



Rocky

CHRISTMAS

EMMA BRAY

Rocky Christmas

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One



Rocky

I take a sip of my club soda as I watch the boxing match on the big screen.

While I'd love to have a beer, that's not what I'm here for. When I'm scheduled to fight in a match, I go through a grueling process of abstinence. I watch my diet. No processed or refined foods. Only healthy, whole foods. No alcohol. No fucking—not that there's been any fucking for me for years. I have two hands to sate my needs with, but I even abstain from self-gratification before a match.

My trainers insist that a strict diet with no drugs of any kind, including alcohol, and no sex helps build up the testosterone needed to really channel a good fight. I don't know how much I believe all that shit, but I do know I want to make sure my body is a well-honed machine when fight time comes around, so I follow their advice.

I'm not much for heavy drink anyway. I prefer to keep a clear head about myself, but a good beer is hard to beat every now and then. After this match, I'll have me one, I silently promise myself as I take another swig of the soda.

“Ooh, that's gotta hurt,” the guy to my right says, his eyes glued to the screen. I look back up at the TV as Riker delivers a right hook to his opponent.

I grunt in agreement. My brother sure knows his stuff when it comes to boxing.

I'm glad I was able to talk him into taking it up instead of watching him waste away up on the top of that mountain he lives on. He's only in his early thirties—like me—but he went into the military when we were younger—unlike me. He's never told me what happened over there. All I know is that he came back a different man. He won't talk to me. He won't talk to reporters. Hell, he won't talk to anyone.

Before I turned him on to boxing, he used to just sit up in his house secluded away from everyone, brooding and doing fuck who knows what.

He's got a lot of rage in him. Anyone can tell that by watching him box. You don't box the way he does without having something to work out. At least he has an outlet to channel his frustration into.

I like a good boxing match too, but my strengths lie in MMA. I like the variety. I like the combativeness of it, and while I don't have the aggression and internal turmoil my brother does, I have a passion for the sport.

Riker KO's his opponent a minute later, and pride fills my chest for my brother. The ref holds Riker's hand up, declaring him the champion of the match. My brother accepts the applause, but he doesn't look jubilant like most victors of a fight do. He's just as stoic as usual, with the same grim, no-nonsense expression he's worn since he came back from overseas.

I plop down some money on the bar and stand. Now that the match is over, I can go home and rest up for my own match.

I'm mentally calculating the time difference between my brother and me so that I can figure out when to give him a call to congratulate him on his latest win when I turn around and stop dead in my tracks.

My eyes light on a mass of fiery red hair that tumbles down a slender back. Those red locks almost touch the top of

the woman's ass, and I stare at them mesmerized. The locks are full and wild, curling out every which way. I've never been the kind of guy who gets off on hair, but this woman's hair is fucking beautiful. My fingers twitch at my sides. I have the sudden urge to spear my hands into that hair and see if it feels as soft and silky as it looks.

The curls bounce as the girl tips her head back and laughs before she hops off the barstool beside her grinning friend, a brunette who I hardly notice out of the corner of my eyes because my gaze is pinned on the pretty little redhead.

She can't be much more than five feet tall, and when she looks in my direction, my chest tightens like I've been punched in the gut when I look into the prettiest pair of green eyes I've ever seen. They're big and innocent-looking and framed by thick, dark lashes.

I know fucking is on my list of prohibited activities, but I'd break every rule in the book for a chance to get my dick wet by this pretty little redhead, but it's not even about that. I'm not just looking at her in lust, though I'd be lying if I said I'm not practically salivating at the thought of burying myself inside what I already know is going to be the tightest little pussy in the world.

No, it's more than that. I feel something I've never felt before surge inside me when I look at her. I don't just want to stick my dick inside her. I want to wrap her up in my arms and hold her close to me forever. I want to crawl inside her head and learn everything there is to know about her.

I blink when I realize I would be happy just to talk to her. I want to get to know her. There's something about her.

I know that if I ever did get inside her, there's no way I'd ever be able to let her go.

My head should be in the game. I should be mentally prepping myself for my fight tomorrow. A lot of big players have bet money on me. I know that. I don't want to let them down. I don't want to let myself down.

But right now, the only thing I can think about is the pretty little redhead across the bar and finding out what her name is.

I take another sip of my club soda before I plop it back down on the bar. I grimace. Fuck, I wish that was a beer.

I might can abstain from alcohol for the sake of the match, but there's no way I'm going to leave this bar without finding out who this tiny angel is.



Holly

Cara's eyes widen as they focus on something behind me.

My laugh dies off, and I turn, my own eyes widening when I see what she sees.

The biggest, burliest man I've ever seen in my entire life is stalking over toward us. A thick, dark brown beard adorns the bottom half of his face. His shirt is molded to the ridges of muscles straining against his T-shirt like it's all the fabric can do to contain all that manliness.

Even though it's winter in Denver, this man is wearing short sleeves like he laughs in the face of the cold weather. Tats decorate his arms.

He's a powerhouse of masculinity.

Good lord, what does this man do? Weight-lift cars?

All that muscle must be more than enough to protect him against winter's chill, but I'm wrapped up in a turtleneck sweater. I'm also wearing a big, fluffy coat too. I stay cold all the time, but this man...something tells me that his big body is like a furnace.

I'm proved correct when he finally stops right in front of me—so close to me that there's scarcely an inch left between our bodies. I tip my head up to look at the giant towering over me. I'm barely five foot two, so I'm short even compared to

the average person, but this guy is way above average. He has to be well over six feet tall, making me appear even teenier and tinier than usual.

His eyes are a deep brown, like the finest chocolate.

They bore down into me in a way that sends all the blood rushing to my cheeks.

His eyes have taken mine captive. I couldn't look away from them if I tried.

I vaguely register Cara murmuring something, but I can't make out what she's saying over the roaring in my ears. It's like this man has caused everything around me to dim.

The man's eyes rove over my face as if he's trying to commit all of it to memory before one of his giant hands reach out to gently touch my hair.

His lips part slightly, and my breath hitches.

"What's your name, sweetheart?" His voice is like a big rumble of thunder, and it sends little shock waves rolling through me.

"Holly." I don't even contemplate not answering him because I'm suddenly dying to know who he is too.

I don't even have to prompt him for his own name.

"Holly," he tastes my name on his lips and nods his head in approval.

My blush deepens, pleasure unfurling deep in my belly at the look of approval on his face.

"I'm Rocky," that deep voice rumbles again.

"Rocky," I repeat his name like he did mine, and his eyes close for a moment as if he's savoring the sound of it.

"Say it again," he rumbles.

My cheeks flame even brighter, but I give him what he wants.

"Rocky."

A shudder goes through his big frame. “I’ve never liked the sound of my name so much,” he growls before he pins me in his intense gaze again.

