

Tatted

AND COMING FOR YOU

RAINY FLOWER

Tatted AND COMING FOR YOU
Book 3 in the TNT - Top Notch Tats
Series

~ Rainy Flower @—->—

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I actually completed a series! This book like all the others in dedicated to my awesome husband and amazing family. I appreciate all the time you allow me to write. I love you always...more than all of space and the aliens too.

I also want to thank everyone who has read my books. I'm truly grateful and thankful for your time.

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Introduction

The D*adman thought he could use me against them in a twisted evil plan. He tried to break us and tear our hearts into little pieces.

I made a mistake and let him succeed long enough for me to prepare. I grew stronger and lethal like a machine. Their commitment, love and support brought me back.

Our lives have changed in extraordinary ways since we first met. I've watched us all grow into better people.

Unfortunately for him, we all agreed to set our morals aside. We have a plan this time and we will win.

I'm ready to end this mystery once and for all.

Are you listening to me? This is your FINAL warning!

I'm tatted and coming for you.

I HOPE YOU'RE READY!

Please skip this page you have no TWs...

This book has strong adult sexual scenes. I also talk about mental health problems and different sexual kinks. There is a ton of foul language throughout the book as well. I know this is a very sensitive subject and it's why I'm actually writing this page right now. So please be prepared because I talk about the very difficult subject of miscarriage and infertility issues in this book.

Please don't traumatized yourself for a read.



Tatted
AND COMING FOR YOU

BOOK 3

CREATED BY : RAINY FLOWER

**COVER BY: CROWE ABBEY
COVERS**



Chapter 1 - Where Do We Go From Here?

Gage Broken Heart

The last few weeks have been the worst of my life. I know that sounds dramatic and I don't give a shit because it's true. Time has dragged on like a bad wound that just won't heal. I've come to terms with the fact that my family and friends have been lying to my face. I'm still confused and in the dark about how we got here. I know all my questions won't be answered until we have a family meeting to sort out these secrets breaking us apart. I crack my knuckles and push down my personal needs. My feelings will have to be put on the back burner until we have this little reunion. Everything has changed since she walked out of our lives. I'm bitter inside like the lemons she used to eat all the time. My thoughts always return to her and my mind won't rest until she's near.

"Turn on the radio, Wes." Tony tells him and Wes does it, not wanting to upset him. "Bluetooth connected." Shit, what is this fool planning? "Someone You Loved," by Lewis Capaldi begins playing through the speakers around us.

"Shut it off." Both Jess and Lake say together in deep aggravated voices. It's the only thing they've agreed on in a while. Tony has been playing that song on repeat lately and I

even know the words. I'm not going to lie, I've turned to music a time or two since she left. It helps some with the pain. I tune out their argument and think about the past few weeks.

The FBI were all over our asses in the beginning after her kidnapping. They were trying to treat us like suspects from the jump because we beat them to the scene. We spent hours being questioned and interviewed. My uncle even had to call in a few family favors to get them to settle down. Thankfully, we have Agent Donaldson on our side too. That was a good call by Liam. As she explained to us, they still had to follow protocols. She was just doing her job and I get it. At least, she's dead set on catching the people responsible for this mess like us. Tamera's father isn't helping the situation either. He's a powerful man, who doesn't like to be told no. Of course, at first he didn't believe his daughter did anything wrong. He wanted to paint her as the victim in this crime against my family. Lake's parents used their connections to keep most of it out of the media for everyone's privacy, including Tamera's. In my opinion the world deserved to know what kind of person she was.

