sick of me being around all the time?" I asked, concerned that she might have felt like that.

"What do you think?" her eyes flared when she looked at me and she flashed me a salacious, playful smile. "But I have goals in life, Jamie... as do you. No one will miss me in the

same way as they'd miss you, but I'd already made a commitment to my project, and I also have people relying on me."

"I get it. And I don't want you to give up your dreams for me. I'm just saying, the lives we lead doesn't make it easy for us to be together all the time."

"No, but we'll work it out in time because the one thing I am certain of is that I love you truly, madly, deeply."

"I don't know if the math is different in Ireland, but in my world that's three things, baby," I replied, and began tickling her waist.

Her hand left mine and she grabbed both my wrists as she laughed. "Stop it, I'll pee," she shrieked, laughing.

"Oh, baby, don't tempt me," I teased, still managing to tickle her as she squirmed from the couch to the floor taking me with her. Climbing over to straddle her, I held her hands above her head. Seeing her wriggle and laugh was a turn on and my dick became hard again; a state I'd regularly found myself in whenever I was in her company. "Kiss me," I muttered as I leaned closer.

Seconds later we were a mesh of tongues, teeth and lips, our hands frantically stripping one another out of some of our clothing, until I came to my senses again. "Wait. Bedroom."

"You can only screw in the bedroom these days?" Daisy teased, naked from the waist up.

"No, but I have several good reasons for wanting you there," I replied.

"Okay, I'll bite, Jamie Fontaine," she said with a naughty smile. "Take me to your bed."

CHAPTER 8



“*H*ere, I have something for you,” I informed her, after setting her down by the bed. I lifted the Kiki de Montparnasse box from the closet and tossed it on the bed, then sat down beside it. “Come here, baby,” I coaxed, curling my hands around the back of her jean-clad knees and pulling her toward me. My eyes sank from her face to her full pert breasts, and I couldn’t stop myself from sliding my hands up over her body to touch them.

“The box, Jamie?” she reminded me after grabbing my wrists and stilling my hands with a smile.

“Right, the box,” I mumbled, still staring at my hands over her chest and sliding them down her body to the waist. “Have I got a treat for me ... I mean you,” I said with a wicked grin.

“Mm, do I get a guess at what it is?” she asked playing along as I pushed her back, then stood. I held her by her shoulders and turned her around until her back was to the bed, snagged the button on her jeans and teased the zipper down.

“Nope, because I want it to be a surprise,” I joked, and began to pull her jeans down her legs. I sank to the floor as Daisy shimmied her hips to help me along. I smiled up at her from my crouched position.

“Oh, the intrigue,” she mumbled. She tried not to laugh as she pulled one foot free and then the other. Before I stood up, I pulled her small lace thong down her legs and stripped her of that as well.

“Lie down on the bed,” I ordered, shoving her back until she lost her balance and had no choice but to do as I said. “Close your eyes and wait there,” I demanded as another idea came into my head.

Daisy did as I asked as I headed back into the closet and came back with the special gift box I had in my suitcase. I’d been given it by the Coco de Mer lingerie label. “Keep your eyes closed,” I warned as I pulled out a black satin blindfold. “You’re going to look gorgeous in this,” I informed her as I tugged the luxurious, soft fabric tight and pulled Daisy to sit upright with her feet on the floor.

“A blindfold?” she asked, and I nodded even though she couldn’t see me. I tied it and stood back to admire my handiwork. “Fuck, you look gorgeous,” I informed her when I took in the black fabric against her fair Irish skin and natural light blonde hair.

“Am I done?” she queried, sounding amused.

“Nope, now this,” I said, reaching for, and tapping the box already on the bed. Taking out the flimsy lace underwear, I kissed from her breasts to her shoulders. Daisy moaned as her skin broke out in a rash of goosebumps as I peppered more featherlight kisses to her neck while I slid on and fastened the see-through bra.

Oh feck, Jamie,” Daisy whispered, her tone less playful and more laced with intent. “Shh,” I coaxed. “Nearly done,” I informed her. Next, I slid on the crotchless and ass-less panties over her feet. As I slid them into place, I applied a trail of

small kisses along her legs. Nearing her thighs, I pulled my girl up her feet as I fixed them in place. Dropping my hands free of her I stood back to admire my handiwork.

“Fucking stunning,” I muttered as I stood shamelessly objectifying her like she was a precious work of art. Daisy knew lingerie was my weakness, and even though I felt sure the pieces I’d chosen worked for her, I had still underestimated the effect they would have on me when they were worn by the woman I adored.

“Are you getting hard on me?” Daisy joked as she stood blindfolded and appeared trusting.

“Maybe,” I said playfully as I sidled toward her, slid my hands around her waist and down over her bare ass.

“Judging from the draft when your palms slid down there, I take it there’s no ass in these knickers?”

“Nope,” I confirmed and turned her around to see how they looked from the back. “Fuck,” I blurted as I eased her down onto her stomach on the bed, knelt on the floor between her legs, and gently nipped her ass cheeks with my teeth.

“Ow,” Daisy squeaked, dropped her head and buried her face into the mattress with a chuckle.

“Damn, baby,” I cussed, and slapped both her ass cheeks softly. Even though I’d spanked her softly, red welts instantly grew where my palm had been. Daisy rolled over and lifted the blindfold to see what the fuss was about.

“Jesus, Jamie, this perversion of yours is going to bankrupt you,” she joked as she ran her hands over the barely-there bra and glanced down at the panties which consisted of a small lace triangle and a series of well-placed elastic strings. “How much did this set you back?” she asked still inspecting her gift.

“It was a bargain. Want to know what the set is called?”

“Feck me, the undies have their own name?” she asked in a high octave tone.

“Indeed, and this sexy little number is called, ‘Welcome Back’.”

Daisy chuckled. “Funny since there’s no fecking back to the pants. Maybe they should have been called ‘Welcome to My Butt Crack.’”

“Hey, it depends how you look at the set, but these panties are highly practical in my view.”

“And what justification could you give for that statement?” she asked, amused and I saw she bit back a grin.

“Think about it. No soaked gusset to contend with when I turn you on.” I slid my fingers between her folds and found her pussy slick with her nectar. I grinned to prove my point. “And I get immediate access to all your intimate areas,” I added as I slid one finger and then two into her hot, wet heat.

“Yeah, well you can look all you like, but there’s only one intimate area down there you’re getting access to,” she warned with a raised brow.

“We’ll see,” I said pulling my fingers out, sucking them into my mouth and spreading her legs wider with my elbows. “Funny you should bring anal up,” I remarked as I buried my head between her legs and began teasing her clit with my tongue.

CHAPTER 9



Three hours later, we'd fucked on the bed, in the shower and again in the sauna. After a short nap, Daisy was taking another shower when I lifted the lid of the box from Coco de Mer again and placed it on the bed.

Daisy appeared in the doorway drying her hair with a towel. "What's in there?" she asked because she hadn't been looking when I took the blindfold out earlier.

"Things for you... actually for us."

"What *things*?" she asked emphasizing the word things.

"Playthings."

"Kinky things?" she asked, sounding as if she was correcting me.

I nodded and her face grew serious. "Sex toys?"

"Yeah, there's a vibrator and a few other things."

"What the feck are the other things?" she asked cautiously but looked amused.

"Things you know nothing about... yet, but..."

"But what?" She asked in a curious tone.

"Butt is right," I muttered under my breath, still teasing her.

“Show me,” she ordered as she continued to dry her hair.

I patted the bed and she tucked one leg under her ass as she sat beside me. I placed the box between us, and she peered inside.

“What the feck—butt plugs?” I didn’t miss the alarm in her tone as her serious expression told me they scared her.

“Yeah, aren’t they pretty?” I asked, lifting them out and placing them on the mattress.

“Pretty? They look like medieval instruments of torture with a modern twist.”

I chuckled. “Nonsense, I bet if you let me experiment with these, you’ll be begging for them afterward.”

“Experiment all you want. But on yourself. There’s no fucking way I’m having one of those shoved up my tooter.”

I laughed. “Your tooter?”

“Yeah, my tooter,” she confirmed without a hint of humor in her tone.

“I’ve never heard any grown woman refer to her asshole as her tooter before,” I said through a hearty laugh.

“And I’ve never had a grown man want me to stick a shiny metal object up it either,” she retorted.

I grinned and shook my head. “I get it. We’ve had some mind-altering sex since we’ve been here already, and I’m guessing the time change is fucking with your sense of adventure right now, so I won’t push it,” I joked.

“The only adventure I can think of involving these, is a trip to the emergency room for you to have something removed, if you try to come near me with those things,” she mumbled as

she lifted the largest, silver colored, stainless steel, butt plug and inspected it. “I mean, really?” she inquired, casting me a worried glance.

“Yeah, really,” I chuckled. “But obviously it’ll take training to get there.”

“And would that be via an online course or a face to face one? Because trust me, I’ve had all the qualifications I can handle, thank you.”

I laughed, slid my hand around her head and kissed her temple. “That’s the biggest one you have in your hand. What I mean is there are several steps before we get to that one.”

“Erm, you’re talking like it’s a done deal, when it’s not,” she stated with a glare.

“Look at this one,” I said reaching in and pulling out the smallest of the three butt plugs in there. “It’s made of aluminium and its much smaller. Isn’t it pretty?”

“Oh yeah and it even has a gemstone on the end,” she mused. “Is that supposed to win me over? I mean did you have an assless dress for me to wear with that and those pants over there to show it off?” She pointed at the shredded panties on the floor.

“Alright, let’s drop this for now, get our winter gear on and take a walk around the cabin. We won’t get far because the snow is deep, but I think a breath of fresh air will do us both good.”

“That’s an excellent idea, Jamie. I much prefer the experience of hypothermia to being shafted with a metal spear.”

I wanted to argue the point about the spear, but I’d made my introductions between Daisy and her next adventure. I

wasn't a stupid man, and I knew when to let things simmer with Daisy and when to bring them to a boil.

CHAPTER 10



“*M*ornin’,” Daisy croaked as she squinted against the glare of the bright sun from the window as I tucked my cell back into my jeans pocket. My heart instantly sped up and I hoped I didn’t have a guilty look on my face. I’d been up for two hours arranging our day and had been just about to wake her when she came padding into the family room.

“There you are. I was just coming to get you. Grab a quick shower and we’ll head down to the resort for the day.”

“You’ve been in the shower already?” she asked. She looked a little disorientated and I guessed the time change was still a challenge for her.

“Yeah, been up for a couple of hours, but it’s only 9:30 am. I thought we’d have a late brunch and I’d introduce you to skiing. I figured we could stay down there today and have an early dinner before we come back here.”

Daisy grinned and her eyes glittered excitedly. “I’ve never been skiing, and I’ve always wanted to try it.”

“Good because Felix booked a ski instructor for you. I’m a good snowboarder, but I didn’t want to risk us fighting if I tried to teach you,” I disclosed.

“Right, I better get a move on. Don’t you dare follow me into the shower again. I didn’t come all this way to view all this pretty landscape on my back or on my knees through a window.”

Her comment made me crack up laughing and she gave me a naughty smirk before she disappeared into the hallway again. I pulled my cell back out and called Felix.

“Daisy’s in the shower. Is everything all set?” I asked. I listened while he told me our plans for the day and then I agreed to text him once we reached the resort.

After I had concluded our call I went back to the bedroom, pulled out some thermals for both Daisy and I, then dressed for the trip down the mountainside. Daisy reappeared from the shower wearing a tank top and panties. She looked fucking edible, but time was running short.

“Put these on, and then this,” I said handing her the long johns and long-sleeved thermal T-shirt. Daisy did as I asked. I handed her a turtleneck sweater and asked her to do the same. I texted the chalet girl to set the fires for later and instructed them to be lit around 8:00. After Daisy was dressed, we both put on our scarfs, snoods, ski pants, jackets and gloves. I had already packed both sets of goggles, mint candy bars, spare thermals, hats and gloves in my backpack.

“Ready?” I asked, lifting both our helmets from the wooden rack by the front door.

“As I’ll ever be. But bejesus, I’m hot,” she quipped. Her eyes danced with excitement.

“Okay, stand here on the porch until I bring the snowmobile out of the shelter,” I said, opening the front door.

The snow had stopped and thankfully the wind that had been around from the day before had died down.

I started the snowmobile and let the engine run for a minute until I felt the handlebars and the seat grow warm, then I climbed on and reversed it out to beside the front porch. Daisy stood out on the porch with the door ajar and fastened her helmet.

“Just a sec, I need the key hanging next to the coat hook.”

Daisy leaned in, grabbed it and locked the door. I dropped the key into my backpack for safe keeping and put my bag on my front. Standing on the last step for purchase, Daisy climbed on behind me. “Ready?” I called out to her.

“Yes, this is so exciting,” she responded, and I smiled. As we set off, my belly flipped a little with nerves too, because I’d hoped that would be her answer to everything else I asked of her today.

CHAPTER 11



Felix had done a great job of networking with the hospitality establishments in Sugarbush and the surrounding areas. It was thanks to him that Daisy and I had been given a discreet table in the restaurant for our brunch, which had meant I drew minimum attention to us. He then took us to a section of the ski equipment rental center that had been cordoned off for us to have our skis fitted in private.

Once fitted with our ski equipment, I carried both Daisy's and my skis over my shoulder. When I pulled my ski mask up to my nose put my shades on, I looked just like everyone else.

Felix on the other hand, still looked like Felix. He'd been photographed by my side so many times that he was a minor celebrity in his own right. I passed him a spare beanie. "Pull your goggles down," I said as we turned to follow him.

"I don't see why you couldn't have taught me yourself," Daisy complained as we picked our steps through the snow on the way to meet the private ski instructor Felix had hired.

"I don't want to be responsible for you not being able to do it. If you have someone else teach you then we won't get into a fight."

"And since when have we fought about anything?" she challenged.

“Erm, when you almost took me out with a water bottle that one time when I turned up at the pub, after making the last album,” I reminded her.

“That was different,” she protested with a dark glare like she instantly remembered how she’d felt that day.

“And so is this. I’m not an instructor, baby. If you fall on your ass, you won’t blame me.”

Daisy shrugged, clamped her mouth shut and fell silent because she couldn’t argue with me about that. Seeing her mull my point over, I stepped closer to her, and lifted my shades. “It’s only a two-hour lesson. If you don’t want to do it with the instructor after that then I’ll accept it. The slopes are a dangerous place if you don’t know what you’re doing. Besides, I didn’t choose an instructor because I couldn’t be bothered to teach you, I did it so that we could both have fun.”