He takes a deep breath before he says, his eyes never leaving mine, “I’m not good with subterfuge, Holly. I’m not one of those guys who’s going to dance around what he wants and ease into it. I see what I want, and I go after it.”

My heart beats against my ribcage as the intensity in his eyes deepens.

“When I saw you across the room just now...” He shakes his big head before he continues. “I don’t know what happened, but fuck, I want you.”

My breath catches.

He rushes on, “I know I’m coming on strong, and I don’t want to freak you out, but I don’t see any point in beating around the bush. I’m going to make you mine.”

The way he says *mine* comes out as a growl, and my heart flutters at the possessive way he’s looking at me—like I already belong to him.

This is crazy. I don’t know anything about this guy, and I’ve never wanted to belong to someone before. A monologue like this coming from any other man would undoubtedly infuriate me. It would come off as cocky and arrogant, but it doesn’t come off that way with this man.

I get the sense that this isn’t just some line he uses, that he’s speaking from his soul.

And I’m loving the sound of him making me *his*.

It calls to me on a primal level. Even though he’s the biggest, scariest-looking man I’ve ever seen, I also somehow feel completely safe in his presence—like nothing could ever hurt me.

When I don’t speak, he runs a hand through his hair, a look of regret and self-loathing on his face.

“Fuck, I’ve just scared the shit out of you.”

Frustration pours off him. He looks like he wishes he could beat himself up.

I instinctively want to soothe him. I lay a hand on his big arm, my fingers trembling atop his muscles.

He instantly stills, his eyes flicking up to mine and his chest heaving up and down at my touch. His nostrils flare, but I keep my hand on his arm. I feel like I'm calming a big beast. It both humbles me and empowers me at the same time. Seeing what I do to him almost makes me dizzy.

"You haven't scared me." I shake my head. "It's just...no one has ever said these things to me before."

He visibly relaxes before he covers my hand with his own. "Let me get to know you." His voice is gruff, and it scrapes over me like sandpaper. "We can go as slow as you want. I just want to spend some time with you, get to know you."

He fingers my hair again, a look of wonder in his eyes. "You're the most beautiful little thing I've ever seen," he murmurs.

My heart races again. He's looking at me like I'm the most precious thing he's ever seen. No one has ever looked at me this way before.

As the senator's daughter, I haven't dated much. I've always been so cautious. I've always had to be careful of who I'm seeing with so it doesn't look bad on my father or his career. I've never dated anyone who wasn't vetted and approved by him. My whole life has been planned out around my dad's career.

I've been complacent. I've never done anything just for me in all of my twenty-one years.

As Rocky's eyes bore down into mine, I realize that I'm tired of living that way. I want to do something for me.

I want Rocky. He's going to be that something just for me.

I'm tired of only dating the guys my dad sets me up with because their connections will further his career. I want to be

with someone who wants me just for *me* and not what a connection with my father can do for them.

Rocky doesn't have a clue who I am. That much is obvious.

And that's why I'm not going to tell him my last name. I don't want to ruin this before it even begins.

My pulse races as I do the first thing I've ever done just for myself. "I want to get to know you, too."

Two



Rocky

I 'm over the moon. I thought for sure I had fucked things up when I came on too strong with Holly last night, but that wasn't the case.

Amazingly enough, absolute angel that she is, she said she wanted to get to know me too.

I couldn't believe it. We slid into a private booth at the back of the bar and got to know one another all night.

All we did was talk, and she let me hold her hand and touch her curls, blushing every time I touched her. Fuck, I love the way her cheeks heated under my gaze, and maybe I shouldn't have stared at her so much, but I couldn't tear my eyes away from her.

She's the most perfect thing I've ever seen, and after speaking with her, I'm convinced she's the most perfect woman in the world—period.

She's twenty-one and has already gotten a degree in art in college. She likes to paint, though she never told me that's actually what she does for a living.

In fact, she never really confirmed to me what she does or her last name. Any time I asked questions like that, she changed the subject, and I let her because maybe she has a bit of a past she's ashamed of. Hell, who doesn't? Although I can't imagine this angel ever doing anything to be ashamed of,

I don't care. I don't care who she was before now. I don't care if she's a criminal on the run.

I'll take care of her. I'll protect her. All that matters now is that she's *mine*.

If she's in some sort of trouble, I'm going to fix it for her. If she doesn't have a job, that's fine. I'll take care of her.

But I sense that there's more to it than that because the clothing that she was wearing hints at wealth. She didn't look like a down-on-her-luck girl.

No, she looks like Daddy's little princess.

My cock hardens at that thought. I'll be her daddy if that's what she wants. I've never been into any kinky shit like that, but fuck me if I don't love the thought of being her daddy.

I'll be whoever she needs me to be, *whatever* she needs me to be.

It was pure heaven talking to her last night. We mostly talked about silly things like her favorite foods and TV shows. Most of our conversation was completely juvenile, yet I couldn't be happier.

I hate that I didn't get a chance to taste her lips last night or to get her number. Time got away from us, and when she noticed how late it was, she jumped up in a rush and told me she had to go. When I asked for her number, she gave me some spiel about how she had lost her phone and was in the process of getting a new one, only further solidifying my theory that she's into something and needs help. I don't mind being her hero.

She assured me she'd meet me at the pub again tomorrow night, but fuck, I'm going crazy. I don't know if I can wait that long.

I've got to get through this match tonight, and then it's going to be another torturous day until I get to see my sweetheart's beautiful little face again.

Every time I close my eyes I see her green eyes, prettier than the finest emeralds. I dreamt of her all night and woke up

making love to my pillow. The sad part is I didn't stop. I kept humping it like a rabid dog in heat until I nutted all over my sheets.

I've never been this hard up for a woman before. Holly is it for me. I know it deep in my bones.

She's the only woman I'm ever going to be inside of again. The only one I'm ever going to *want* for the rest of my life.

I don't know what's going on with her, but I vow to myself that the next time I see her, I'm damn sure going to find out, and then she'll never have to worry about anything again because Daddy is going to make it all better.

And then I'm going to take her home with me and worship her for the rest of our lives.



Rocky

I win the fight, but I'm not as elated as I normally would be. Every thump of my heart beats out her name.

Holly, Holly, Holly.

She's all I can focus on.

It's killing me that I don't have her phone number. I don't know where she lives. I don't even know her last name so that I can look these things up.

I have no way of getting in contact with her, and fuck, I don't know if I'm going to be able to make it until tomorrow to see her. I may very well die before then.

My chest is tight, and my entire body aches all over. I'm physically hurting without her.

How is this possible when I just met her last night? How is it possible for me to need her so badly already?

I think I've always needed her. I just didn't know it until I laid eyes on her, and now that I've seen her, there's no getting her out from underneath my skin.