I never thought I would be grateful to someone and hate them at the same time. Unfortunately, that's how I felt about him. The Deadman (that's what we call him, because that's what he is) made a mistake that ended up helping us find *Mi Sirenita* in the long run. We were extremely lucky that Tamera was a greedy bitch when she was alive. Based on the investigation, we learned that Tamera put on Mistory's tracker bracelet and accidentally activated it without knowing. The abandoned barn had an underground cellar that was complete with electrical blocking equipment. We couldn't find Mistory for hours and it felt hopeless. However, after Tamera's death the Deadman moved her body topside. That was the break we had been praying for. Since The Kelly Brothers had everyone looking for Mistory, their location lit up like a Christmas tree as soon as Tamera's body left the barn. Bryson's hacker homies don't fuck around and can find anyone, anywhere. The FBI found Tamera's body in a blue Accord parked outside the crime scene. It was the same blue car from the video Bryson found the day of the accident. That means the Deadman had to

be the one who cut Mistory's brake lines too. We still aren't sure about the attack in the park. Mistory hadn't noticed a scar or bandage on his arm, but he was wearing long sleeves. It was hard reading those reports and getting the information second hand since she never shared any of that with me. I try to calm my anger by running a hand through my hair. I don't bother styling it anymore and it's getting longer too. What's the point? I'm still so fucking mad.

How did that fucker get away? Why did she leave? I crack my neck and feel like pacing to help me relax. Fucking knee jerk reactions getting the better of me.

It was extremely humbling to know even with all my money, shit all *OUR* money, we were still helpless when Mistory was taken from us. But then she left us on her own, didn't she? Why? To protect us? To punish us? Does she even still trust us? Trust *ME*? I didn't even know their plan. Why am I being tortured like this?

In my heart and mind I know she was traumatized by what happened to her. No one should feel hopeless in their own body. It's a true blessing that her bad memories are all she has to deal with now. It could have been so much worse. I swallow hard and taste the bile in my mouth at the bad thoughts running through my head. I think back and remember her being so quiet at the hospital. It was like her light had left her body and her glowing vibe was gone. I wanted to help her heal but I understood I couldn't push her own process. She kept saying she was too tired to visit for long periods of time. Then Dr. Maraschino was quick to ask us to leave. We all played nice and followed orders. Honestly, we were lost too. I would never compare us or make light of her position and grief. However, these types of situations aren't easy on us either. It's our job to protect her and we failed, period. She's the woman we love and we did nothing. Seeing her like that in the hospital killed us slowly every minute. Nothing could prepare me for the pain I experienced the day we showed up to take her home. We were in high spirits and had decorated the whole house with her favorite flowers. Sunflowers, plus red and white roses were scattered everywhere. Mistory never saw them though because she was gone when we got to the

hospital. We still don't know what happened that day. Agent Donaldson had said she was released and disappeared. Even her parents were scared at first but she checked in with them shortly after that. They took pity on us after a while and started giving us updates on her but little else. We even tried following them but they never saw her. Maybe, they did now that I know they had The Kelly Brothers helping them.

I still can't wrap my head around it. We are the ones she is running from.

If someone asked me how it feels to have your beating heart ripped out of your chest, I would describe my emotions that day. My heart is truly fucking broken right now. People say sappy shit like that in movies and those books she's always reading but I'm dead serious. There's definitely pain in my heart so the description seems fitting if you ask me. I'm currently so angry and giddy it's making me sick to my stomach. I haven't slept or eaten in days now. After the big TV interview, we all went back to the house. There Jess finally shared one of his secrets with us. He knew how to find Mistory, and Bryson was the key. We had to wait for him to contact us. Lake had to be sedated when he found out the truth. We almost couldn't save Jess from Lake's boiling rage and a part of me didn't want to. He's just lucky the guards were around at the time.

I glance over at Lake and see that horrible blank stare he gets when he's on meds. I feel bad for him but I'm selfish right now, and I have to worry about my own sanity. My heart and mind can't take on anyone else's burden. In less than thirty minutes, I'm going to see her for the first time in weeks and I'm going crazy. I shift in my seat and wish I would've driven.

Wes speeds up like he can feel my energy. He's driving us because everyone else is too anxious. Plus, we don't need to get into an accident or get a speeding ticket. Bryson called Jess about two hours ago with Mistory's secret location. She wasn't even far from us. I'm not sure if that's good knowledge or worse somehow. She had to know we've been suffering this whole time. How could she leave us high and dry like that?