“Alright, you’ve talked me into it. I just hope it’s not a bossy, army type that barks instructions and expects me to be coordinated. I don’t do well with that kind of man.”

I chuckled. “No? Damn, you had me fooled,” I shot back. My sarcastic remark got me a swipe, but when Daisy nearly fell on her ass as she delivered it, I figured I’d made my point about the dangers of hurting herself.

“So where are we eating tonight?” Daisy asked in a swift change in subject.

“It’s a surprise,” I told her as we walked toward the meeting point for the ski instructor. I felt more than a hint of nerves at the thought of what I intended on doing. “But you see that little café up there?” I asked. I pointed toward four small windows on the road, at the bottom of the resort, with a view of the mountain we stood on.

“There?” she asked, disappointed when she pointed exactly where I had. It didn’t look like much at all, and the signage above the door was so small she couldn’t read it from where we were.

“Yeah. I know it doesn’t look like much, but they make the most amazing hot chocolate you’ll ever taste in your life.”

“Oh, really? Well, I’d like to see them try to make a better one than my ma with her marshmallows, cinnamon and whipped cream,” she replied.

“Daisy O’Donnell,” a heavily accented voice called out. There were plenty of people milling around where the voice had come from, then I saw the back of the guy’s head that was holding his hand up.

“Here,” shouted Daisy waving her arm in the air like she’d won a prize at bingo.

The crowd parted and a young, olive-skinned dude with Italian movie star good looks turned to face us. He beamed a toothy smile when his eyes met with Daisy, and I instantly wondered why I’d thought getting a ski instructor for my girl had been such a great idea.

“Ciao bella signora, la mia gironata é appena migliorata del cento per cento. Mi chiamo Alessandro Genesoli.”

He’d lost me at ‘hello’ but I could tell by the way he appreciatively checked Daisy out and flashed a salacious smile he approved. He looked delighted to have such a smoking hot girl for a private lesson.

“We don’t speak Spanish, so I’d appreciate it if you would address us in English.”

“He’s speaking in Italian, and he said, ‘Hello, beautiful lady. My day just got better, one hundred percent better. My

name is Alessandro Genesoli,” a helpful middle aged, American woman with a Southern accent smugly informed me. I could see the instructor immediately wanted to throat punch the interfering woman for calling him out on what he had said.

Daisy chuckled shyly and shook his hand, while I growled and removed my shades to look the fucker in the eye. Alessandro’s charming smile fell from his face when he looked anxiously toward me after the woman had translated what he’d said.

“Oh, did he now?” I remarked. My question had sounded threatening as I glanced the length of him. I towered over him height wise and I wasn’t particularly tall. I pulled down my snood and narrowed my eyes in an intimidating move. I could see he recognized me, but his stance was still super confident. “I’ll be coming along for the ride,” I informed him in a low gravelly tone.

“This is a private lesson for one?” he half-stated, half questioned.

“I can ski, but I’m staying with my girl,” I informed him.

Alessandro didn’t look particularly impressed with my demand, but he glanced from me to Daisy and shrugged. “As you wish, but I will expect you not to interfere.”

“Yeah, no interfering,” Daisy echoed and grinned because she knew Alessandro had pissed me the fuck off.

“Okay, first we must have a lesson in falling over before we do anything else,” he informed Daisy.

“Erm, isn’t the purpose of a ski lesson so that I don’t fall over?” she challenged. Her eyes darted from him to me for reassurance, but the instructor continued.

“Oh, you will fall—many times. But where and how you fall is important for you to be safe and not be permanently injured or die.”

“So, lesson one, how to fall without breaking my neck?” she clarified.

“Exactly. But first, even before this, we must learn the rules of the slopes.”

“Jesus, should I have brought a notepad and pen?” she asked, glancing toward me. I couldn’t see the expression in her eyes because of her goggles.

Allessandro laughed. “Of course not. I don’t mean to sound putting off?”

“Off putting you mean?” Daisy corrected as she weighed up his comment by tilting her head from side to side. “I suppose ending the day in one piece should be enough motivation to listen.”

Allessandro laughed as I removed Daisy’s skis from my shoulders. “First things first, let us put your skis on.” Separating them, I placed them in front of Daisy’s feet.

“Here,” he said, holding out his hand. Daisy took it, stepped into the skis and locked her boots in place by pressing her heels down. Allessandro let go of her hand and Daisy immediately fell on her ass.

She chuckled. “Okay, what’s the next lesson?” she asked. She looked both undignified and uncoordinated when she struggled to get back on her feet.

“Getting back up,” he remarked with a laugh. Stepping forward, he offered her a hand, and when she took it, he pulled her back to her feet.

“Feck, I didn’t expect them to be that slippery—not until I moved at least,” she mumbled. She dug in her ski poles to stop herself from sliding away.

“Skis are supposed to be slippery,” Alessandro replied in a matter-of-fact tone.

CHAPTER 12



Once her instructor had explained the rules of the slope, and how to fall down safely, he taught her a snow plow technique with her skis to control her speed. Many people that weren't proficient did this to prevent themselves from getting into trouble on the slopes.

Next, we headed to the ski lift. Alessandro chose an easy blue run, the gentlest of the runs, for Daisy's first lesson. He looked pissed when I insisted on accompanying her and made sure I sat next to him on the chair lift with Daisy tucked firmly at my other side. But when I grabbed her coat sleeve to help her off, she shrugged out of my grasp. As Daisy was such an independent person, she tried to ski on her own until she lost her balance and ended up in a heap. She was narrowly missed by the occupants of several chairs getting off after her, causing a pile up of bodies that had maneuvered to avoid her.

"Ah, 'tereso', I see you take the falling over lesson very seriously," Alessandro drawled as I helped her to her feet and rearranged her ski poles in her hands.

"All right, smart ass, no need to rub it in," she snapped back. "But you must admit, I'm a quick study since I've fallen twice already and not hurt myself."

I chuckled and guided her by her coat sleeve to the edge of the slope away from the more proficient skiers descending at faster speeds. Having learned her lesson from before, she allowed me to guide her without protest.

“Okay, tereso, when you step onto the slope, the skiers behind you have right of way. Therefore, you must always look behind to ensure you are not stepping into the path of someone. The most proficient skiers will be traveling more than thirty to forty miles per hour and I don’t need to tell you what damage that would do to bones if they were to crash with you.”

Daisy shuddered and muttered, “And this was supposed to be a fun week.”

“Skiing is fun,” he interjected. “There are just a few rules like remaining upright, not being hit by other skiers and not falling off a piste or the chair lift.”

“Okay so just a few rules. I’ve not been that great at the first two, so let’s hope I’m proficient enough at the others not to get myself killed.”

“You’ll do great, baby,” I encouraged. “It’s not scary once you get going.”



“YAY,” I said, when I’d slid sideways to a halt on my skis and pushed myself over to Daisy with my sticks. I’d followed her down the slope where she’d weaved gently from side to side to begin with until she lost concentration. But she had still made it down in one piece.

She pulled down her snood, shoved her goggles up to the top of her head and flashed me a goofy smile. “Feck me, did you see the speed I came down there at?” Daisy asked, proudly. She heaved heavily as she caught her breath but looked exhilarated from her first successful descent down the slope.

Her eyes shone in delight at her achievement. I leaned in, pulled my snood down and gave her a peck on the lips. “You did,” I laughed, “Pity you weren’t supposed to overtake the rest of us, although I don’t think that was deliberate,” I teased. “But you did stay upright, and you had a bit of a wide slalom thing going on with your hips to slow yourself down near the end.”

“I did,” she agreed. “Not quite ready for the black runs yet, I imagine I’d need to practice my technique for a bit and get my hip movements going a little faster.”

I laughed because at one point she had gone horizontal across the slope from side to side before turning and going back in the other direction to slow herself down. She gave up and coasted vertically until she gathered speed but she managed to stay upright until she ran out of steam at the bottom of the run.

“We have time for one more run,” Alessandro stated. I glanced up at the digital clock at the foot of the slope that gave out the time, temp, snow conditions and avalanche warnings, to check for myself.

“Nah, I’d rather go somewhere warm and have that hot chocolate Jamie boasted about, if that’s okay?”

“Of course,” I said, “besides, I want you all to myself for a while. I’m tired of sharing you with another man.”

Daisy thanked Alessandro and he checked the lesson was the same time for the following day, then put his hand on her shoulder. I bit back a growl while he praised my girl and told her he could listen to her accent all day. But I shot him a murderous ‘what the fuck do you think you’re doing’ look and he dropped his arms by his side.

“Jesus that guy pawed you every chance he got,” I muttered with him still in earshot.

“Awe, I know. But I didn’t mind because he’s fecking hot, and if we’re talking accents...” she let out an erotic moan. I shot another glare at Alessandro who smiled back at her.

“Yeah, well we’re not. I know you’re trying to get a rise out of me, Daisy O’Donnell, but I’m not gonna bite. I know nothing turns you on like my hot American accent. Besides, I bet he comes on to all the women he instructs,” I muttered.

“What you’re saying is either I’m not all that or is Jamie Fontaine jealous of the instructor he insisted I have?” she teased, then poked me in the belly and almost fell over again.

“Of course not,” I scoffed, grabbing her sleeve to steady her. “I’m not insecure about you. I trust you, but I wouldn’t trust that fucker an inch.”

Daisy shuffled forward, slid her skis between mine, and wrapped her arms around my waist. “You have nothing to fear, Jamie. There’s only room in my heart for one man.” I bent and gave her a kiss that was shorter than I’d wanted, but we were in a public place, and so far, no one had really recognized me dressed in all my ski wear.

“Come on, let’s get that hot chocolate you wanted, and we can pick up a few goodies for Felix to take back to the cabin for later.”

“I thought we were eating out?”

“We are, I just figured if my girl wants chocolate licked off her body in the middle of the night, we should definitely have some in the pantry.” I winked and she raised an eyebrow, but I didn’t miss the lusty smile she gave me at the same time.

As we neared the ski lockers, Felix showed his face. He took both sets of skis and boots and swapped them for our walking boots. After we’d changed, we headed down to the little café I knew from a trip to Sugarbush in the past, to test out that hot chocolate I’d boasted to her about.



“WHAT’S NEXT? Daisy asked as she wiped her cute chocolate mustache from her upper lip. Daylight was fading and I knew I was only a few hours away from the main event I had planned.

“We’re having an early dinner, but we have time to fit in a relaxing head and body massage. Then it’ll be straight from the spa to dinner.”

“And after that?” she asked in a seductive tone.

“I thought we’d have a romantic night—you and me naked on that super comfortable bed in front of that big open log fireplace. What do you think?”

“Sounds glorious, but I’d be happy just to go back to the cabin now and let you massage me ... with chocolate of course,” she replied with a wink. A smile creased my lips, and I shook my head.

“I’ve well and truly corrupted you, huh?” I probed.

“Maybe just a smidge,” she replied, holding her finger and thumb up to show me a small measure.

“Believe me, there will be plenty of body parts being massaged when we get back up the mountain. But we don’t want to disappoint Felix who went out of his way to arrange a visit to the spa for us. A sports massage will iron out the kinks after your first day of skiing.”

“Well only if I can have a massage therapist that looks like Alessandro for my session,” she teased, and I grimaced.

“Don’t get me started on that guy. But knowing my luck, that’ll be his second job.”

CHAPTER 13



“*B*ejesus, I think I’m aching more after that massage than I was before I had it,” Daisy grumbled good naturedly. She placed a hand on the small of her back and arched it to stretch her spine outside of the spa before we climbed into the back of the SUV that Felix had arranged to take us to dinner. She nodded toward Felix, then looked at me as he rounded the hood to get into the seat next to the driver.

“Is it really necessary for us to drag Felix along? Poor guy has been working since before we got out of bed today.”

“It is. Trust me. Where we’re going is intimate, but it isn’t entirely private.”

“I see,” she said as I settled in the back of the car and took off my jacket.

“Everything in order?” I asked Felix to ensure nothing had been forgotten.

“Yes, boss.” Felix turned and gave me a protracted grin, narrowed his eyes and turned back to face the front.

“What’s he grinning about?” she asked, smiling. As the car began to pull out from the curb, we could hear the hard packed snow crunching on the road beneath us.

I took Daisy's jacket and left it on the seat next to mine, made sure we were both buckled in and drew her into my side.

"Apart from the creepy ski instructor and the lumberjack female masseuse, have you had fun so far today?" I inquired with a grin.

Daisy gave me an adoring look and licked her bottom lip. "Not nearly as much fun if you'd been kissing me more often," she replied.

"Hm, I think I can do something about that," I muttered as I placed a hand behind her head and drew her closer. Daisy's adoring gaze flicked from my lips to my eyes and back to my lips. Audibly swallowing she let out a dreamy sigh.

"Now you're talking—"

I felt her hot breath on my skin at the exact moment my lips took charge of hers. She moaned in response before my tongue tangled with hers and I deepened the kiss. Daisy whimpered as she shifted in her seat, and I found myself shifting in mine. I had thoughts of unbuckling her seatbelt and pulling her onto my lap. Somehow, I resisted in the interests of safety in the snowy bends on the mountain roads of Vermont.

It was many minutes before we came up for air and I held Daisy's face in my hands. "God, I love you," I mumbled, wholeheartedly as I stared into the eyes of the woman I felt sure I'd never get enough of.

"Nice to know you're religious, but is there any of that love in there for me as well?"

"Smart ass," I quipped, and chuckled.

Daisy settled with her head against my shoulder and entwined her fingers with mine. Her simple gesture made my

heart swell in satisfaction. “Isn’t it perfect getting to spend time together with no work?” she asked.

“We need a lot more of this,” I agreed. “This past year has been difficult with all the pre-arranged gigs, and the other promotional stuff going on.”

“It’s been hectic in my world as well, but that should improve now that Poppy’s coming on board at the pub,” she informed me.

“Two more months,” I stated, letting Daisy know I was counting the days until we had more freedom to be together.

“Yeah, but it’ll be the end of the year before I can fully work from elsewhere,” she reminded me.

She lifted her head and caught my gaze. “Is this restaurant far?” She glanced out the window and I guessed she had seen the huge moon in the sky. “Wow,” she remarked, and I figured I’d guessed that right.

“An hour from the resort but I promise you, it’ll be worth the journey,” I replied and stared at her profile.