Still, I try to get through the night as best I can. One of the big players who bet money on me is so thrilled with my win that he's invited me to dinner with him tonight.

Sitting through a dinner with some rich blood is the last thing on my mind right now, but my manager insists that it would be considered a slight not to do it. Since this guy is reportedly a senator for the state of Colorado, I figure it's best if I don't go offending the big guy.

Even though I'd rather go home and jack off to thoughts of a certain green-eyed, red-headed siren, I throw on a pair of jeans and a long-sleeved button-up shirt for this dinner.

That's as far as I'm going. I'm not wearing slacks or a suit. That's just not me. He's lucky he's getting this much because when I'm not in the ring, I'm usually wearing sweatshirts and joggers. Jeans and a button-up is as dressed up as I ever get.

The driver pulls up to the senator's house. That's right. The senator had his driver come get me even though I'm perfectly capable of driving myself.

I'm wealthy enough with the winnings I make from being an MMA heavyweight champion to afford my own driver if I wanted one, but I don't like to flaunt my wealth that way. Besides, I like driving myself.

I take in the classic brick Tudor-style home. Its turrets and arches bring to mind medieval castles. I'd expect nothing less of the auspicious senator.

Fuck, might as well get this over with.

I let out a heavy sigh as I take the few steps up to the stairway to the huge double doors.

The senator himself greets me at the door with a wide smile. I have a polite greeting of my own ready on my lips, but it dies in my throat when my eyes flick behind him and spot a mane of familiar gorgeous red locks tumbling around thin shoulders.

My entire body tenses. I know those curls. I watched them curl around my fingers enough last night that I'd know them anywhere.

The girl looks up, and those green eyes that I dreamt of all night widen in panicked recognition when they meet mine.

My heart leaps in my chest and then plummets.

It's Holly.

My Holly.

I already know what's going on the moment I see her.

She's the senator's daughter.

Fuck me.

Three



Holly

I stare into Rocky's shocked eyes with horror. He stares back at me with a stony expression on his face.

My cheeks burn. He's probably upset to find out who I really am, and this is why I don't tell people who I am.

Because they're afraid of my father.

It's common knowledge that the senator keeps his daughter on a tight rein.

"There's my prizefighter!" my father opens his arms wide in a gesture of welcome to Rocky.

My cheeks burn even brighter when I hear the way my father addresses him like he's a horse that just won him money in a race. Of course, I'm sure that's probably all he is to my father. My father doesn't regard people he considers beneath him as people. They *are* livestock in his eyes, a means to an end.

Panic flares in my chest when Rocky's eyes stay pinned on me.

My father finally notices where Rocky's eyes are and flicks his over to me with a frown.

Oh God, my dad *cannot* find out that I know Rocky because then he'll find out about how I went to that pub downtown, and he'll be furious. It doesn't matter that I'm

twenty-one, and I can legally do what I want. As long as I'm the senator's daughter, I don't have that freedom.

The only reason my father doesn't keep me constantly under his thumb anymore is because I've proved myself trustworthy enough to fly under the radar, so he doesn't keep security on me as much as he used to.

"Holly, why don't you go tell your mother our company has arrived?" Dad phrases the command like a question, but I know it's not really a question. It's an order.

My eyes flick over to Rocky. He's looking at me again, his jaw hard. He shoots a scathing glare at my father—which I'm thankful Dad doesn't see.

My heart does a little flip in my chest. Rocky obviously doesn't like my dad speaking to me that way, but I'm praying that Rocky doesn't say anything to Dad and let on that we know each other.

My father *cannot* know. He'll nip what this thing between Rocky and me is in the bud before it ever begins.

If Rocky even wants anything to do with me anymore. Judging by the look on his face when he walked in and saw me standing here, he might be thinking twice about getting involved with me now that he knows who I am.

Heaviness weighs down my stomach as I go to find my mother and tell her Dad wants us in the dining room.

When Mom and I enter the dining room, Dad and his business partners are sitting at the table with Rocky.

Mom takes her place at the other end of the table across from Dad, and the only seat left vacant is right beside Rocky.

My cheeks heat again. I can't believe my dad would allow me to sit next to a man like Rocky, but I'm secretly thrilled that I get to be close to him again—even if I won't really be able to talk to him.

Rocky's gaze is pinned on me again. He stands as I walk over and pulls out my chair for me.

He's the only man at the table who stands.

He pushes the chair under me, the pad of his thumb brushing gently against my shoulder as he does so, before he takes his seat again.

My dad beams at him approvingly. “Huh, so you’re a fighter with manners,” he comments with amusement, as if he’s shocked that Rocky would have manners just because he’s a fighter or perhaps because he doesn’t run in the same circle Dad and his associates do.

I can tell by the look on Rocky’s face that he’s drawn the same conclusion as me. To his credit, he doesn’t say anything, though. He sits tall and straight and proud, his big shoulders taking up all the space in the room, it seems.

I feel so tiny sitting next to him. My hands shake where I have them clasped together in my lap.

Rocky’s scent wraps around me sensuously. It’s something spicy and fresh and masculine, and I almost feel dizzy with it.

I have to fight the insatiable urge to lean into his chest. I want him to wrap his arms around me while I burrow my head in his chest. These are crazy thoughts, but I can’t help them.

“So, Rocky, huh?” One of Dad’s friends regards Rocky curiously. “Named after Rocky Balboa?”

“My dad was a big fan,” Rocky’s voice rumbles.

“You don’t say,” another of Dad’s friends chimes in.

Rocky doesn’t comment.

My dad and his associates pepper Rocky with questions about the match, about his process and so on.

Rocky answers their questions, but I can tell he’s just being polite. I don’t know why it gives me a rush of relief that he obviously isn’t here because he wants to be. He’s not trying to smooze my dad for a favor.

Apparently, Rocky has never lost a match, and he even has a brother who’s also a fighter, but he’s a boxer and not an MMA fighter like Rocky.

Whatever that means. I don't really follow sports. I suppose that's why I didn't recognize Rocky last night.

I peek a glance at him out of the corner of my eye. How stupid was I to not realize that this man is a fighter? He has "hard" and "tough" written all over him. His muscles are still bulging just as big as they were last night.

I can see them straining underneath his button-up shirt. I expect the buttons to pop free at any moment. Not that the shirt doesn't fit him. It does. It's just his muscles...my god, I've never seen muscles like that on a man before. They look like they can hardly be contained.

I wonder what his bare chest looks like without a shirt on. I feel moisture pool between my legs. I press my thighs together to try to ease the ache that suddenly starts in between my legs.

I can't tell you what we eat. All I know is that I nibble on little bites of food, but I push most of it around on my plate.

It's not that I'm feigning a faint appetite because I can usually eat more than an entire football team and still stay tiny. I just can't focus on food or anything else with Rocky sitting right next to me taking up all the air in the room.