For a short time, she stared out of the window at the winter wonderland whizzing by, then she turned to look at me again. “I believe you. You’re great at picking places to eat. You were right about that café earlier. I can still taste that hot chocolate, it was divine. I wonder what their hidden ingredient is. It’s like caramel but not, like Nutella but not,” she shrugged and wrinkled her nose. My dick twitched because I couldn’t resist how cute she was when she did that. “Whatever it is, it takes that drink to a whole different level of yumminess.”

“Yumminess?” I queried and laughed.

“What’s the restaurant called—wait, have you taken another girl there before?”

I frowned. How could she think that I'd do that to her?
“Fuck, Daisy, do you really think I'd do that to you? No, it's called Starry Night Café, and it was recommended to me by Paddy. It was a favorite haunt of his when he came up here before.”

When I heard a sigh of relief it reminded me there were still some insecurities that persisted between us. I hoped after what I was taking her there to do, it would dispel any doubts about what she meant to me.

Our conversation took a more general turn until we arrived at the Starry Night Café in Ferrisburgh. The place looked exactly as it had when I'd Googled it after Paddy shared his love of it with me.

The cream, wooden washboard front set against the gray, aluminium roof and the quirky little restaurant signage made the place instantly inviting when it was set against the cute snow-covered frontage on either side of the entrance. There was little doubt in my mind that Daisy would find the place picturesque.

“Wow, this looks so quaint ... and lovely,” she mused as she took my hand and stepped out onto the cleared pathway that led to the door. It looked pretty quiet as well, with only five or six other cars in the parking lot.

I nodded. “As do you,” I replied, piling on the charm. I hadn't told her I'd booked the place out so that we could have privacy for our special meal. Daisy tolerated my wealth and fame, but she wasn't impressed by money.

Felix walked ahead of us and opened the door, and as we entered, a blast of warm air hit us as we stepped inside.

“Mr. Fontaine, welcome,” a relaxed looking server greeted us. “If you’d like to follow me, I’ve set up the table in the Fireplace Room like you requested.”

Daisy looked up at me puzzled. “The Fireplace Room?” she mumbled with a raised brow.

The Fireplace Room was a dining room in an octagonal structure with a large fireplace at one end and it was perfect for an intimate dinner by candlelight. The rest of the room had been set up for diners, but in the low candlelight and the roaring fire it felt exactly right.

“My colleague will prepare a selection of cocktails for your pleasure. If you’d like to peruse the menu, we’ll take care of everything else.”

“I’m just heading to the restroom to wash my hands. Would you like to do the same?” I asked Daisy. She nodded, stood and as her restroom was on the opposite side from mine, I watched her until she went inside, then I headed toward the front door again where the men’s room was situated.

Once in the restroom, I washed my hands but that wasn’t my real reason for making some space. It was more about needing to catch my breath and tell myself there was no reason to be nervous. Daisy loved me and we ultimately wanted to be together.

“Here you go, boss,” Felix informed me as he handed me the blue velvet ring box. I’d bought the ring in Paris before Daisy had arrived for Valentine’s Day, although I’d had no intention of proposing to her then. My clear vision for doing this was to bring her to Vermont and the snow.

I cracked open the box and checked the diamond again, snapped it shut and squeezed it into my back jeans pocket.

“Fuck, she’s gonna say yes, right?” I asked my bodyguard when another bout of nerves suddenly took hold of me.

“Boss, Daisy’s an independent woman, but she isn’t stupid. She knows you love her, and she dotes on you. If she refuses it won’t be for any of those reasons. It would be down to logistics of you being together,” he said as he clapped my back in reassurance.

He was right. I had done my best to figure all of this out, or at least I prayed I had.

CHAPTER 14



*M*y heart pounded louder in my ears with every step I took toward the dining room again. Pushing the door open, I glanced toward Daisy who had already arrived back from the restroom. As she sat at the table, my heart leapt again. She looked incredible as she smiled adoringly toward me with her short edgy blonde haircut, and her flawless makeup-free features. Candle flames danced as they reflected in her eyes, and I swear I'd never felt more in love with her than in that moment.

Carefully perching myself on my chair across the table from her to avoid the box in my pocket, I reached over and took her hand in mine.

“This room is amazing, right?” I probed to ensure she thought so. Everything had to be perfect. There was low romantic music playing in the background and although I didn't know what it was, it added to the ambience of the place.

“Absolutely, it's stunning,” she replied, and I breathed a sigh of relief.

We both glanced toward the patio at two couples braving the cold outside. They appeared wrapped up against the elements and were warmed by huge outdoor patio heaters.

They appeared to know one another and were animated in their conversation, and it made me smile.

“God, they must be freezing out there,” Daisy muttered as the bar server arrived with a selection of cocktails for us to try.

“Dreaming of Spring, the Long Goodbye, Under Darkening Skies, Bittersmoke, Rye of the Tiger, Salt of the Earth,” the cocktail server informed us of the names as he placed each one on the table.

“You can take the Long Goodbye away, we know all about them,” Daisy said, dryly referring to each time we’d had to leave one another.

The cocktail server frowned in concern and looked at me as if to say what the hell is she talking about? I nodded. “Inside joke,” I remarked, but lifted the cocktail from the table and placed it back on his tray.

He nodded and stepped back from us. “I have your champagne on ice and the server will be here to take your order in a few minutes.”

Daisy smiled and lifted the Salt of the Earth, which was the perfect choice given how straightforward and no nonsense she was as a person.

“Blech! I hate vodka and olive combinations, but I thought I’d at least try.” She shuddered as she set it down to one side. I grinned at her facial reaction. “This one looks intriguing,” she mused as she held up the one named Darkened Skies and inspected it by holding it nearer to the candle at the center of the table. She brought it to her nose, sniffed and tentatively sipped it. A smile curved her lips, and she took another sip. “This is more like it. I can taste Campari and Grenadine in this. Much more my kind of tipple.”

I reached for the Bittersmoke and took a large swig. The burn at the back of my throat was distinctive and I instantly recognized the harsh taste of chartreuse. The drink felt as if it had taken a layer of skin from my throat by the time it reached my stomach.

“Fuck,” I wheezed out and struggled to catch my breath. My eyes watered and Daisy laughed heartily when she saw my reaction.

The waiter arrived and we ordered our food, both of us choosing a starter of the kobha squash puree, toasted nori sorba and an entrée of Flannery beef and winter vegetables which were both delicious and filling. When Daisy refused dessert, I stole a quick glance at the time.

“What would you say if I asked Felix to bring us our coats and we took a moonlight stroll on the garden patio?”

“That’s a great idea. After eating all that food, I feel a wee bit sleepy. I pulled out my cell phone and texted Felix my message. He knew what he had to do the moment he received it.

Felix entered the dining room and handed me both of our coats. I placed mine on my chair and helped Daisy into hers.

“Wow, and I thought the age of chivalry was dead,” she teased as she shrugged her ski coat over her shoulders. Stepping in front of her I took both sides and zipped her into it, held the part still open near her neck and pulled her in for a kiss.

The taste of champagne on her lips along with her tongue delicately teasing mine made my cock twitch in my pants and I pulled her closer. Daisy placed her hands on my hips, and I

remembered the ring in my pocket. Abruptly I pulled back and took a step away from her.

“Now, now, let’s not get carried away in public,” I remarked, nodding toward the couples sitting outside, through the window.

“Can we forget the patio and just go home to bed?” she asked in a seductive tone as I pulled on my own ski coat and zipped it up to my neck.

“All in good time.” I reached out and took her hand. The moment I closed my fingers around hers my heart rate spiked again. The emotions that ran through me eclipsed any feeling of nerves I’d ever experienced before I stepped out onto a stage.

Cold air blasted us both as we stepped through the doors to the garden. Daisy immediately turned into my chest and my arm curled protectively around her.

“Feck me, it’s biting cold,” she remarked, shivering.

“Biting cold?” I chuckled. “I’ve never heard that term before.”

“You’ve not heard it’s nippy outside?”

I considered her comment and smiled as I looked into her eyes. “I’ve heard the term ‘there’s a nip in the air,’” I admitted.

“Nip, bite, it’s all the fecking same. It stings.”

I pressed a small kiss to her nose and turned her toward the couples on the patio.

“Do we really need to stay out here? I’ve seen it now and it’s pretty. Can we go back inside?” she asked, huddling so close like she was trying to climb inside of me.

“Okay, but I’ve a question I need an answer to first,” I informed her. Felix had hovered behind us, glued to his cell phone, and I saw him send a text from the corner of my eye.

“All right, but be quick, my balls are freezing out here,” she demanded as her eyes searched my face. Instantly an explosion was heard up above us. Daisy clapped her hand on the back of her hood and stared up at the darkened sky. One after another they burst in a shower of technicolor to spell out the words ‘Will You Marry Me’.

So occupied by the fireworks Daisy hadn’t realized I’d let her go and when she turned back to look at me, I was down on one knee with the ring box in my hand.

“Huh?” she asked, blinking down at me in disbelief.

“Daisy O’Donnell, you have taught me what it is to love. I thought I’d known that before, but only since I spent time with you, did I realize not only the meaning of the word, but how it feels to love someone that the time spent apart is as painful as I imagine it would feel to lose a limb. Actually, more than a limb because when we’re not together I feel as though half of me is missing and the other half is slowly dying.”

I cracked open the box exposing the large diamond on the small gold ring with a nervous grin. My heart rate was off the charts, but I tried hard to focus on her face.

“What I’m trying to say is, you are the light of my life, you have touched my soul in a way nothing else ever has and I’d be a fool if I didn’t push my luck and ask for more. So here I am, down on one knee in front of you, to ask you the question that’s been on my mind for quite a long time now. Daisy, my sweetheart, my heart, my life, would you do me the honor of being my wife?”

Daisy looked like she'd been hit by a Mack truck, and I knew it was the last thing she'd expected to happen. When she remained silent and still, I began to lose confidence, glanced toward the couples on the patio who were now engaged in our intimate moment.

“Daisy? Can you say something, sweetheart? You're killing me here?” I prompted.

“Yes,” she stated, deadpan. Taking her hand, I tugged it gently.

“Do you know what you're saying yes to?” I asked, noting she was clearly in shock.

“Not really ... I mean the logistics of this, but I'm saying yes anyway,” she remarked and nodded vigorously. Her eyes searched mine and she grinned as I pushed the ring on her finger. Daisy glanced down at it, gazed back at me and shook her head.

“You don't like it?”

“I do. But it's extremely fancy,” she stated before I laughed and scooped her into my arms, then swung her around.

“She said yes, guys!” I called out to the couples on the patio and a Northern Irish voice shouted back.

“Thank fuck for that, my balls were almost frozen to that metal chair,” someone called back.

The shocked look on Daisy's face made me belly laugh. “Jesus, Daisy, you made me sweat for a minute. How do you think I'd have felt if you'd turned me down in front of this lot?”

Paddy and Bernadette, Ryan and Belle walked quickly toward us.

“You planned all this for me?” Daisy pondered with a look of stunned adulation in her eyes.

“No, they’re here for me,” I teased as Belle clapped her hands and grinned at her sister. “You didn’t honestly think we’d get five days on our own, did you?” I joked. Had I been selfish that’s exactly how I would have played this. However, knowing my girl the way I do, I figured if I hadn’t invited some people to share her news, she’d have wanted to go home right away tonight to share it.

“Congratulations, Auntie Daisy,” Ryan drawled in a sarcastic tone as he swept past me and pulled her in for a hug. “You had us worried for a minute, but I checked and legally you being with my uncle doesn’t affect anything me and Belle might get up to ... not that I’ve deflowered her or anything,” he joked with a wink.

No matter what my nephew’s feelings toward Daisy’s youngest sister were, he had obviously mortified Belle who blushed and punched him square in his arm. We heard the thud as it landed. “Ow, for fuck’s sake, Belle, I was only joking.” When he thought Belle looked relieved, he added, “The deflowering was at Christmas, I remember it well.”

“Bejesus, of all the people I could be celebrating this with it had to be you,” Daisy said to Ryan, to save her youngest sister’s blushes.

“I know, you’re so damn lucky to have me, eh?” he remarked, sarcastically. Belle swiped his arm and he chuckled. “But I’m not here to steal my Uncle Jamie’s thunder, he’s a lucky man.”

“That I am,” I agreed, and shoved him gently away from my girl. I wrapped my arms around Daisy again and pulled her close to my chest. “Now that my nerves have fused back together let’s get back inside and toast with a drink.”

“Now you’re talking. I didn’t come all this way to freeze my ass off and not get a good bottle of whiskey out of it.”

“Remember what I warned you about Paddy, skis and whiskey are a lethal mix.”

Paddy raised a brow in surprise. “Who was it that said anything about me skiing? Give me one of those little quad bike things on skis and I’ll be as happy as a pig in shit.”

“You mean a snowmobile? You can’t drive those drunk either,” I warned, sternly.

“No intention of driving it, that’s what I brought Bernie for.”

Daisy’s eyes widened at the thought of his wife in charge of Paddy, drunk on the back of a snowmobile.

“It’s all good, we’ve got a private suite in the resort so there’s no need for me to cart him around. Any driving will be at the hands of a guy who knows what he’s doing in this weather.”

She turned to Daisy and grinned. “That was romantic ... all those fireworks and Jamie on one knee in the snow. Paddy proposed to me with a pint of lager and a packet of pork scratchings. I mean pork scratchings are far from my favorite, but the pub was all out of salt and vinegar chips that night.”

Daisy chuckled with narrowed eyes, unsure whether Bernie was teasing or not. Knowing Paddy’s lack of charisma, I was one hundred percent sure she was telling the truth.



SEVERAL ROUNDS OF DRINKS LATER, Paddy and his wife piled into the hired car that had brought them from the resort to the restaurant with the promise we'd meet up tomorrow. Ryan and Belle traveled back to the resort with us.

“You really had no idea?” Belle asked excitedly as Daisy stared down at her ring. She wiggled her fingers so that the diamond caught any light in the back of the SUV.

“No, none. That saying ‘love is blind’ must be true because I can usually smell a plot brewing when someone does something behind my back.”

“Are you going to FaceTime Mammy and Daddy and tell them?”

My girl's face paled. “My da is going to be miffed you didn't ask him first,” she declared with a glare.

“Ah, but that's where you're wrong. When I came to visit you after Paris, your dad and I had a quiet word. It went something like, “Upset my daughter, cheat on her or treat her less than your queen and I'll flatten you with my tractor.”

Daisy and Belle burst out laughing. “Ah, that's my da,” they both said in unison.