I can't believe this is the same man that I sat across from last night and now here he is in the same room as my parents.

I gasp when I suddenly feel Rocky's big thigh pressed up against mine. I peek a glance at him and see him looking at me out of the corner of his eye. He takes my hand under the table and gives it a little squeeze.

I'm surprised I don't melt into a puddle right there at the dinner table. My face must be as red as a tomato, and my breathing quickens.

I have to get out of here before my dad or someone else notices and comments on it.

I excuse myself from the table and desperately head out of the dining room and over to the balcony off the living room.

I need some fresh air before I explode.

A moment later, I feel a heated presence right behind me before big, muscular arms brace themselves on either side of me on the balcony railing.

My breath catches, already knowing who it is.

I turn to find myself caged in between the balcony railing and Rocky's huge body. I feel the heat emanating off of him, warming me despite winter's chill. His body really is like a furnace. He could warm me better than any fireplace. I feel a flush of warmth course through me right now at his nearness.

"Why didn't you tell me?" his voice rumbles.

I look down. "I didn't want you to think any differently of me."

He tips my chin up with a knuckle under it, forcing me to meet his eyes. His brow is furrowed in confusion. "Why would I think differently of you?"

I let out an exasperated breath. "Because I'm the senator's daughter. My life is micromanaged by my father. He'll never let me be with you. I can't be with anyone *I* choose. He's going to pick whomever I'm with."

A muscle ticks in Rocky's jaw. His eyes glint with anger as he growls stubbornly, "I'd like to see someone try to take you away from me, sweetheart."

My heart thrills at the fierce look in his eyes. He looks like a warrior willing to go to battle for me.

My breath catches even as my stomach drops at his next question. "If you thought we couldn't be together, why did you stay and talk to me last night?"

I lick my lips and answer him honestly. He deserves that much at least. "Because I wanted something for just me, and I can't explain it, but when you came over to me, it was like... there was this pulsing energy between us. I wanted *you* just for *me*. If only for a little while."

It's selfish of me. I don't want him to be a dirty little secret, but I *need* something just for me. I *need* a moment with

him. Just one moment. Then, I'll always have the memory of the one man that I had picked.

The one who had picked me.

Rocky's nostrils flare, and I think I've angered him until he speaks and I find out that he's angry but not *at* me. *For* me.

I don't know that anyone has ever been angry on my behalf, and it fills me with something I can't identify, but it's something that makes my blood rush hot.

Rocky's big hand cups my cheek tenderly. "What have they done to you, sweetheart?" His eyes search mine before he vows, his jaw hardening, "I'm going to get you out of here."

My heart leaps, but then it crashes just as suddenly. I can't allow Rocky to make a scene.

He wraps his arm around my shoulders and tucks me into him as if he plans on striding me back out to the dining room like this to announce that I'm his and he's taking me.

As much as my heart thrills at the thought of that, I know I can't allow that to happen. I may be young and sheltered, but I'm not naïve. I know that my father has dangerous connections. I know that he can be a dangerous man himself. I know that he didn't get to where he is today without breaking the rules, and I don't want to see anything happen to Rocky because of me.

So, I pull away from him. He frowns as he turns to gently take my wrist.

"No," I shake my head at him.

Rocky's brow furrows as his gruff voice rumbles, "You want to be with me, Holly. I want to be with you. Let me take you away from here."

I shake my head again. "I can't. Not like this. Can't we just get to know one another a little bit more?"

Rocky's eyes soften at my plea. "So, you do still want to see me?"

I bite my lip and nod. I know I shouldn't, but god help me, I do. "I do, but no one can know."

It breaks my heart to ask him to stay a secret, and I don't want him to think I'm ashamed of him or anything, but Rocky obviously doesn't take it that way because his lips tip up into a breathtaking smile. "So, you want to sneak around?"

My cheeks flame. It sounds so juvenile when he puts it that way. "I don't know. I want to see you some more. Can we keep meeting up at the pub where no one will see us?"

"Where no one important will see us," he clarifies.

Guilt gnaws at my stomach, but Rocky doesn't look upset with me. In fact, the look on his face is one of understanding.

He sighs and wraps his arms around the small of my back, pulling me close to him. "If that's what you want, sweetheart, then that's what we'll do. For now."

A burst of joy blooms in my heart at the thought of seeing him again. I plant my hands on Rocky's chest as he tips his face down closer to mine. His lips are just a hair's breadth from mine, and I wonder if he's going to kiss me. My lips tingle in anticipation, but his lips never touch mine.

Instead, he groans, "Fuck, I'm dying to taste you, baby, but if I do, I know I'll never make it back to that table."

My entire body is trembling, and it's not from the cold. His heat is branding me through our clothing. My nipples pebble, and I can feel Rocky's huge erection pressing against my stomach. It's no surprise he's just as big there as he is everywhere else.

I take in a shaky breath before I suggest, "Tomorrow night at the pub then?"

A sound like a growl rumbles up out of his big chest before he steps back, every muscle in his body taut like it took everything in him to release me.

He adjusts the bulge in his pants, and my cheeks flame. It's so erotic watching him touch himself down there, knowing that I made him hard like that.

He swipes his thumb along my bottom lip as his eyes bore down into mine with a promise. “Until tomorrow night, sweetheart.”

Four



Rocky

I hate the idea of sneaking around to see my woman like we're teenagers doing something wrong, but I'll do whatever it takes to see my sweetheart. And if this is how she says it has to be, then I'll go along with it—for now.

But make no mistake. There's no way I'm doing this forever. Sooner or later the world is going to know that this little honey is mine.

Fuck her father. I don't give a shit about senators or any of their political bullshit. All I care about is Holly, and if she wants me, then I'll move heaven and earth to make sure we're together.

I don't know what she's so scared of, but it's obvious she's frightened of what her father will do if he finds out she's with me.

I get it. I'm not in the same class level as them. I don't run in the same circles. I was only invited to dinner at his house because I'm this prize mare that won him a lot of money. The man's condescending attitude the entire night grated on my nerves. He and his fuck buddies treated me as if I was a specimen to be studied. Something to be humored and gawked over.

He'd probably die of mortification if he found out that I'm going to be sticking my big, fat cock inside his daughter.

Fuck him. I'm not scared of him. I just need some time to show Holly that she doesn't ever have to be afraid of anything when she's with me. Once I get her on board, I'm taking her. Simple as that.

I might not be as rich as her father, but I've got enough money to keep her in an extravagant lifestyle. She'll never have to do anything if she doesn't want to. Whatever she wants will be hers. I'll do whatever it takes to get it for her.

I'm sitting in the pub thirty minutes before she shows up. It's not that she's late. It's just I'm so impatient to see her again that I'm early.

I sit at the booth drumming my fingers on the table, my eyes never leaving the doorway. My chest tightens every time it swings open, hoping for a glimpse of Holly.