CHAPTER 15



*A*fter dropping my nephew and Daisy's sister off at the same hotel where Paddy and his wife were staying, my girl and I followed Felix back up the mountain to the cabin on our snowmobile.

"The chocolate you asked for is in the fridge," Felix informed us after we'd taken off all our outdoor wear and headed into the family room. The fire roared in the hearth, and I knew the chalet maid had been here.

"It's been a long day," my bodyguard mused as he stretched his arms above his head. He had been incredible in his planning today to ensure everything had gone smoothly.

"Thanks, dude. I appreciate all your hard work today. We're spending the day with the others on the slopes tomorrow, but not until the afternoon. Stay in bed in the morning for a while. We'll be happy to have toast and coffee when we wake up and we'll grab an early lunch before hitting the slopes." I glanced toward Daisy who nodded her agreement.

"Of course," Daisy agreed.

"Congratulations again," Felix told us both with a smile. "Maybe you'll work out where you're going to live to keep my

boss from being so cranky when you're not around, since you're going to be his wife."

Daisy chuckled. "Aw, I love that he's cranky when I'm not around, it tells me he loves me," she responded as she came over to me and slipped her arms around my waist.

Felix knocked on the table and bit back a grin. "In the interest of self-preservation, I'm heading off to bed before I give away any more of Jamie's secrets."

"Goodnight, Felix," I said pointedly, but he knew I was joking. He headed across the family room and into his part of the cabin, closing the door behind him. Turning my attention back to Daisy I flashed her an affectionate smile. "So, fiancée, where were we?"

"I don't know about you, but I got engaged to a smokin'-hot rock star," she drawled in a mock Southern accent.

A grin spread on my face. "Oh, is that so? I think I got the better part of the deal because I got a pretty, Irish barmaid," I countered in my mock Irish one.

Daisy threw me a patronizing look at my attempt at sounding like an Irishman and shook her head. "May I remind you, I'm not just a barmaid but a pub owner, landlady, and licensee. There's a difference."

"Yes, ma'am. I stand corrected." I chuckled. "But here, you're the sexiest woman of my dreams," I said, curling my arms around her. "Ryan was right, I am such a lucky man. Did it occur to you that I brought you somewhere snowy to propose?"

"Oh, there was you being ultra-romantic proposing to me in a winter wonderland since we met as the result of a snowstorm. Meanwhile I thought, Jesus, I'm not going to look

very attractive in my engagement photographs since I had ugly ‘hat hair’ and I looked like a sumo wrestler with all the layers of padding to keep me warm.”

“We never did get that dessert,” I teased in a seductive tone as I changed the topic, let her go and headed over to the refrigerator to retrieve the chocolate. Daisy slumped in a chair and shook her head in disbelief.

“Tell me I’m not dreaming,” she said as she sat at the dining table staring at her three carat, solitaire ring. “This must have cost you a fortune,” she mused. “It’s too much, but not enough to get an anal plug in my arse.”

“The ring has nothing to do with the anal plug.”

“Good, because I’m not swapping one ring for another,” she joked. “It’s still too expensive for me.”

“Nonsense, I had a fifty percent off coupon,” I told her, grinning.

“You did?” she asked, eyeing the ring again by moving her hand for the diamond to catch the overhead lights.

I chuckled. “Tiffany doesn’t do coupons.” I lifted her arm and pulled her gently out of the chair. When I took her into my arms, she wrapped hers around my neck. We stared at one another until a slow smile crept over my face.

“Only the best for my girl, besides it wasn’t the biggest, you’d have rejected me if I’d gone any bigger on the stone, right?”

“Yeah, this is definitely on the edge of classy and just short of obscene. I’m going to have to wear it on my chain when I’m serving in the bar. I’d hate to get this mount clogged up.”

“Like hell you will. The only time you’re allowed to take that off is when I’m slipping your wedding ring on your finger,” I ordered.

“Talking about weddings, how the hell is all of this going to work?”

“Part of the year in Ireland, part in the states and I’ll tour whenever it’s necessary... and I’d want you with me of course.”

“When were you thinking? For the wedding I mean, there’s a lot to plan although I’m telling you now, Jamie, I’m not going for one of those fancy weddings where my pictures are all over ‘Hello!’ or ‘Okay’ magazines.”

I smiled. “Agreed. What kind of wedding would you want?” I asked as I unwrapped the chocolate and broke it up into a bowl, ignoring the ‘when’ and focusing on what her preferences would be.

“Small, intimate. In fact, maybe a private service at the local chapel and the reception in the pub.”

I grinned. “The pub?”

“Yeah, why not?”

“Well, what my girl wants she shall have,” I stated with certainty.

She smiled. “You’d forego a flashy wedding to give me what I want?”

“Daisy, I want what you want. I’ll be getting a new suit. Everything else will depend on you to make us look good in our wedding photos. If your incredible smile is more genuine from a photograph taken in the pub, then that’s what it’s going

to be. Besides, I'm not marrying a wedding venue, I'm getting the girl of my dreams."

"How did I get so lucky?" she asked again, rising on her tiptoes, and placing a chaste peck on my lips. My hands slid from her back to her ass, and I pulled her tighter against me. "Hey, I want some proper sugar," I said, playfully, and bent my head closer to take her lips in a soft kiss. Within seconds, I'd walked her backward down the hallway and into the warmth of the sauna.

CHAPTER 16



“*M*s. O’Donnell, I’m going to get you naked now. Knowing what has been beneath all those layers today, it has taken an iron will not to drag you back to this cabin and lick every delicious inch of you. If I hadn’t arranged for the others to be at the Starry Night Café, I think I’d have caved and done it as well.”

“It’s not like you to show restraint,” she joked, as I dropped my hands from her body, grabbed the hem of her turtleneck sweater and stripped it off her body. Her smile died on her lips and her eyes grew intense when I dropped it on the floor at her feet. I smoothed the static on her hair before I took her face in my hands.

“God, girl, do you know how much I love you?”

“A bit... since you proposed to me,” she replied, suddenly looking a little stunned again.

“I did, and I have to admit I was nervous.”

“You were? Have I ever given you reason to think I’d turn you down?” she asked, as I grabbed her long-sleeved thermal top and stripped her out of that too.

I bent and kissed her neck, traced my mouth to her ear and whispered, “It’s kind of fucked up having a hard on when

you're dressed in winter thermals.”

“I'm still wearing less than you,” she argued, lifted my sweater and dragged it over my head. I immediately dropped a hand over my shoulder and pulled the rest of my layers off in one swoop.

“Damn, that's my man,” she muttered while her eyes immediately darkened with desire as she took me in. Her hands landed on my pecs, and she swept them across to my ribs.

“Nah-huh. Your turn,” I coaxed, nodding at the rest of her clothing.

“Feck me,” she mumbled and stripped out of the rest of her clothes until all she had on was a pair of sensible, white-cotton panties, a matching bra and the thick knee-high ski socks.

“Fuck, look at you, little Miss Innocent,” I mused as my hands slid around the soft skin at the waistband of her panties. Goosebumps spread instantaneously.

Daisy's skin was still cool to the touch from the ride up the mountain, despite the layers of clothing she'd worn. She grinned at my reference to her cotton underwear which I had to admit caused a certain spark of interest from my cock. It twitched as I held her firmly and traced little kisses from her ear, down her jaw and her neck. I blew hard into the cotton bra, warming her breast but igniting another rash of goosebumps at the same time. I bit her nipple through the fabric of her bra, and she winced.

“Ow, Feck, Jamie,” she whined and tried to squirm away from me.

“Oh no, you don't,” I said, tugging her back toward me by her wrist. Sliding my hands up her sides, I quickly lifted her

up onto my body, and when my girl's eyes met mine, she must have seen the desire I was sure burned in them.

“You're so beautiful,” I told her with a soft smile.

“And I know you too well, Jamie Fontaine. You'll say what you think I need to hear if it'll get you laid faster. But we're having a shower first. I don't care that there's a monster bar of Swiss chocolate waiting to be melted in the microwave, or how sexy that winning smile of yours is. I'm stinky after being in all those passion-killer clothes all day.”

I chuckled. “Okay, in that case we're not wasting another minute standing here with me pretending I'm happy to stretch this foreplay out.”

Striding over to the shower by the side of the sauna, I leaned in, turned on the faucet and stepped underneath it without checking the temperature. Daisy let out a yelp and clung tight to my hair when a cold spray of water rained down on us.

“Fuck,” I mumbled as I reached out for the temperature control, turning my girl away and attempted to shelter her from the cold jets of water. “This never happens in the movies,” I muttered, as I fiddled with the dial on the wall until the water ran warmer.

Daisy laughed and tugged my hair back until my face was close to hers. “Well, I happen to think you're extremely romantic. All that effort today for me when it's your holiday as well.”

“It wasn't designed as a totally quiet vacation. This was a vacation with a purpose.”

“Well, I'm deeply touched that you'd thought to bring me somewhere white and secluded.” She bent and took my lips in

a soft kiss, pushed her tongue through the closed seam of them and explored inside my mouth. It wasn't long before her center ground against my hard cock and feeling frustrated, I dropped her feet to the floor.

“That’s it. Get naked, I’ve had enough of this teasing shit. My wet jeans are stuck to my ass and my tip is creeping out the waistband because it thinks I’m trying to drown it.”

The laugh Daisy let out was food for my soul, but she cheerfully did as I asked by stepping out of the shower and relieving herself of her wet underwear and socks.

Stripping out of my jeans, I grabbed her hand and pulled her back under the hot water. Grabbing the shower gel provided, I soaped up a lather and ran the suds over her breasts, her arms, round to her back and over her firm little ass.

Lifting her again, I leaned against the tiled wall. My body glided against her sudsy frame as I took her mouth in another passionate kiss. Daisy wriggled her ass and her entrance slid over my dick. The near miss made my cock pulse in a small thrill of the pleasure. As my erection lay the length of her seam, the friction increased our needs for more from one another.

Bending my legs, I positioned myself closer and whispered, “Grab my cock, baby.” Daisy reached behind her, wrapped her hand around my shaft and guided the tip of my cock over her entrance.

“Fuck that feels so good already,” I confessed as I held her ass with one forearm and cupped her face with my free hand. Daisy had her eyes closed and unless I took her from behind, I had always insisted on eye contact whenever I penetrated her. “Look at me, baby,” I demanded.

Daisy looked up and I dipped my forehead to hers and smiled when I saw her half-closed, lust-filled gaze captured in mine.

“Do it,” she breathed out in a whisper and my hand instantly slid from her face and joined the other that had moved to her ass to take her weight.

“My pleasure,” I murmured as I slipped my tip an inch inside and held it there.

When she grunted and wriggled above me for more, I let out a chuckle. “Am I teasing you, baby?” I asked before I thrust forward and sunk balls deep in her, earning a gasp of surprise and a long guttural groan.

“Damn you’re thick,” she muttered as her head dropped from mine and she bit me on my shoulder. A groan of mixed delight and relief tore from my throat while I basked in the sensation of her tight, wet heat as it hugged me from within.

“Shush,” I whispered, as I guided her back and forth over my cock. I’d missed our bodies being joined in such an intimate connection. “I love you so much, Daisy. I never thought I’d say these words to any woman ever, but I can’t wait to make you my wife.”

Daisy lifted her head, her eyes emanating sheer adoration for me as her man, and my heart clenched tight at the sight. A look passed between us that touched me on another level and I began lifting her on and off my cock with a sense of urgency that was almost overwhelming.

Twice, I almost came when the urge to ride her to the finish had felt too tempting. I managed to stave this off by slowing it down and holding her hips still for a few tense moments. However, when a long, pained moan left her throat I

knew she was close, and I pumped faster. My biceps ached and my cock burned from the friction, but it would have taken an army of men to stop me from chasing her to orgasm.

“Oh feck, faster,” she ground out before her teeth bit her bottom lip and a frown creased her brow in frustration. I read the familiar build of her release on her furrowed brow and I fucked her harder. “Oh, Jamie, I’m coming,” she warned breathlessly as her eyes rolled closed in her pending ecstasy.

“Look at me, baby,” I demanded when I felt my own release looming. As my balls tightened and drew up, Daisy’s pussy clamped down around my cock. I grabbed her face and demanded her attention as she came in hard rhythmic pulses of pleasure. Every nerve in her body quivered uncontrollably as I held her shaking body tight and made her ride out every shock of pleasure I could.

“Jamie, oh, Jamie,” she moaned in a shaky voice as she clung to me like I was her last lifeline. Her nails ripped my back before I saw a pleading, helpless look of surrender in her beautiful eyes. She tried to hold my gaze and her seemingly never-ending orgasm became too much for me to deal with in that moment.

No matter how hard I tried to hold off, a shower of stars burst to life behind my eyes as they closed, while my brain went into meltdown, and I flew over the edge. Furious waves of pleasure rendered me weak as euphoria took over and I slumped down the wall, taking Daisy with me.

We sat in a crumpled tangle of limbs on the floor and kissed in an unhurried, tender embrace, the water from the warm shower still raining down on us.

“I don’t know about you, but I think I’m gonna need a wee nap. I don’t think I’ve the strength for any plans you had for

that chocolate.”

“Agreed,” I said as I slipped out of her and we both climbed back to our feet. I quickly cleaned us both up, turned off the shower and wrapped her in a luxuriously thick, warm bath towel.

“Come on, that bed has been calling my name since I walked through that door, I can’t wait to snuggle up and lie connected with you by the light of the fire.”

“Jesus, how did I get so fecking lucky?” Daisy asked again like she couldn’t believe her life.

“Baby, I keep telling you this, but you don’t want to hear it. But trust me, you are my dream girl, it’s me that’s the lucky one.”

CHAPTER 17



“*W*here the feck did I put my phone last night?” Daisy stage whispered to herself like she was trying not to wake me. “High” by Chainsmokers, her ring tone, filled air of the room in the breaking, dawn light.

Eventually she found her bag and answered her cell phone. I watched her through one eye and smiled. “Hello,” she whispered, and pulled the device away from her ear to see the time.

“You’ll need to be quick, Belle, I only have three percent left on my battery.” I chuckled as she stood naked, and laid waiting for her to come back to bed. Daisy listened to what her sister said and went to respond but her cell phone died before she could answer.

“Feck,” she muttered, dropped the phone on the nightstand, climbed back in beside me and snuggled down again. When her arm snaked over my waist, I moved closer, tugged her tight to my chest and settled my chin on her head. Inhaling her unique smell that was all Daisy filled my heart with contentment and I closed my still sleepy eyes again. “This is nice,” she mumbled close to my ear and wriggled still closer.

“Mm,” I hummed in satisfaction which turned into a groan when “The More You Ignore me” by Morrissey started to play on my phone. It was the annoying ringtone I’d assigned to my nephew, Ryan.

“Jesus. H. Christ, I’m starting to regret asking these kids to come along already,” I grumbled as I freed myself from Daisy and reached for my cell phone.

“What?” I snapped when I answered.

“Daisy’s phone died when Belle was talking to her,” Ryan informed me.

“We’re still asleep,” I hissed.

“Oh, that’s a new talent, Uncle Jamie. When you wake up can you tell Daisy that Belle’s waiting for her in the ski center like they arranged last night?”

“They did? What time is it?”

“10:00 am. Even Paddy is up. He’s like a big kid with the snow. Fortunately, he’s wrapped up to the nines so no one recognizes him, but I should probably warn you, he’s been drinking already. I figured you might like to know that since he’s being measured up for his skis at this very second.”

“Shit, we’ll get ready and be down there in about forty-five minutes,” I advised. “Insist he waits for us in the café directly across from the chair lifts.” I hung up before he could protest that no one told Paddy what to do.

Throwing back the covers, I climbed out of bed and turned to Daisy. “We need to move, baby. Paddy’s been drinking and he’s in the ski rental place right now.”

“God, wouldn’t Bernie stop him from going up the mountain like that?”

“Since when did Bernie ever stop Paddy from doing what he wants?”

“Point taken,” she agreed as she followed me out of bed and flung open her suitcase.

We dressed quickly in layers, and I went to speak to Felix who was watching the news on the TV in his room.

“I need you to get your ass down to the ski equipment rental place. Paddy’s been drinking and wants to go skiing.”

“Damn, that man’s got a death wish,” Felix muttered as he stood up and faced me. “But I’m not here to protect him, I’m here for you ... and Daisy.”

“We’ll be fine. We’ll follow you down as soon as we’ve had some coffee. Daisy’s getting dressed right now. We’ll only be ten minutes behind you.”

Felix eyed me carefully and I knew he was weighing up the risk of leaving us.

“Who would recognize me in all that ski wear? I promise to keep my shades and hat on until I meet up with you down there.”

“And you’ll message me the second you reach the resort?” he asked, negotiating further.

“Scout’s honor,” I swore.

“Jamie, you were never in the fucking scouts, but I’ll hold you to your word,” he mumbled as he began piling on clothes for the journey down to the resort.

I left him and hit the kitchen. I prepared some coffee and Daisy appeared ready for the day just as the coffee brewed. Taking two mugs, I poured us each a drink and handed one to her.

“Did Felix go down to stop Paddy?” Daisy asked, and I figured she must have heard some of our conversation.

“Yeah. As soon as you’ve finished your coffee, we’ll head down there as well.”

“You don’t happen to have a spare portable power bank for my mobile phone, do you?”

“Felix has tons of them. Let me go look.” It paid that we all had the same phone. There was always one of our phones dying and in need of recharging. I stepped into Felix’s room and didn’t need to look far to find one.

When I headed back to the open family room/kitchen area, Daisy had already left, her coffee cup empty on the dining table. I saw her by the front door pulling on her ski wear. With her ski coat open she stepped into her boots and tied the laces as I pulled a snood over my head and shrugged on my ski coat. I turned and zipped her up, handed her gloves to her, and pulled her in for a kiss.

“I promise, we’ll get to that chocolate later if it’s the last thing we do today,” I whispered as I pushed her back, grabbed her hand and opened the cabin door. “But right now, I need to go rescue my stubborn and reckless bandmate.”

CHAPTER 18



*R*yan wasn't wrong about Paddy. Any frustration I'd felt about him calling me quickly disintegrated the moment I set eyes on my bandmate and functioning alcoholic, Paddy. The idiot was already three sheets to the wind, drunk and arguing up a storm with the ski rental attendant.

He was so busy causing a commotion at the boot station he didn't notice us when we joined him. "I'm not wearing red and white boots. I need black ones, like those over there," he insisted, pointing toward pigeonholes full of black boots.

"But, sir, these are the only size thirteen we have," the poor assistant insisted. As I was also a size thirteen and had brought my own boots, I told the assistant I'd swap with Paddy. I figured anything for a quiet life and to stop Paddy from drawing a crowd. The last thing that we all needed was to draw attention to ourselves.

"Fuck. Read my lips. I'm wearing a green jacket. Don't you know the saying? Red and Green are never seen except on an Irish Queen? Now, do I look like an Irish Queen to you?" he reasoned as he stared intently toward the ski rental attendant. He swayed and grabbed hold of the counter to steady himself.

I signaled to the assistant I had this. When the attendant backed off to help someone who'd called for his attention, I turned to his wife, Bernadette, feeling concerned. "What time did he start drinking?"

"What do you mean?" she asked innocently. She looked puzzled by my straightforward question and didn't appear entirely sober herself.

"How much has he had?" Bernie blinked slowly as if she were considering my question.

"Not sure. We had a couple of bottles of duty-free booze that he bought." She narrowed her eyes like she was thinking more deeply about what I'd asked. I huffed in frustration, and she glared at me. "We're not all you, Jamie. Some of us fly commercial."

It was a cryptic explanation but one that made sense immediately. Had I remembered Paddy would hit the duty-free stores, I'd have sent my own plane to pick them up. "So, two... litre bottles?" I guessed. "How much is left?"

"Four bottles, I bought two as well," she corrected before she glanced toward her husband. Felix had taken Paddy in hand and was already sitting him down.

"Bernie?" I asked, jolting her memory that I'd asked her a question.

"What do you mean left?" she asked, repeating my question. She closed one of her eyes and I wondered if she could see two of me.

"Stop repeating what I say," I snapped to get her full attention and glanced toward Paddy again. "It doesn't matter. He's not going skiing at all today. He'd kill himself or kill someone else," I decided, reneging on my plan to swap boots.

Wandering over beside him, I flung my arm around his shoulder. “Hey, buddy, how’s it going?”

“There you are,” he said like he’d been waiting for me. “Would you tell that guy over there, I’m not wearing red and white ski boots?” he slurred and swayed unsteadily, even when sitting down. He tugged at the collar of his jacket as if his reason should have been clear to me.

“He’s not wearing red and white ski boots,” I told the assistant who looked perplexed that I’d agreed with him. I winked to let him know I was placating Paddy. The truth was you couldn’t argue with Paddy when he was drunk. Years of working with him had taught me the best way to deal with my inebriated friend was to placate him and then to distract him.

“Listen buddy, Daisy and I haven’t eaten this morning yet. What say we head over the road to that café and grab something to eat while Felix sorts something out about the boots?”

Paddy looked at me for a long moment; at least I figured he was trying to focus on my face and eventually he nodded. “Do they sell lager?”

I turned him in the direction of the door and began walking with him. “Why don’t we go over there and find out?”

“He’s not seriously going to let him drink more?” I heard Daisy mutter to Felix as we passed Bernie who trailed behind us. I winked at my girl to tell her I had the situation under control. The only drink I’d let Paddy drink was a gallon and a half of coffee.



AFTER FORTY-FIVE MINUTES in the café, Paddy was still boozed up to his eyeballs. Ryan and Belle had deserted us for the slopes, and I was pissed that Paddy had taken time away from my girl.

“You’re going back to bed to sleep some of this off,” I ordered, although I figured with the amount he’d likely had, to be in the state that he was, we’d all be back in Ireland before he’d be sober again.

After some protestations from Paddy and Bernie, my faithful bodyguard had carted them off to bed.

“We’re heading back up to the cabin,” I stated to Felix, after I had a word with Daisy and she had agreed.

“At least there’s an upside to Paddy’s drinking,” I mumbled as we strolled back to the snowmobile hand in hand.

“Yeah? What’s that? He’s single-handedly trying to keep the alcohol exports afloat?”

I laughed at my girl’s sense of humor. “No, you missed your ski lesson with that asshat, ski instructor this morning.”

Daisy grinned and gave my hand a squeeze. “Aww, are you still upset about Alessandro?”

Pretending to be pissed, I swung her around in front of me and held her to my chest. “Listen, you might think twice about mocking me when you see what I’ve got in store for you when we get back to the cabin.”

“Oh, yeah? Sounds like tough talk, Jamie Fontaine. I hope you’ve got the goods to back that statement up,” she challenged with a grin.

“Baby, you have no idea.”

CHAPTER 19



“*I* can’t get over how cold it is here, even during the day,” Daisy stated, as she peeled off her ski jacket and bent down to remove her boots.

“It is, but if you wear plenty of layers and go skiing it’s barely noticeable.”

“Says the guy with enough muscle that the cold can’t penetrate.”

“I love penetration,” I shot back and flashed her a wicked smile.

“You have sex on the brain, Jamie Fontaine,” she mumbled as she turned and bent to place the boots together on the floor.

“It’s not on my brain right now,” I joked as I grabbed her hips from behind and ground my semi-hard cock against her ass.

Daisy stood and tipped her ass back against me, pulled out of my reach and turned to face me. “I think so, because your brain is sending messages to your dick,” she replied, as she chuckled. She placed her hands on my chest and pushed me back.

“Down boy. I need a shower to warm me up,” she explained. Daisy patted my chest, stepped past me and

removed her ski pants.

“Great idea, naked showers are the best warmups,” I replied, following suit by removing the rest of my ski wear.

“What other kind are there?” she queried with a raised eyebrow.

“Drunken showers of course. Those are the ones where your buddies shove you in with all your clothes on to sober you up before you go unconscious.”

“Mm, perhaps we should have done that with Paddy and Bernie,” Daisy mused.

“Don’t go giving me ideas. I’m pissed he got himself into that state, today of all days.”

“Today of all days?” she repeated, questioning me.

“Yeah, our first day as an engaged couple,” I said. Flashing her a lopsided grin I moved toward her, lifted the hem of the sweater she was wearing and stripped it over her head.

“Aww, you can be so romantic at times, who knew?” she said, shaking her hair away from her eyes. She attempted to pull her thermal top back into place with a coy smile, but I swatted her hand away and removed this as well. My hungry eyes appraised my handiwork, “We still won’t forget it because I’ve never seen Paddy that bad,” she argued, standing in a plain black bra and long thermals.

“Very sexy,” I teased as my hands swept around her waistline and slid beneath the waistband of the long johns and inside her panties as well. “Damn, your ass is freezing,” I remarked.

She shivered when my hands met her bare skin. “Exactly. I told you, I’m chilled to the bone.”

“Let’s have a shower, then get into the sauna.”

“Sounds perfect.” Daisy began to smile, but I pressed my lips to hers and began to kiss her as I walked her backward, all the way into the bathroom.

Relieving her of the rest of her clothing, I hit the faucet and the spray immediately began to fall. Slipping beneath the warm jets of water, she let out a deliciously, sexy groan.

“Oh. My. God. This is sheer bliss,” she disclosed as her hands ran over her bare, wet skin. Maybe, for her, but from where I stood, seeing her with that heavenly look on her face as her hands stroked over her naked, curvy body, it felt torturous.

After taking off the rest of my clothes, I joined her in the shower where we washed one another. We managed to finish up without it turning into another steamy session in there, because I had bigger plans for us, longer than a ten-minute, slippery release.

Once we stepped out of the shower, I wrapped Daisy in a warm fluffy towel and guided her into the sauna.

“Oh, it’s roasting in here. Remind me to come straight in here the next time we come back from outside.”

She was right, it was damned hot in the sauna. So hot it burned my nostrils. We only lasted ten minutes in the sauna, but during this time we saw some elk that had roamed into view and lingered outside the window.

“What time is it?” Daisy asked when we left the sauna and went back into the bedroom.

“Sexy time,” I joked in a smarmy, seductive tone.

Daisy snickered. “Yeah? I figured you might say that, since that big bed is just sitting there waiting for us to get in it.”

“How well you know me, my girl,” I replied playfully, as I stripped her towel away.

“Are you ever going to let me wear anything when we’re here in the cabin alone?”

“Sure, hang on,” I replied, turned and jogged to the closet. I came back carrying three boxes. “Alright, pick one,” I coaxed.

Daisy’s eyes widened and she bit her bottom lip. “I’m scared to since I assume there’s lingerie in there that goes with something in that box of torture instruments you already introduced me to.”

I grinned. “I love how perceptive you are. But you have no need to feel afraid. You trust me, right?” I asked, wagging my brows.

With a look that said she wasn’t sure at first, she eventually blew out a breath and nodded. “Right.”

“Well, that didn’t sound very convincing,” I goaded in mock disappointment.

“And neither do you when you tell me those huge shiny butt plugs won’t hurt me either.”

“Baby,” I said, giving her a look that said I was disappointed in her attitude again. “Do you want to be adventurous in bed and experiment?” I asked more seriously now.

“I do. But...”

“But the butt plugs frighten you?”

She nodded. “A bit ... a lot actually,” she corrected.

“Then it’ll be my job to make you beg for it. And if you don’t, then we won’t use them. How does that sound?”

“Better,” she confessed, and I immediately accepted her decision.

CHAPTER 20



Chocolate stained the sheets as Daisy rolled over and stretched with a delicious arch of her back before she sat up. Her face was covered in Swiss chocolate, the delicate, three-hundred-dollar lingerie from Coco de Mer I had bought her lay in two torn shreds beside her as she repositioned herself on her knees. The sight of her made me grin.

“Jesus, Jamie, you’re a fecking greedy beggar,” she joked when she stared into the bowl and saw most of the chocolate was gone. She dipped her finger into the chocolate and slipped it between her lips. “Mmmm,” she groaned in ecstasy, making my hard cock pulse on my belly.

“Fuck,” I groaned as I lifted my head off the pillow and grabbed her hand. Tugging her finger from her mouth, I stuck it in mine. Daisy’s eyes flared with desire when I sucked hard on her little digit. She pulled it away and shoved me by my shoulders until my head flopped back to the bed again.

“Let me see,” she mused, tapping her fingers to her lips with a salacious smile. “Where can I put this to have unhindered access to this delicious indulgence without you muscling in on my treat. I flexed my dick on my stomach and she glanced down at it and grinned. “Oh, did you say

something?” she asked my cock. I chuckled. “Tell me, Jamie, can you suck your own dick?”

I laughed. “They tell me I’m big, baby. But no one is *that* big.”

“And who would those ‘they’ be?” she questioned.

“People,” I replied, because I didn’t want to talk about the women I’d been with in the past.