When she finally comes walking through the doorway, looking even prettier than I remember, I jump out of my seat and head over to her. That tightness in my chest finally abates. I can finally breathe again.

She smiles at me shyly as I pull her close to me and lead her over to the booth. I've paid off the waiters to make sure no one sits in any of the tables around us so we can have our privacy, though if I have my way, we won't be here for long.

I'm dying to kiss her, but I still refrain, knowing that once I get my lips on hers, I won't be able to stop, and all we need is to make front page news with me ravaging her in the back of this pub for all the world to see.

While part of me thrills at the thought of claiming her publicly, another possessive part of me balks at the idea of anyone getting to see an inch of her skin. That's for my eyes only. When I finally do claim her, it's going to be just me and her. No one else around us.

"I'm sorry for how my father treated you last night," she says as she slides into the booth.

I sit across from her. I can't stop staring at how beautiful she looks. "Don't apologize for him. It's not your fault, and his

actions are not a reflection on you. I'm used to dealing with men like him."

"Still, I feel bad," she says.

I reach across the table and take her hands in mine. She's so tiny and delicate everywhere. It causes a surge of protectiveness to fill my chest. "Don't," I insist. "It was worth it because I got to see you last night. It's a good thing too because I felt like I was going to die. I didn't know if I could wait another day, sweetheart."

Her cheeks turn pink as she gives me that shy smile again. "I was eager to see you too."

I lift her knuckles to my lips and kiss them reverently because I feel like I'll die if I don't get my lips on her in some way. "Do you want a drink, sweetheart, or can we go ahead and get out of here? I want to take you somewhere we can be alone."

Her lips part, and I see the pulse fluttering in her throat before she shakes her head. "No. I don't care about drinking. I'll go with you."

My heart hammers against my ribcage as I stand and wrap an arm around her, tucking her in close to my side. Anything to get closer to her.

She doesn't pull away as I lead her out of the back of the pub, knowing already that she won't want to be seen going out the front. I doubt anyone who knows her father will be at a place like this, but for just in case. To set her mind at ease. Pretty soon we won't have to do any of this bullshit anyway.

Snow falls as I lead her over to my suburban that's parked out back. I open the door to the passenger side and lift her in. She looks up at me with her big green eyes, snow melting in the fire of her hair.

Her cheeks and nose are pink from the frigid air, and I can't hold back any longer. I wanted to wait until I got her home, but fuck that. I grab the nape of her neck and cover her lips with mine.

Five



Holly

When Rocky kisses me, I forget where we are. All I can focus on is the incredible feeling of his lips sliding against mine. When his tongue pushes into my mouth and twines with mine, it's a good thing I'm sitting down because my entire body turns to jelly.

He fists his hands in my hair as he continues to lean over me and deepens the kiss. My body heats, and I become lost in him.

We're both breathing heavily by the time he pulls back from me. His eyes are dark, and his chest is heaving up and down. "Fuck," he growls, "you're the sweetest thing I've ever tasted. I've got to stop now before I make a mess in my pants."

My cheeks flame at just how dirty what he said is, but I a thrill goes through me at his words that he's so turned on, he can hardly control himself.

He gets in the driver's side and slams the door shut before he turns the engine on and peels out onto the highway. He's driving like a maniac, but I'm not scared. I feel completely safe with him. He glances over at me several times, his eyes darkening with lust and desire, and then he finally reaches over and takes my hand, holding it in his as if he can't bear to not touch me.

Neither of us speaks. The energy crackling between us is so hot and heavy it's almost suffocating. I can't even appreciate the picturesque, snowy mountains as Rocky drives us higher and higher.

All I can do is sit there with my pulse fluttering wildly as I clench my legs together to try to ease the ache that's taking root deep inside me.

An ache that I know only Rocky can ease.

He finally throws the car into park in front of a large contemporary-styled mountain home, but I don't even have time to admire it either because he's out of his door in a flash and opening mine to pull me up into his arms. He holds me chimp style with my arms and legs wrapped around him, and I feel his bulge lined up right against my throbbing clit. I've never had sex before or felt a man's hardness pressed against me *there*, but it sends tingles shooting throughout my body.

I instinctively move my hips up and down, seeking more of the sensation.

Ohhh.

My toes practically curl in pleasure in my boots at the delicious friction generated between our bodies through our clothing.

Rocky stills me with a hand on my hip, and I look up to him with flaming cheeks.

"I'm sorry," I whisper, embarrassed and afraid that I've done something wrong.

He chuckles in disbelief and shakes his head. "You have nothing to apologize for, sweetheart. You're not doing anything wrong. You're doing everything right. Too right."

I burrow my face into his neck to hide my smug smile when I get his meaning. There's something so thrilling about the thought that he wants me that badly. It has me floating on a high.

It's cold outside, but my face is warm against his heated skin, and his big arms are wrapped around me, protecting me

from winter's chill as he carries me into his house.

As soon as the door closes behind us, he cups my face in his big hand and kisses me again. I melt into him and kiss him back.

He growls, and I feel his chest rumble where it's pressed against mine. Dear god, feeling that growl does something to me, and I begin humping him through our clothes again without even realizing it.

He hisses in a breath before he groans out, "Fuck, baby, I've got to give you what you need."

The next thing I know, he's set me down on the bed. He rips my shirt off over my head before kneeling in front of me to rip off my boots and pants. Then his lips are on my thighs, kissing his way up to—*Oh god*.

His mouth is suddenly between my legs. He plants a possessive kiss right on my clit before he claims me with one long lick.

I moan as I fall back onto the bed. Rocky holds my legs open wide as he begins to lick and suck on me in earnest. "Look at how juicy this sweet little thing is for me," he growls in between licks. "Never tasted anything like you, Holly. Swear to god, you got me ready to nut all in my pants right now. Don't know if I'm going to make it, sweetheart."

I moan louder as a ripple goes through me at his dirty words. I whimper his name, and I feel the shudder that goes through him as his hands tighten on my thighs.

"Fuck. Need you now," he grinds out as he stands up and quickly rips the shirt from over the top of his head in that way that men do.

I greedily drink in the ridges of muscle defining his huge chest. He's covered in tats and so gorgeous I couldn't look away if I tried. Every inch of him is big and bulky and pure man, and it sends more wetness gushing between my thighs.

I can't believe this is happening. I haven't known Rocky long at all, yet I feel like I've known him forever.

I reach out a hand and trail it over his abdomen. I feel the muscles ripple under my touch. He drops his pants, and my eyes widen, my mouth falling open, at the huge column of flesh that springs forward.

It's big and fat and glistening with moisture on the tip. It looks like it's as big as my forearm, but I'm not scared.

I know that a woman's first time hurts, but I want Rocky inside me, and that desire is overriding any fear I might normally feel.