“Who are these ‘people’?” she probed.

“Paddy, Fingers, ... other kids... when I was in school,” I stammered.

“Ah, those people. Good answer,” she said, nodding playfully.

She scooped four fingers into the bowl and wrapped them around my dick. Sliding her hand from root to tip she smeared the melted chocolate over the head. She repeated her move from the bowl to my cock and then taking a bit more from it, she traced every crease in my abs. When she’d finished, she wiped her hands on the V muscles at my hips. Next, Daisy shoved my legs open and nestled herself between them.

“It’s been a while since I had Swiss chocolate,” she muttered almost to herself, as she lowered her head and engulfed my cock with her mouth.

“Fuck.” The word tore from my mouth as she sucked strongly up my shaft. When she reached my tip, my cock sprang free from her lips with a pop.

“Mm, that tastes... ohh,” she groaned before she took me in her mouth again.

“Holy shit,” I blurted.

For the following few minutes, Daisy sucked, nipped and licked at my cock until I thought I would lose my mind. No one had ever made me come as fast as Daisy did and within a few minutes my body began to tighten. However, the moment she became aware of this, she pulled my dick out of her mouth and began paying attention to my abs.

“Baby, no,” I murmured and tried to guide her back onto my dick. She lifted her head, her tongue poking out and held my eyes in a dark gaze of lust as she continued to lick my abs.

When I tried to push her head down again, she sat up straight and chastised me. “All in good time, Jamie. You’ve had far more chocolate than me so it’s only fair you let me take my time.” She turned her attention back to the bowl and scooped out what was left inside. She coated my dick in a fresh layer of chocolate and got busy down there again, sucking, nibbling, and licking until there was no way I could hold back.

“Fuck, I’m coming,” I blurted as the world turned multi-colored behind my eyelids and thick strands exploded from my cock in pulses of warm sperm. Daisy took every drop until I was spent, then continued to lick the chocolate until she had cleaned every drop.

As I lay in a brain-melting haze, Daisy sat back on her knees and surveyed the scene of me lying before her. When I opened my eyes to look at her, she caught my gaze and held it.

“Now, tell me that wasn’t more fun than me wearing a butt plug,” she goaded.

“Dear God, baby, you blew my mind,” I muttered after the way she had taken me to the edge and then made me do it all again. On this occasion, she was right.

“I agree, that was so fucking awesome,” I replied. Daisy shifted position and lay down over me. We were both sticky and the smell of chocolate mingled with the pheromones in the air, as we lay wrapped in each other’s arms while I caught my breath. What we’d done was way more fun than the tense situation it would have been of me introducing her to a butt plug.

CHAPTER 21



“*H*ey Ma, Da, we have something to tell you,” Daisy beamed as she held her ring up in front of the camera during a Facebook call to her parents, the following morning.

“Congratulations,” both Dermot and Roslin said in unison.

“Bring the ring closer to the screen,” Roslin ordered. Daisy obliged. “Wow, that’s a nice little rock,” Roslin said, nodding her approval.

“So, you’ll be home the day after tomorrow?” Dermot asked, even though he knew we would be.

“Have you set a date yet?” Roslin asked, at the same time.

“Ma, we’re barely engaged,” Daisy responded, scolding her. “We haven’t had time to let it sink in yet,” her daughter explained.

“Are Ryan and Belle behaving?” her mom asked me.

“To be honest, that’s highly unlikely knowing my nephew, but we’ve barely seen them. We had some drama with Paddy and they both disappeared leaving us to deal with him.”

“What kind of drama?” her father asked.

“Just drank too much and caused a scene in the ski boot rental shop because they only had red and white boots. He was wearing a green jacket and refused to let the colors clash, or some bullshit like that,” I explained.

“Ah, well he’s right on that. I’d have refused to wear them as well. Red and green should never be seen—”

“Except on an Irish Queen,” I finished, mimicking Paddy’s accent when I said it.

“Well, that’s how the saying goes anyway,” Dermot insisted, but chuckled.

“Superstition or something?” I asked.

“Who knows, it’s just something we heard growing up,” Daisy’s dad elaborated, but he looked embarrassed when he said it, like he didn’t understand the saying himself.

“Ah, well, anyway, he never got to go skiing because he was so fecking sozzled. Felix took him upstairs to bed,” Daisy explained.

“I thought he was married to Bernie,” Dermot joked, like he’d implied Felix had snagged Paddy because he was drunk.

“Best not let Felix hear you joking like that,” I remarked.

“Oh, look I’m quaking in my boots at that threat,” Dermot replied, playfully. “Hasn’t anyone told you, us Irishmen are fearless?”

I chuckled and Daisy broke into the conversation to ask her mom how Poppy was doing at the pub. Once Roslin reassured her everything was in hand at home, we concluded the call, explaining we’d had to run to spend our last day on the slopes before flying back to Dublin.



BY THE TIME hit the center of the resort and reached the chairlift, everyone was waiting for us. It was the first time, apart from dinner, when everyone was in a fit enough condition to ski.

Bernie was stone-cold sober, and Paddy had tried hard to follow her example. By his groveling behavior, it was clear he knew I was offended by his behavior the day after our engagement. Since then, he had tried not to drink in such a binge drinking way that he could barely function. When I say he tried, that didn't mean he had always been successful today.

However, I was in no doubt he would make up for that in the privacy of his hotel suite after we'd left for the day. But on the occasions when we'd headed for the slopes or out to dinner at least, he'd somehow managed to moderate his intake.

Like most things in life, Ryan demonstrated what an amazing snowboarder he was, and although I loved snowboarding myself, I'd chosen to ski that week due to Daisy's preference to learn how to ski when given the choice. Once I'd seen how much trouble Belle had at keeping her balance on her board, I figured my girl had made the right choice.

"Right, Ryan, I'll race you down to the bottom," Paddy challenged. The look that passed between the rest of us said we thought this to be a very bad idea.

"You're on," Ryan snapped before I could signal for him to ignore the contest Paddy had suggested.

Belle looked worried and leaned in close to Ryan. "This isn't a good idea."

“Blue run,” I interjected, quickly before my nephew suggested a more difficult run. Ryan glanced toward me like he was going to protest, but the scowl I was sure that was on my face made him instantly back down from any thought he had in his head.

“Sure, let’s keep it simple for the old man,” Ryan replied, poking the bear.

“Are you saying I couldn’t do a harder one?” he asked.

“He’s not saying that. I’m saying we want to get as much skiing in as we can, and if you go to the top of the mountain, the ladies will all be freezing their asses off here by the time you finish the run,” I interjected to squash Paddy’s competitive streak.

My bandmate considered this and nodded. “I can understand that,” he said, suddenly reasonable.

Again, I figured this was out of character for him and that he felt he needed to walk on eggshells in case I lost my cool with him. Daisy smiled lovingly toward me, like I was her hero for saying this and I winked.

“If they’re doing a blue run, can’t we all go up instead of waiting for them?” Belle asked.

“Good idea,” Bernie muttered. “It beats the embarrassment of Paddy wagging his cock with a teenage boy to see whose is the biggest.” Paddy shook his head at his wife but gave her an affectionate smile.

With this settled, we all headed toward the chair lift and joined the queue. My shades had some marks on them, and I took them off to clean them. As I went to put them back on, I noticed a small girl toe to toe with me staring up at my face.

“You’re him,” she said, wagging a little pointy finger up at me. She looked about five or six years old, and I raised an eyebrow and decided as the chair lift was quiet, I’d play along.

“And who is him?” I asked with a note of amusement in my tone.

“The guy my dad argues with my mom about.”

“Uh oh, and what do I do that causes them to argue?” I glanced up at the two figures in front of her and noted a couple discussing a map between them.

“The guy from the internet that sings like this,” she replied and began singing one of our most recognizable songs and gyrating her hips in an exaggerated way that was more reminiscent of Elvis than it was of me.

Daisy and Belle started giggling. I glanced at them and bit back a grin as I turned back to look down at the kid again.

“That’s me?” I asked, widening my eyes in mock shock. “I think you have the wrong man,” I pleaded in a quiet voice, like we were sharing a secret. “Did your mom and dad not teach you that you should never speak to strangers?”

“You’re not a stranger, you’re Jamie Fontaine, my mom’s second husband,” she replied. Before I could say anything else, she turned and tapped both her mom and her dad on their backs.

“This is your second husband, isn’t it?” She tugged her mom’s coat as she asked. Her mom looked down at her child, and then up at me. I had quickly slipped on my shades and gently shook my head. Then in a mock Irish accent, I said, “Aren’t kids hilarious?” Her dad eyed me with caution as the mom kept staring at me, but Daisy and Belle started laughing and I cracked up laughing as well.

Figuring I was busted, I went to take off my shades, but the mom shook her head and bent to talk to her daughter. “This isn’t my second husband, baby. My man is Jamie Fontaine, this man is too skinny and not nearly as tall as him.”

The husband’s scowl turned into a smile as he eyed his daughter and looked back at me. “Sorry, dude, my wife has an obsessive crush on a rock star and has filled my poor daughter’s head full of bull. Poor kid thinks she’s actually going to meet this second husband someday.”

I chuckled again and shook my head. “No problem, but you never know, stranger things have happened,” I replied, still trying to keep up the Irish accent that had turned distinctly more like an Asian Indian one.

Daisy and Belle cracked up beside me. Bernie snickered and nudged shoulders with me. I glanced toward her and the smug look on her face made me believe for a minute she was going to ‘out’ me.

“Well, buddy, I know for sure, it’s not you. This asshat here would have peed her pants, and likely fainted as well, if Jamie Fontaine had been standing next to her.”

“No, I wouldn’t. You’re just jealous because he’s better looking than you,” the woman said as the chairlift swept around, caught the family’s legs and the three of them went jolting off up the mountain.

“Okay, well that was a near miss,” I said, still talking in my Irish accent.

“If you say so, Ghandi,” Daisy remarked in reference to how I sounded, and Bernie and Belle laughed harder. “If you think you fooled that woman with that stupid accent, you have

another thing coming. I saw the way she eye-fucked you right in front of her husband. That guy is blind, I tell you.”

Grinning, I shook my head. “Nonsense, that woman had no idea who I was. That was your imagination working overtime because of jealousy, baby.”

The chairlift came around and lifted us off our feet. Settling in, I pulled down the bar to keep us safely in our seats and slung my arm around her.

“Baby, I think it’s cute when you get all fired up and jealous,” I said as we neared the station for exiting the chairlift.

“Yeah, and we’ll see how cute you are when you have to keep up that ridiculous accent if we bump into that family again.”

CHAPTER 22



Time passed too fast and before we had really settled into the cabin it was already time to head home. Felix had checked that our evening slot was still good. He then informed everyone else to be ready to leave as soon as we reached the resort.

On the way to the airport, I noticed a tremor in Paddy's hands as he tried to eat a bread roll. I then realized how unsteady his hands were when he tried to curtail his drinking. I made a note to talk to him, to see how I could try to support him to seek help.

It had been a whirlwind five days, and not nearly enough time alone for Daisy and me but getting engaged was the start of our future. It had been quite a tough year full of partings between us since we'd met, but the outlook for us going forward felt brighter.

It was a relatively short trip to Burlington airport and thankfully the timeslot we had arranged for take-off wasn't delayed due to the weather. The night flight departed on time, and we landed in Ireland at 5:00 am the following morning.

Still exhausted from the flights, skiing and the cold, we checked into our hotel, mumbled our goodnights and retired to our rooms.

We had arranged to stay in the same hotel in Dublin that we'd previously stayed in since Poppy was already staying in the apartment above the pub. Her friend from college who had been helping her had taken the second bedroom. But what Daisy didn't know, was that my sister Catrina and my other nephew Nick, along with my bandmates, Fingers, his wife Kim, Ticker and Hogs had arrived in the city to surprise her.



“DON'T WORRY SO MUCH. She's going to love it,” Roslin told me as I stood with her, Poppy, my sister Cat and Terry, Daisy's barman. I must have looked as concerned on the outside as I had felt inside.

“I know she said this is what she wants, but what if it isn't?” I asked as I ran a hand nervously through my hair.

“What's this? My uncle's nervous that a girl won't want to marry him?”

“Fuck, Nick, you gave me a fright,” I said, clutching my chest when he'd snuck up and startled me from behind. Everyone laughed but me.

The look of glee on Nick's face told me he was delighted he'd given me a scare. “Not as much of a fright as Daisy's going to get when she realizes it was me and Poppy who picked out her dress.” He shot me a look of mock horror, but my belly immediately filled with dread because I had been nervous about them doing this.

What if she didn't like it?

“Relax, Jamie. I steered Nick away from the Cinderella frocks with the poofy ballgowns and the thirty-foot trains at

the back,” Poppy said to reassure me.

“Yeah, it’s more punk rock meets the Pussycat Dolls,” Nick chipped in with a smug looking grin on his face.

“Nick, I swear ...” My heart rate had been running fast since I’d woken up. I’d snuck out while Daisy was sleeping, and it was still barely 6:30 am. I checked the time on my phone and hoped to get back before she woke up.

“He’s lying, don’t listen to him,” Roslin cut in. She placed a hand on my forearm and gave it a squeeze. “I think what you’re doing is extremely romantic and if our Daisy doesn’t think so, then the girl needs her head examined.”

“We’ve got the license?” I asked in a panic when I remembered that this needed to be sorted out.

“Everything is in order. All you need to do is get her to our house by 1:00 pm. and you can leave the rest to me,” Roslin stated, calmly.

“Alright, I’m out of here. I’ll text to let you know when we’re on our way.” Felix led the way back to the car he’d rented and drove me back to the hotel.

Fortunately, Daisy was still asleep from her jet lag. I snuck back into bed beside her just after 7:30. and cuddled up like I’d been there all morning.

CHAPTER 23



I woke with a start when the sound of the hairdryer filled the room. My heart instantly raced when I remembered the big event I'd planned for later. I quickly rose to my elbows and stared down the bed. Daisy was dressed for the day, freshly showered and sitting at the dressing table drying her hair.

"What are you doing?" I asked, instantly climbing out of bed and walking over beside her. My morning wood bobbed and when I stopped, it almost caught her in the eye.

"You can put that thing away," she said gently, shoving my length away from her and smiling up at my face.

"I have no idea what you're talking about," I said, wagging my dick at her by swaying my hips.

She chuckled and softly batted it away this time. "You were sleeping so heavily I was going to leave you until later. I'm going over to the pub, I thought I'd call you from there."

"Oh no you don't," I said, quickly taking her hairbrush out of her hand. "No pub this morning. You're mine for another day. You promised me six days and I've only had five. I have plans for us today."

"Plans?" she repeated.

“Yeah, what time is it?” I asked.

“Just after 9:00,” she mumbled as she tried to steal her hairbrush back. I lifted my arm out of her way, and she growled when she didn’t catch it. “Give it back,” she demanded.

“Nope, not until you agree to spend the day with me. I’ll make a concession, you can go to the pub later,” I bargained.

“Let me call Poppy and make sure she doesn’t need me this morning then.”

I nodded. She reached for her cell phone and called her sister, placing her on speakerphone.

“Hey, it’s me. We’re home. I was about to come over, but Jamie wants to take me somewhere. How’s business?”

“Business is going well. We’ve been busy since St. Patrick’s Day. We’ve had quite a lot of American tourists hoping for a glimpse of Jamie. Your boyfriend is good for business.”

Daisy chuckled until I flashed her a smug grin, then she threw me a mock glare. “Are there any new bookings for functions?” Daisy inquired.

“As a matter of fact, yes. We had one the day after you left for a wedding function later today,” Poppy replied.

My heart jumped up my throat when she said this.

“Well, that’s it. I need to come over. What still needs to be done?” Daisy said, immediately switching to business mode. My heart pounded rapidly at Daisy’s reaction to this news.

“No,” Poppy responded sharply. She sounded alarmed, and then quickly recovered her composure. “I mean, come on, Daisy, this pub is going to be mine in a couple of months. You

need to allow me to show you what I can do. Otherwise, you'll be like a helicopter parent, always hovering over me."

Good recovery, Poppy. When I heard Poppy's assertive tone and her reasoning, I figured Daisy would have to concede, but I held my breath anyway and waited for her to respond.

"But—"

"No buts, Daisy," Poppy said, firmly. "I'm either good enough to run this place or I'm not. I'll have a degree in business studies and management from one of the best universities in the country in a few weeks. You need to stop this possessive stance on the place if we're going to make a success of this expansion."

Daisy glanced up at me and I lifted a brow as if to say Poppy had a point. But I could see by the way she bit her lip in concern, she felt torn about giving her sister complete control of her 'baby'. I tipped my head slightly in a challenge and drew in a long breath until I saw Daisy mentally submit to her sister.

"Right. I hear you. But I'm coming in later. It's still my name above that door as licensee for two more months," my girl replied. The determination in her tone almost made me laugh because she had no idea we'd be going there, and that the function Poppy was talking about was ours.

"Now, if you don't mind, I'm extremely busy right now and you're taking up my time. I'll see you later," her sister snapped and hung up.

It took everything within me not to crack up laughing when I looked at the pissed expression on Daisy's face, but somehow I held it together. "Don't worry, baby, I'm sure

Poppy will do a great job. We'll pop in later to ease your mind. But for now, I'll just grab a quick shower and we'll get out of here," I said, handing her back her hairbrush.

As I headed for the shower, I swiped my cell phone off the nightstand and took it into the bathroom with me.

Me: Don't let Daisy leave the hotel. I'm in the shower and she was trying to head to the pub.

Felix: Roger that boss, I'll hang in the foyer by the elevator.

Me: Text me if she tries to leave.

My shower was one of the quickest I'd ever had. I even brushed my teeth in there to cut down the time that Daisy was out of my sight. I was still dripping wet when I flung a towel around my waist and made it back into the bedroom, as she was pulling on a jacket.

Daisy gave me a startled look and I sensed she had been caught about to leave.

"Were you going to run out on me?" I asked through narrowed eyes, as I whipped the towel off my waist and dried my hair and body with it.

"No. I was putting my jacket on to ..."

"To wait for me, right?" I asked, still rapidly drying myself like a madman.

"I was just going to... maybe go and placate myself that everything at the pub is in order before I give you my full attention for the rest of the morning."

"Nice try, but you're not," I ordered. "You're spending the morning with me. You promised me, Daisy," I said, sternly.

“The pub isn’t going to burn down in a few hours. There’s something I want to show you,” I disclosed.

“Jamie, your something to show me usually involves your cock and some skimpy lingerie you recently purchased.”

“Ouch, that makes me sound shallow. I’m hurt,” I stated with my hand over my heart. “I promise this has nothing to do with either of those things, but I’m still excited to show it to you,” I reasoned, all the while quickly pulling on my clothes as I spoke to her.

“Come on then, let’s get this over with, then perhaps you’ll allow me to go home and see for myself that my pub is still in one piece.”

CHAPTER 24



*A*s we began to hit the suburbs of Dublin, I pulled out the blindfold I'd brought from Vermont and asked her to slip it on.

“Really, Jamie? I don’t have time for this today. Did you not hear Poppy? There’s a wedding going on in the pub a bit later.”

“I did. I also heard your sister tell you she had everything under control.” Daisy huffed, but reluctantly tied the blindfold in place. I grinned and fist pumped the air once she had, because she had no idea what I had in store for her, and I couldn’t wait to see her face.

Less than fifteen minutes outside the city center we came to a small humpback bridge. I took a right turn just before it and drove us down a worn farmland track.

“Jesus, these road surfaces need attending to,” she complained.

“Yeah, they’re shocking,” I said, grinning as I tried to moderate my speed to control missing the potholes we met on the way down to the far end of a field. When we reached this point, the track dropped down into a valley and a medium sized private estate came into view. Two large barns stood to the left of the house and a tennis court to the other side. It also

had large, manicured gardens spread out neatly to the front of the main property.

A burst of adrenaline shot through my body, causing a spike in my heart rate at the thought of how Daisy would react. I was nervous about sharing the place with her. But I felt quietly confident that I'd gotten the choice of our first house to her liking, as well as mine. The substantial, red brick building looked grand, without being too ostentatious. With five bedrooms and three full baths, it was plenty big enough for Catrina and the boys to stay whenever they visited.

Stopping the car, I turned off the engine and sat staring at the house for a moment or two until Daisy's voice invaded my thoughts.

"Are we there yet?" she asked in a childish, whiny tone.

"Sure. Take the blindfold off," I said with my heart in my throat again.

I stared at Daisy's face as she peeled the material away and her eyes immediately narrowed as her brow creased in confusion.

"Where are we?" she asked, warily.

"Home... I hope. What do you think?" I gestured at the house, but kept my eyes trained on her.

"You're thinking of buying this place for us?" she asked in an incredulous tone.

"What do you think?" I probed again.

"Jamie," she said, sounding part amazed and part disbelieving. "It's a bit grand, don't you think?"

"No, it's just a five-bedroom house. Your parents have five bedrooms, right? This one is just a wee bit bigger, but I

thought it would be perfect from a privacy perspective. It took Felix and I three goes to find the place when we came to view it before. It's only fifteen minutes from the center of Dublin. We can stay here when I'm not touring and there's room for my relatives to visit. Do you want to see the inside?" I said in a rush. I knew I was babbling, but we were running out of time since I had bigger plans ahead.

Daisy sat staring and bit her lip like she was worried. "I don't know how it works in the US, but here you need to make an appointment to view a house."

"Already arranged, baby," I said, reaching into my pocket and pulling out a set of keys.

"The estate agent gave you the keys to the place?" she shrieked in a high-pitched tone. "Bejesus, Jamie, you'd charm the knickers off a nun," she retorted, grinned and shook her head in disbelief.

"Estate agent? You mean realtor? Don't you know that's one of the positive effects of being a rock star?" I asked her as I opened the driver's door and jogged around the hood to open hers.

Daisy climbed out, linked her arm in mine, and we wandered down the small hill onto the path at the front.

"Wow, we really could live here?" she asked. The excitement in her eyes danced at the prospect.

"Would you like to?" I asked, as I dipped my head to catch her gaze.

"Hell, Jamie, that's like asking a kid if they want to go to Disneyland."

I smiled, and my heart rhythm slowed. "Then what would you say if I told you I'd already bought it for us?"

“Feck me,” she blurted. She stood with her jaw hanging loose as her eyes ticked over the buildings, the gardens and then to me. “Are you serious? It’s yours?”

“Ours, Daisy. It’s our house, and I’m serious. I reckoned if I was going to ask you to marry me I should at least have somewhere for us to live.”

“Oh, Jamie,” she exclaimed, as she jumped up and down and clapped her hands. “I don’t fecking know how you managed to do all the things that you’ve done behind my back.”

“Not behind your back, baby. Yes, the house is my surprise, but I’d never want to do anything negative or underhanded that would hurt you,” I replied, pulling her close and wrapping my arms around her. Daisy stared up at the house and turned her attention back to look at me.

“What did I do to deserve this?” she asked in a serious tone.

“What do you mean?”

“My life is like a movie script. I have the man of my dreams, who is batshit crazy about me for some reason I can’t fathom, and he wants to live with me for the rest of his life. I never considered myself a particularly lucky person, but I obviously did something right in a previous life or something because ...” She shrugged, and tears pooled in her eyes.

“Hey, none of that or I’m not showing you the house. I’m not taking you inside our house for the first time with tears streaming down your face.”

“They’re happy tears. And if you think this is bad, just wait until you see the state I’ll be in on our wedding day.”

Placing a hand behind her head, I pulled her into my chest. Not so much to comfort her, but so that she wouldn't see the secret I held inside, written all over my face.

CHAPTER 25



Daisy chatted excitedly about our new house the whole time after we left the property, until we had made it back to the main road. She was so wrapped up in the thrill of having a property in Ireland for us to live in that we'd almost made it to her parents' place before she noticed.

"Are we going to my parents' house?"

Clutching the steering wheel tighter, I made a silent prayer that she wouldn't object to the other huge risk I had taken. Schooling my face, I glanced quickly away from the road to look at her. "I thought we should pop in and let you show them your ring before you lose it. You always take your rings off when you wash your hands."

"I'm never taking it off," she assured me. My heart squeezed when she held her hand out toward the windshield and wiggled her hand until the sunlight caught the cut of the diamond on her ring. The gem made little glittery patterns inside the roof of the car and her excited eyes scanned the tiny shards of light. "It's absolutely gorgeous, Jamie," she gushed. "And it's exactly the kind of ring I'd have chosen for myself ... the diamond could have been a wee bit smaller, but I can live with it," she joked, before she stretched over and kissed my cheek.

Fortunately, we reached her parents' house and Roslin opened the front door as if she'd been waiting to pounce on us. Daisy opened the passenger door before I'd had the chance to cut the engine. I used the moment to catch a deep breath to calm my nerves. As I sat watching the love of my life show her mom her engagement ring, I briefly wondered if she would reject my plan to marry me so soon after I'd proposed to her. Shoving my insecurities aside, I climbed out of the car and made my way over to Daisy.

When we entered the house, the first thing she noticed was how groomed Dermot appeared.

"Oh, Da, are you going to see your bank manager or something? What's with the clean shave and the hair gel?" she asked. "If I didn't know any better, I'd say you'd been to the barbershop."

"Since when did I raise you to insult your father," her dad teased back.

Daisy chuckled. "I'm serious. Ma, will you look at him? If I didn't know how much he dotes on you, I'd say he had a floozy on the side."

Roslin laughed and slapped a hand on her daughter's shoulder. "Don't be daft, it's sowing season, Daisy. By the time your da is done ploughing the fields, he's hardly the energy needed to plough me, never mind another woman."

"Ma!" she exclaimed. I let out a hearty laugh. "That's a filthy thing to say," Daisy snapped as she scolded her mom.

"I'm filthy? You should see your da when he gets back after a day out in the fields."

"I love you, Roslin," I stated, totally enthralled by how she and Dermot took great delight in yanking peoples' chains.

“Well, that might be so, but there’ll be no mother and daughter action in this house,” Roslin retorted.

“What am I going to do with you two?” Daisy asked with her hands on her hips, as if she was the parent scolding her children.

“Now in all fairness, Daisy, you started her off with that comment about cheating,” her father replied.

“Right, that’s it, we’re out of here. We only stopped by to show you both my ring. Now that we’ve done that, I’m going to find out what’s happening at the pub.” She turned and looked at her mom. “Did Poppy tell you there’s a wedding function there later?”

“So I heard. Anyone we know?”

“You know what, Ma? I was so focused on it being perfect, I never thought to ask.”

“I think I might know them,” Dermot mused, and Daisy shook her head.

“Da, you think you know everybody in Dublin, but let me tell you, you don’t.”

“Actually, come to think of it, I really do know them. Well, I know her more than him.” Dermot tapped his chin and looked thoughtful. It took everything I had not to crack up laughing at him.

“Who is it then, smart arse?” Daisy goaded. Roslin and I exchanged glances and although I was grinning, every nerve in my body vibrated as my heart pounded wildly inside my chest.

“It’s you, Daisy. It’s yours and Jamie’s wedding.”

My girl chuckled and shook her head. “Yeah, like Jamie could pull something like that off without me knowing.” She

stole a glance at me and did a double take. “Tell me he’s joking,” she ordered. I guessed my face must have shown my concern by the shocked look on her face.

I shook my head and slid my hand around her waist. “I can’t. I’d never joke about this,” I whispered in her ear. She leaned back to take me in and the look on her face was priceless. “You already said yes, so,” I shrugged. “I figured since I was bringing you home...”

For a few beats my girl stood looking speechless before she laughed. “Ah, good one. You almost had me there. Is it the first of April?” she asked, like she’d considered the likelihood of us all fooling her, and figuring it was too ridiculous to contemplate.

“Belle,” Roslin called out and her youngest sister appeared at the door. Dressed in a terry cloth robe, she had her hair styled in an updo with little daisy flowers threaded through her hair.

“Yep? How exciting is this?” Belle gushed, smiling excitedly toward her big sister.

My girl’s eyes darted from me to her dad, then to Roslin and back to me. “Feck me. You’re all serious!” she cried out. “Where is it?”

“Is that yes?” I asked, praying I hadn’t overshot the mark and read how I thought she’d react wrongly.

“Do I have a choice?” she asked, still clearly stunned.

Cradling her head, I pulled her to my chest. “Maybe we need a few minutes?” I said. Her parents followed Belle out of the living room door. I crooked a finger under her chin and lifted her gaze to see me.

“Is this too much?”

“Yes ... no, I mean it’s an ultra-romantic gesture. How can we do this? We’ve no license to get married,” she wondered.

“Baby, everything’s taken care of. Father Mathews, the priest that christened you, is waiting at the chapel for us. I got in touch with the city’s registrar and arranged a special license. All you need to do is sign it and he can marry us. But—I can see how stunned you are by all of this and now I realize how controlling it might look.”