Rocky sees me looking at him. With his eyes never leaving mine, he fists his huge cock in one hand and strokes it up and down before he climbs on top of me, lining himself up with my hole.

I place a hand on his chest. I need to tell him the truth before we go any further. "Wait, Rocky."

His brown eyes instantly find mine.

"You should know I've never done this before," I tell him, my cheeks heating in embarrassment at my inexperience.

His eyes widen before they darken with lust. "Fuck, are you trying to kill me, sweetheart?"

I lick my lips, relieved that he's not disappointed. His eyes follow the motion of my tongue, and he stutters out a breath.

"You're telling me I'm going to be the first man inside this sweet thing?"

I nod.

He growls and then captures my lips, kissing me deeply. I feel an insistent pressure between my legs as he starts pushing himself inside me. I wiggle around, trying to get more comfortable, but the pressure just keeps building and building until there's finally a sharp sting.

I cry out, my arms and legs going around him as I clutch onto him.

He strokes my hair as he shushes me. "Sshh, Daddy's got you. You're okay."

I still when I hear him call himself “Daddy.” My pussy clenches around him with the words, and we both groan.

I’ve never thought of myself as one of those girls who has daddy issues, even though I can’t exactly say I have the best relationship with my father, but hearing Rocky call himself my daddy pulls at something deep and forbidden inside me.

It fills me with such a rush of pleasure, it makes my muscles clench down hard on him again.

“Yes, that’s right,” he whispers in my hair. “You know who your daddy is, don’t you, sweetheart?”

I can only moan in response. He fists his hands in my hair. “Look at me,” he orders me.

My eyes snap open to obey him.

“Yes, that’s it. Good girl,” he croons at me approvingly. “I want to look at you when I make you come on my cock for the first time. Don’t close those pretty green eyes. Keep looking at me, sweetheart.”

I do as he says, and having him stare into my eyes as he thrusts in and out of me only amplifies my pleasure. His brown eyes are smoldering. I’m lost in them. Lost in the sensation of being completely wrapped up in his big body as he pushes in and out of me in strong, powerful thrusts.

His mouth parts, and his big barrel chest heaves up and down. Sweat breaks out on his brow as he continues to plow into me over and over again.

He’s hitting this spot deep inside me that makes my brain short circuit as pleasure snaps along every nerve ending in my body.

I moan out his name. He grunts, and I feel him swelling impossibly larger inside me, filling me more completely than ever.

“Nu-uh,” he reprimands me as he moves a hand to grip the front of my throat. Those his grip is firm, it’s gentle too. “You call me Daddy when I’m balls deep inside this pussy.”

My pussy ripples around him, and that pressure is so deep inside me, I feel like I'm on the verge of something cataclysmic.

"I feel you, baby," he pants huskily. "You're right there. Come for Daddy."

My stomach clenches at his words, and then a rush of white-hot release floods my entire body. "Daddy!" I scream out as my entire body spasms.

"Fuck yes! Just like that, sweetheart! You know who your daddy is, don't you, baby?" He tells me as he keeps plugging away at me, riding me through my orgasm.

He makes a choked sound and his thrusts become shorter and jerkier.

"Fuck, Holly!" Rocky throws his head back and roars like a bear as he thrusts inside me one last time. He holds himself deep as he plugs his cum deep inside me. I feel it gushing into me in hot spurts that immediately overflow and begin dripping between us on the bed.

My god, is it normal for a man to come this much? I don't know, but my body loves it. I'm practically purring as Rocky continues to release inside me in hot jets that set off another orgasm in my own body.

"Fuck," he grunts when he's finally done, but he doesn't pull out of me. Instead, he gathers me in his arms and rolls us so that he's lying on his back with me splayed on top of him. He pushes my hair out of my face and kisses my lips tenderly.

"Mine," his deep voice rumbles possessively.

With that one word, my heart both soars and cracks because this is everything I know I want and everything I know I can't have.

Six



Rocky

“I don’t know if I can let you go.”

Holly smiles at me indulgently from where she sits in the passenger seat of my Suburban.

I don’t think she realizes I’m not joking, though. My stomach gets heavier like someone is dropping a pound of lead in it with each mile.

It goes against everything in me to drop her a couple of blocks down from her house and watch her walk up to her house while I sit here and hide like this. We’re both grown adults. She’s twenty-one, and I’m a thirty-one-year-old man—not some fuckboy.

I hate that we’re sneaking around like we’re having an affair when Holly is mine. Heart, body, mind, and soul. We pledged ourselves to one another last night.

She even admitted that, but she refused to let me keep her today.

“You’ve got a match coming up,” she told me. “I promise we’ll meet up after then. I just need more time to figure out how I’m going to deal with my father.”

Fuck her father. I refrain from telling her exactly how I’d deal with him, but if the time comes and he gives us trouble, there’ll be no stopping me.

No one is going to keep me from her—not even her dad. Not the president of the fucking United States. No one.

The only reason I agreed to this is because of the pleading look in her eyes. My hands are tied. I don't want to be the bad guy, but fuck, watching her walk away from me is killing me. I'd rather eat nails than go through this again.

I firm my jaw. She's right. I have a match coming up soon, and my trainers would be pissed as hell if they knew I spent all night fucking, but fuck what they say about building up testosterone before a fight. There's no way in hell I can have Holly in my bed and not be deep inside her. I'd challenge any man to not do the same with her sweetness curled around him.

No match is more important than showing my sweetheart just what she means to me. Nothing is better than hearing her sweet moans in my ear or feeling her pussy fluttering around my cock. No amount of prize-winning money can compensate for that.

Once I see that Holly is safely in her father's mansion, I put the car into gear and drive away.

I don't make it three blocks before I turn the car back around and then re-park where I dropped her off.

I realize I'm being an obsessive psycho stalking her like this, but I can't help it. I just can't bring myself to leave her.

I stare at the property for hours, hoping for another glimpse of her, but she doesn't come out.

I don't know why I can't bring myself to pull away. There are plenty of things I should be doing.

I should be training. I should be getting my head in the game. But fuck I can't. All I can focus on is Holly and how much I want to be with her. My arms literally ache to have her in them again.

I've never needed another human being like I need her. It may have been a mistake to claim her before she was ready to buck her dad and go public with us because I physically cannot bring myself to drive away from her.

Something's going to have to give.

I sit outside her house all day, an uneasy feeling deep in my bones. I can't explain it, but I've always gone with my gut, and my gut is telling me not to leave so I don't.

I sit up straighter in my vehicle when evening rolls around, and the entire family—the senator, his wife, and Holly—all come walking out of the door.

My eyes greedily drink in my girl. Those fiery red curls I love so much are hanging loose down to her waist, and she's wearing a cream-colored turtleneck and brown leggings with boots. She looks so classy, so fancy.