“You’re not controlling at all. This shows me how much you love me, that you can’t wait another minute for me to be your wife,” she replied, as her serious eyes searched my face.

“Then what’s the problem?” I asked, frowning.

“I think I just need a minute to soak it all in, Jamie. If I’m honest, I’m completely blown away that you would take care of all this for me. I’m just trying to absorb that a few days ago we got engaged on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.”

“Don’t forget the Italian Stallion that hit on you or drunk Paddy and Bernie,” I added to make light of the shock of it all for her.

“That romantic cabin and all that happened there too,” she agreed. “Then there’s what you did, not even an hour ago. We’re getting married and we own a gorgeous five-bedroom house in one of the poshest parts of Dublin.”

“So, at the risk of sounding pushy. Are you agreeing to marry me today?”

“Of course, I will. But Jamie, I don’t have a dress or anything—”

“Yes, you do,” Belle shouted from the other side of the door. “Everyone’s waiting in Ma’s bedroom to doll you up and make you look presentable.”

“Are you all listening on the other side of the door?” Daisy asked, sounding annoyed.

“I wasn’t listening,” Dermot called out. “I was only here in case you gave your mother a heart attack by saying no. She’s been planning this shindig for weeks.”

Daisy started laughing and nodding as tears filled her eyes. “Don’t you dare cry. Someone’s bound to take a picture of us going into the chapel and it’ll be plastered all over social media,” I teased, and she laughed.

“Then I better go and see what they have planned for me. But I’m telling you now, if it’s one of those big poofy dresses, I’ll be getting married in jeans.”

CHAPTER 26



Our formal Irish wedding ceremony was as traditional as I had expected it would be ... apart from when my girl made the priest change the word obey in the vows to cherish. It was then that I knew for sure Daisy was fully invested because despite me springing the wedding on her, she had still had the presence of mind to voice her personal slant on her promise to me. As for me, I'd been so sure about our future that I'd been talking to my own childhood priest via zoom as I'd planned the wedding.

Daisy looked a vision as we attended the full, high Catholic mass, dressed in a feminine, sheer Boho-style, chiffon and silk, ivory dress. The head band on her veil was a delicate hair band of daisies, blue forget-me-nots, and were the perfect accompaniment for my blonde-haired girl.

Poppy, Belle and Roslin had come up trumps when it came to knowing Daisy's taste in bridal wear. My girl had mildly freaked out when she saw Poppy was present for the wedding party and not at the pub like she'd said she was. But she was reassured by the fact that a childhood school friend and wedding planner, Lorraine Masters, had everything under control.

I'd given Roslin the wedding rings I'd chosen for safe keeping beforehand and these had been passed on when the time came to my nephews, Ryan and Nick, who stood as my best men. Poppy and Belle were naturally Daisy's bridesmaids.

My sister, Catrina, bawled her eyes out for most of the ceremony, and at one point Dermot, like a true gentleman, came to her rescue when he offered her his handkerchief. I had to smile at the face he pulled when she tried to give it back, and I figured that Nick had seen this as well when the loud "Eww," echoed throughout the otherwise silent, vaulted ceiling of the chapel.

"Jesus," Ryan muttered to Nick, and Roslin shot him a glare—trust Ryan to use blasphemy inside the house of God.

With no further mishaps and the ceremony at a close, Father Mathews said, "You may now kiss your bride." My bandmates went wild, cheering loudly from the back row of the chapel. Daisy's two old aunties and Dermot's uncle looked petrified when they glanced back and saw the three scraggy rock stars and their partners all waving at us from their seats.

Cradling Daisy's head, I looked into her eyes and whispered, "I love you, Mrs. Fontaine," before I kissed my gorgeous new wife.



WHEN WE GATHERED UPSTAIRS at the pub, Daisy had to fight her natural instinct to take over the event.

"Geez, Louise," Poppy said to Daisy. "Give yourself a break. It's your fecking wedding day." It was the second time

Daisy had asked a question about the food for the evening reception party since we'd arrived in Daisy's apartment.

"I never got to invite anyone," my wife complained, after Poppy walked away.

"Yep, you did. Only you didn't know anything about it," Belle said.

"Who did you all invite?" Daisy asked, frowning.

"All my flatmates from London, all Poppy's too. Let me see ... our friends from here. And..." She tapped her fingers against her lips like she was deep in thought, and I saw a wicked glint in her eye. "Then there are all your ex-boyfriends, Maria and Frances of course and all your other girlfriends... oh, Archie, Seamus and Ronan as well. Jamie only wanted his family and bandmates, their wives, and girlfriends.

"Archie, Seamus and Ronan?" she repeated, and her face softened. Daisy had a special place in her heart for those three old regulars from her bar. "How many in total?" she responded, ignoring the ex-boyfriends comment Belle had slipped in to goad her sister.

"Twenty-six for the meal and a hundred and twenty in the evening... well that's how many are invited. But who knows what could happen if word gets out that Jamie and the band are all here."

"And what's the entertainment for later?" Daisy asked.

"What else? We're having a Ceilidh of course," I chimed in. "What do you want to dance to, baby?"

"Did last New Year's not teach you anything?" Daisy asked, chuckling because it was a wild New Year's party.

“It taught me I need to keep a closer eye on my sister with your horny barman, Terry.”

“Oh. My. God. Right!” she exclaimed. “They haven’t seen one another since the New Year’s party?”

“Not in the flesh,” Nick chipped in, coming over to join the conversation. “But I’m sure I’ve heard them sexting.”

“Fuck, Nick, that’s gross,” I chipped in, to the image he’d lodged in my head about my sister.

“I know, at her age as well,” he mock judged, and shook his head in disgrace.

“I meant you listening,” I joked. “You need to find a woman to hang with. Only a loser would live vicariously through their mother,” I joked.

“Unc, you’re a sick man,” Nick retorted, frowning as he tried not to laugh. “That’s your sister you’re talking about.”

“And your mother,” I countered with a wink.

“And you’re both in bad taste talking about Catrina like this,” Daisy remarked, putting us both in our place.

“Your Auntie Daisy’s right. Drop the eavesdropping and spreading rumors about your mom and Terry sexting.”

Nick squinted at Daisy. “I have one hot auntie...” but before he could finish what he was saying Catrina chimed in.

“Nicolas, that is a lie. We do not sext. What the hell are you going around telling people? What you heard that night was Terry with a cold. His chest was wheezy, that’s all.”

“Yeah, mom, you said that at the time and here we are almost six months later and you’re still protesting his innocence... and he’s had that wheeze more than once. You

know what they say about those that protest too much,” he replied with a wink. Catrina swiped him upside the head and Nick backed away with his arms in the air. “I’m out of here. I think Ryan needs a hand with something,” he muttered.

“Believe me, there are things Ryan doesn’t need a hand with from anyone,” Belle replied in another double entendre.

Daisy’s eyes flared at her sister’s remark. “Bejesus, there’s something in the water with all this fecking hormonal honesty flying around.” I chuckled and slipped an arm around her waist. Belle and Catrina followed Nick downstairs leaving Daisy and I alone.

“Talking about hormones,” I whispered close to her ear. “Mine are running rampant looking at you in this dress. Is it bad I want to dirty it?”

“Jamie, you were born wanting to dirty things,” Daisy replied dryly.

“I think my wife knows me too well,” I teased as I drew her closer for a kiss.

“But I love that you want to dirty my dress,” she whispered back, as her eyes glittered with mischief.

“You know what I think, Mrs. Fontaine?” I muttered close to her ear.

“No. We’re not having a quickie before the wedding dinner,” she replied, as if she read my mind.

“Well, that’s promising,” I offered back. It wasn’t an out and out no. Just that I need to wait until after.

“I can’t believe I’m Mrs. Jamie Fontaine,” she said abruptly, as her eyes focused on mine.

Getting serious, I swept my hands to either side of her head. Cradling her face in them, I took a moment to let my eyes tick over her beautiful face. Then I pressed my lips to hers in a closed-mouthed kiss and leaned back to catch her gaze again.

“Since the moment you spoke those first words to me, I’ve never been able to get enough of this smart, sassy mouth of yours. I love that you tell me no ... that you put me in my place. Don’t ever let my fame change you, Daisy O’Don ... Fontaine,” I corrected myself and smiled.

“What would you have done had I said no to all of this today?” she asked.

“But you didn’t. My gut drove me to do what I did, because I couldn’t have gone another year living the way we had. Not with the connection I feel we have. I know you find being with me feels weird sometimes, but believe me Daisy, I feel like a very lucky man having you as my wife.”

EPILOGUE



“Uncle Eugene is as sharp as ever on that harmonica,” Daisy said as she stood, hugging a glass of champagne and tapping her feet to the fast-paced Irish folk tune the old timers were playing.

“Looks like Catrina and Terry are out in the open,” Dermot mused as he came over beside us and stood watching them. “Before you know it, they’ll all be following you and living in Dublin, Jamie.”

“I’d love it, if they did that,” I admitted. “Nick’s off to college for the next three years in the US though. Cat wouldn’t leave him over there to fend for himself. It doesn’t matter how far away he’ll be in the states, she would never leave the country until he’s finished school at least.”

“She’s going to be torn. Ryan’s going to be in London for three years, so either way, she’ll have one son in the US and one in the UK as it stands now,” he reminded me.

“True. It would make my life easier if she could move to Dublin. At least I wouldn’t feel guilty about leaving her alone, which is what’s going to happen when Nick leaves for college.”

“Don’t underestimate the power of love,” Dermot replied, nodding at Cat and Terry again. I had to admit they looked

very cozy together. “Oh, and it looks like Nick might have found someone to play with,” Dermot said.

Daisy’s dad nodded his head toward Nick who had Maria, Daisy’s friend, sitting on his knee. “Isn’t she a little old for him?” Daisy asked, with a confused look on her face.

“Believe it or not Nick’s the more mature of the twins,” I said and chuckled. “Did I really just say that about my nephew?” he joked. “Nick’s more like me than Ryan, if he likes what he sees, age wouldn’t come into it.”

“Oh, and by that I take it that you’ve been with older women?” Daisy piped up with a curious look in her eyes.

“You really want to talk about this on our wedding day?” I asked. “What I meant is, if the chemistry is right, age shouldn’t be a factor.”

“I’d quit right there, Jamie, because I think you’re digging a bit of a hole,” Dermot said coming to my rescue.

“Thanks, Da,” my wife said in a clipped tone. “What are you doing here, anyway? Are you everyone’s chaperone this evening? Where’s Ma?”

“She’s over there acting out her fantasy of being a band groupie,” he said through a laugh as he nodded toward my bandmates. Daisy’s mom was sitting between Fingers and Hogs lapping up Hogs attention.

I laughed along with him. “I’d be careful if I were you, Dermot. Hogs has a penchant for mature women.”

“I’m secure enough in what we’ve got to let her hang with them for a while, she’s a good girl,” he said beaming with pride.

“That’s what I thought about your daughter and look how I’ve corrupted her,” I replied.

Dermot glanced from me to Daisy and back to his wife. For the first time he looked a little unsure of his trust. “Maybe I’ll just go and ask her to dance. She loves dancing,” he muttered.

As he wandered over to the table where my band was sitting, Daisy swatted my shoulder. “You are a bad man, winding my da up like that,” she said through a giggle.

“And you’re a bad woman, who once was a good girl until you met me, right? Would I lie to my wife?” I asked, giving her a serious stare. “I’m telling you, that guy would have your mom’s panties at her ankles before she could blink, if he thought he’d get away with it. There’s a lot about my band you’ve yet to learn, baby. Although I love the guys to bits, I wouldn’t trust any one of them with women.”

“Not even Paddy?” she asked with her eyebrows up in her bangs.

“Especially not Paddy. Why do you think Bernie’s with him all the time? She knows her man inside out.”

Daisy frowned and the concerned look on her face compelled me to reassure her. “Don’t look so worried. You will never need to feel concerned about me and other women. I’m a reformed man; a one-woman man since I found you, and believe me, Daisy Fontaine, you are my world. I’m besotted with you.”

“Right,” she replied with a glazed look in her beautiful big eyes. “Dance with me?”

The music was a fast jig as the band led our guests in an eightsome reel. However, that didn’t seem to matter as I led

my wife onto the dance floor. In contrast to all the skipping and cheering around us, I pulled my wife's body close, and for the following five minutes we slowly turned, toe to toe in circles.

The moment Daisy nuzzled her face into my neck I heaved a deep, cleansing sigh, and instantly felt at peace with the world as I held her tight to my chest.

A tap on my shoulder interrupted us. "Guys, you're going to want to see this," Poppy stated, excitedly. Daisy broke away from me when her sisters each grabbed a hand.

"Shouldn't I throw my bouquet first?" Daisy asked.

"I'd just give it to Cat and Terry. Did you know he's handing his notice in and moving over to live with her in the US of A?" Poppy replied.

"No shit!" I said, as I felt oddly happy about the news. "Well, I'm happy for her, if that's what she wants."

"Come on, Jamie," Belle shouted as she tugged my wife away from me and headed for the stairs that led from the function room to the bar downstairs.

Following the girls through the bar, Poppy reached for the bolts on the outside door, and for a minute I expected a street full of fans like we'd found the previous time when I'd unlocked the same bolt at the turn of the year.

"Oh. My. God," Daisy gasped and covered her mouth in shock. I immediately stood shoulder to shoulder with her and stared out into the street.

Thick, fluffy, white snowflakes poured down from the sky like confetti, and it was reminiscent of the snowstorm that had led me to be diverted to Dublin that night more than a year before.

“Well, on that note, Mrs. Fontaine, we’re leaving right now. I don’t relish the thought of my precious new bride arriving at home for the first time on the back of a snowplow or tractor.”

“We’re staying at our house tonight?” Daisy squealed with delight and my heart swelled and clenched in my chest because I couldn’t wait to spend the rest of my life with the girl from Dublin who stole my heart when I got stuck without a bed for the night and found love when I’d least expected it.

The End

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Writing came relatively later in life for K.L. Shandwick after a challenge by a friend led to The Everything Trilogy and now she loves creating new storylines.

Her characters have flaws and she hopes this helps the connection between them and her readers. K.L. enjoys the journeys the stories take her on during the creation process and each has his or her own voice. She also doesn't use prepared outlines for her stories preferring the characters to take their own direction as the story progresses. These days K.L. lives in the Yorkshire countryside and writes full-time.

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K.L. also writes contemporary romance in the name
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