She's so beautiful it makes my chest ache. My hands flex on the steering wheel, longing to pull her into my arms.

They all pile into the senator's limo to be chauffeured somewhere, and of course, I follow, wanting to know where they're taking my Holly.

When they pull up to a fancy restaurant, I wait for them to enter. Then, I get out of my own vehicle and creep over to peek in the window. No doubt this is the type of place you have to have reservations to get into, and food is the last thing on my mind.

I know why my instincts wouldn't allow me to leave her earlier when I see the pinched expression on her brow as she stands still like a deer caught in the headlights while a cocky-looking little shit slips her coat off her shoulders.

My vision goes red at the sight of another man's hands on her. Even if he is only slipping her coat off of her, my mind can't disconnect that from undressing her.

Who is this fucking guy? It's obvious Holly isn't comfortable around him, and that sends all my protective instincts when it comes to her into overdrive.

I don't think. I just react.

Rage pumps through my veins as I storm into the restaurant, my eyes never leaving my sweetheart's grim face

and the pompous little blonde-headed fucker who has the audacity to touch what's *mine*.

Just like when I'm in the ring, they don't even see me coming until I grab the little fucker by the scruff of his neck and toss him away from Holly. He slams into the wall and slides down to the floor, but I pay him no more mind.

My gaze is pinned on my woman. Her eyes are a mixture of panic, relief, and worry, and I just want to see her green eyes sparkling with happiness again like they were when we were back at my place alone.

"Are you okay?" I run my hands along her shoulders, checking her for signs of injury. It's ridiculous because I didn't see the fucker trying to physically harm her, but those are my instincts when it comes to Holly—to protect her, to make sure she's okay.

Her eyes soften as she nods, "I'm fine, but what are you doing here?"

The senator's cold voice cuts through the air like a knife. "That's a good question. What *are* you doing here?"

I turn to see his eyes narrowed as they flick between me and Holly, understanding dawning on his face. He's sharp enough to have already figured out what's going on. "Why are you attacking my daughter's date?"

My nostrils flare when I hear him call that fucker Holly's date. A growl tears up out of my throat. I see the little fucker press himself against the wall where he's still sitting flat on his ass cowering. He hasn't said a word since I slung him against it. He hasn't made one move to check on Holly. The little prick isn't worthy to lick her boots.

Holly lays a restraining hand on my arm, and the only thing that keeps me from jumping across the table and attacking someone—her father or the fuckboy again—is the pleading look in her eyes and the way it was obvious she wasn't here by choice. I don't know what I'd do if she voluntarily went out with another man. I'd probably tear the entire city to the ground. That's how crazy about her I am.

I feel a tremble go through Holly's tiny frame as her dad pins her in his stern gaze. "Explain yourself, young lady."

I step in front of her protectively, shielding her with my body and indignant on her behalf. He talks to her like she's still a child or his property, and no one is going to talk to my woman that way—not even her dear old dad. "With all due respect, sir, Holly is a grown woman and doesn't have to answer to you."

A muscle in the senator's vein throbs and his fists clench at his side. I spread my stance and give him a challenging look. "Go on. I dare you."

Even he knows better than to try to take on a fight with a heavyweight MMA champion. He looks to be in good shape for his age, but he's no match for me and we both know it.

"Holly," he speaks to her again, "you know your obligation to this family. You know how disappointed I'll be if you do something stupid," he warns her, speaking to her through my body.

I place a hand on her behind me to soothe her. "She's no longer yours to command," I tell him before I turn around and wrap a protective arm around her, effectively dismissing him. "Come on, sweetheart. Let's go."

Holly lets me lead her out of the restaurant without ever speaking another word to her parents.

Her mother just sat there wide-eyed the entire time. In fact, I've never heard the woman speak a word in all the time I've known her, and I figure that's probably how it goes in Holly's life. Her father calls the shots, and his wife and daughter are supposed to stay silent and just fall in line.

Well not anymore. I'm setting Holly free.

She's shivering by the time I get her out to my SUV, and I know that it's with more than just the cold outside.

I cup her face gently in my hand and lean down so that I'm looking directly into her eyes. "You're okay, sweetheart. I've got you. I promise. Nothing is ever going to hurt you again."

Your father's angry, but everything's going to be okay. You trust me?"

She blinks before she nods. "Yes, I trust you, Rocky."

I press a tender kiss to her lips, looking to soothe her. She melts under me, and the tightness in my chest finally eases.

I have my woman safe with me. I'm taking her home again, and this time no one is ever going to take her away from me.

Seven



Holly

I 'm thrilled to be back in Rocky's warm embrace, but there's a nervousness inside of me that won't settle. I know my father. He never loses. There's no way he's going to take this lying down.

I purposefully left my purse back at the restaurant. It had my cell phone in it, and I don't want my father being able to track where we are—even though I know he has enough resources that if he really wants to find out where Rocky lives and come after us, he'll be able to.

“You're safe with me,” Rocky's voice rumbles underneath my ear as he assures me for the millionth time.

I'm lying with my head on his chest as I trace the outline of each of his tattoos. “I know. I trust you, Rocky. I feel safer with you than I've ever felt.”

I smile when I feel his chest swell with pride.

My smile falters as I continue, “It's just my father... I know he's not going to let me go without a fight.”

Rocky's lips quirk up into a smug grin. “Well, if he wants to fight, I'll gladly fight for you. Nothing in my life has been worth fighting over like you, sweetheart.”

I try to muster up a smile for him, but I can't. My stomach drops again.

“I just have a bad feeling.”

“Everything’s going to be fine,” he promises me as he kisses me again. “I’m not going to let you out of my sight. No one is going to hurt you.”

I nod, telling myself that I have to shake this feeling off. I don’t want to worry him or bring him down. I think it’s just that I’ve spent my entire life doing everything my dad told me to so it’s scary to directly defy him like this.

Rocky has already secured me VIP seats for his match, and while I’m not looking forward to seeing my man get hit, he assures me that he can take any hits his opponents throw and still go back for more. I know that, but it still hurts my heart to think of seeing him get hurt.

As if Rocky can still sense my mind racing, he tips my chin up to look at him and prompts me, “Promise me you’ll stop worrying. Let me take care of you.”

He searches my eyes earnestly, open adoration in his eyes, and I finally relax, letting the look in his smoldering brown eyes wrap around me.

Rocky’s right. I’m probably worrying for nothing. If a man like him can’t protect me, no one can.

“Okay,” I promise him.

He smiles, and I kiss his throat wanting to show him just how much he means to me. A growl rumbles up out of him as he pulls me on top of him so that my legs are straddling him.

He enters me in one deep thrust. We move slowly together while kissing each other deeply, his hands fisted in my hair until our release crashes over us like the gentle, rolling waves of the ocean.

“Fuck, I love you, Holly,” Rocky breathes against my neck before he plants a kiss there.

My heart leaps inside me. “I love you too.”

He’s right. I don’t need to let my dad or anyone else steal our joy. There’s nothing else in the world that matters except

for us. Rocky and me. And he's not going to let anything come between us.



When we go to the match the next night, everything is going fine. Rocky is winning, of course, and I'm in awe of his raw masculinity. His body is glinting with sweat, and I've never been one of those girls who was turned on by sweaty men, but Rocky is gorgeous. He's a powerhouse of tatted muscle, and I'm so here for it.

I jump when I suddenly feel a hand around my upper arm. My stomach sinks when I look up to see my father glowering down at me. I don't know where he came from, but fear slices through me because the look on his face is murderous. Not that I think my father would ever physically hurt me, but I wouldn't put it past him to lock me up in my room to keep me away from Rocky.

I try to jerk my arm out of his grasp, but he only tightens his hold on me. "That's enough of this foolishness, young lady," he hisses. "Come on. You shouldn't be in a place like this parading yourself around like some fighter's whore."

His words cut me as he smiles over my head at people who must be watching us, but I still struggle in his hold, panic overtaking me at the thought of him taking me away.

"Let me go!" my voice comes out shrill with the terror I feel at being taken away from Rocky. Something deep inside me tells me that if my dad succeeds in getting me out of this arena, I'll never see Rocky again, and I can't imagine life without him now.

My dad doesn't release his hold. Instead, he begins pulling me through the crowd. Tears are streaming down my face, and a few people look over at us in concern, but once they see who my dad is, no one makes a move to stop him.

No one except Rocky.

Suddenly, my dad's hold on my arm drops and I turn to see Rocky has my dad's wrist in a firm grip. Rocky is glaring down at my dad, towering over him in all of his big, muscled, six-foot-five glory.

He jumped out of the ring to save me.

My heart swells, and more tears rush to my eyes. Rocky glances at me, his eyes softening, but then he turns back to my dad, and they harden again. "Let me make myself very clear in case I didn't the last time we spoke," his big voice booms. The arena has suddenly gone very quiet as everyone witnesses the commotion. "If you ever try to kidnap my fiancée again, I promise you will live to regret it."

My dad's eyebrow shoots up into his hairline. "Are you threatening me?" he asks incredulously.

I'm holding my breath because no one has ever spoken to my father that way.

"Call it what you will," Rocky says, "but as long as Holly wants to be with me, I'm not going anywhere."

My heart starts thundering in my ears as Rocky comes over and wraps a sweaty arm around me. I look up at him and place a hand on his chest. "Your fiancée?" I ask weakly.

His chocolate brown eyes smolder down at me, "Did you think this would end any way other than marriage, sweetheart?"

I can't stop the smile that breaks out across my face, and I don't care how many people are watching us. I place my hands on Rocky's bearded face and pull his head down to kiss him with the entire world watching. He's mine, and I'm his.

Epilogue



One Year Later

Rocky

I circle my arms around my wife's back and plant a kiss on the side of her head. She leans back against me, and I splay my hands over her slightly swollen belly.

When Holly asked me last year what I wanted for Christmas, I could think of nothing I wanted more than to call her my wife, so we were married on Christmas Day.

Now here we are a year later, and she's fulfilled my Christmas wish again. She carries our first child within her. Our little girl.

I'm not a man who's prone to crying, but tears swelled in my eyes when she told me we were having a baby. They did again when we went to the gynecologist together and saw our baby girl on the monitor for the first time.

After that night when I threw the MMA match to rescue my girl from her piece-of-shit father, we haven't seen or spoken to either of her parents again. They haven't tried to reach out to her, and Holly hasn't tried to reach out to them.

I guess their true colors are showing. She was never anything more to her father than a pawn he could move around to further his career.

I don't know if her mother is just too frightened to buck against her father, or maybe she's become deadened over the years.

I was concerned Holly would become depressed without her parents in her life, but on the contrary, she's blossomed like a beautiful flower. The heaviness and fear that used to weigh her down is gone.

She told me that even though she felt bad to admit it, she was relieved to not have to deal with her parents anymore. That she had never been particularly close to either one of them. She never really felt like they treated her like a daughter.

I can't imagine how it was for her growing up in such a cold household, but we're going to be starting our own family very soon, and I vow that she and our baby girl will have more love than they can handle. She's never going to feel neglected or used again. Not while I'm alive.

Even after I'm dead, I'll find a way to take care of her. If anything could last forever, it's what I feel for her. My love for her will never die.

I push her beautiful red curls back from her ear and breathe into it, "Once again, you gave me the best Christmas gift a man can ask for."

I feel the shiver go up and down her spine, and my cock gets even harder in response.

She pushes her ass back into me. I hiss in a breath as I grind into her ass. I start kissing her neck, but she turns in my hold and stays me with a little hand against my chest.

"I have another gift for you," she smiles up at me sweetly.

I drop a kiss on her lips. "Nothing can top what you've already given me, sweetheart."

She smiles at me again and takes my hand, pulling me along to the studio I had set up for her.

She's free to do whatever she wants now, and she pursues her passion of painting. While she mostly paints abstracts that

sell pretty well to decor companies, she paints some landscapes and portraits too.

I love everything she creates. I love to watch her body sway as she dips the paintbrush in the colors and glides it across the canvas.

I could watch her all day, but she's had me locked out of her studio for the past week. I had a suspicion she was up to something.

My breath catches when she gives me a shy smile and pulls the sheet from what she's been working on.

It's a painting of me bare-chested. She has all of my tattoos painted out in minute detail, my beard, my eyes, the way I look at her. She's captured everything I feel for her in one picture.

My chest swells, tears stinging my eyes again.

"Do you like it?" she asks me earnestly, holding her own breath anxiously.

"Are you kidding me?" I tell her as I pull her into my arms again and kiss the top of her head. "I love it. I love *you*. You're everything, you know that?"

She shakes her head and places a protective hand on her stomach in that way expecting mothers do. It makes my chest swell to see it.

"Soon Bella will be here, and she'll be our everything."

A smile tips my lips. "So, you've decided on Bella?"

We've been going back and forth over names. After we narrowed it down to some of our faves, I gave her the final say, knowing she'd pick the perfect one for our little girl.

She nods, smiling back at me beautifully. I swear to god she really is glowing.

"Bella," I try out the name again, and it settles inside me.

"It's perfect," I tell her. "Just like you."

“Rocky,” she whispers my name in that tone that sends precum leaking from my tip. I already know what she wants before she gives the order, and I’m more than willing to obey.

“Kiss me,” she whispers breathily.

I cover her lips with mine and kiss her with all the love and devotion in my heart for her.

My love. My life. My woman.

Mine.

Want to read Riker’s story? Check out [Fighting Ace](#).

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