The other guys are devastated also. I caught Tony sleeping in my bed a couple nights ago and it wasn't even awkward because I felt his pain. Then Jess had joined Tony there last night when Bryson didn't call right away. They said it's the only bed that still has her scent. I didn't tell them I've been spraying her perfume on it for days. I went into a blind rage and almost fired the maid who washed my sheets. Luckily for her, Mrs. Crocker talked me down and gave me the perfume idea. After Mistory left, we decided to close the shop until further notice. Tina has been handling all our calls recently. Hopefully she'll work her magic and save our rep. She volunteered to take on the job after Lake told a famous popular musician to quote, "Go fuck himself and his music sounds like two cats fucking in an alley." It's crazy because I have no urge to care or want to fix any drama at TNT. It feels like nothing's important to me anymore.

At least, compared to her. *Mi Sirenita*. Is she even, My Little Mermaid still? My stomach sours at the possible answer to that question. Wes clears his throat and his deep voice brings me back to reality.

"We're almost there. How's security? Do I need a gun? Will there be hostiles?" I'm not surprised by Wes' questions because we've all been packing lately and we're willing to use force to get her back. Liam taught us how to shoot years ago. Lake refused to hunt animals so he had a moving course built. I watch the back of Jess' head waiting for his answers to the questions only he knows. He just stares out the front windshield for a time before responding. He better get used to talking fast.

"Nah, Bryson told them we are coming. We have full access once the vehicle is scanned. You'll need this." Wes turns to him with raised eyebrows and Jess hands him a key card. "Jace should be stunned though."

Tony lets a manic laugh loose and Jess plays with his hair showing his mood. Lake shifts next to me and I can see his hands shaking. The words traitor and liar flash through my mind. I have mixed emotions towards Jace right now. I blamed him for the kidnapping in the beginning because he was

supposed to be watching her that day. Seth and Wes found Jace drugged and knocked out in the trunk of his car outside the restaurant. I know he felt bad that he couldn't save Mistory but that's still no excuse for hiding her from us.

We are going to The Kelly Brothers' cabin in Sugarloaf up in the mountains. We knew about the one in Big Bear and even searched it one day. However, this cabin was a secret, I guess. I also knew what the key card was for. They must have the same gates here that KISS installed at TNT and our house. All the gates are special and have a technology KISS created that screens for bombs and other weapons. Our security is top notch now and very expensive. Even now the new massive fencing around our properties is almost complete. It sucks that we had to do that to the TNT building but safety is our greatest concern right now. I'm still proud of everything we've done to build up that neighborhood and I'm hoping it won't be an eyesore when it's finally done.

Of course, the show loved the idea of a private fence. They already planned on setting up shop in the parking lot. They even rented a new hotel nearby for filming next month. Seth suggested we run fire along the top of the huge fence. Since flames are my thing, I mean look at my tattoos. I naturally took interest in the unique idea. Bryson filed permits and sped up the approval process. I should have known something was up with him and it was all an act. Bryson swore he didn't know where Jace was. I push down my anger and think about my new flames. At least with the new added touch the massive gate looks cool instead of shady.

Jess' phone rings and it pulls me from my thoughts. Lake growls at him and once again I'm glad I put Tony behind Jess instead. We all pay attention to Jess' call.

"We are five minutes out," Jess hisses into the phone. He listens to the caller on the other line then hangs up without commenting again.

We reach the top of the hill and there's a steep drop on the other side. It's undercover and looks like you're driving into the forest but suddenly there's a large wooden gate in front of us. A scanning device pops out of the ground and Wes

rolls down the window. He puts the key card in the machine and the gate starts to open. We all watch as a red light travels over the car as we drive to the next gate. A few seconds later, the light turns green. This metal gate drops into the ground and we are free to drive inside. Wes whistles and he seems impressed by the level of security here.

“Do share with us, James. Or do you think you’re exempt from explaining yourself these days?” Lake spits the words at Jess and I flinch. Everyone knows Jess hates the name his father gave him with a burning passion. Lake knows better than anyone since he had to deal with the prick often enough before he died. This is a topic we don’t normally touch with a ten foot pole. I look at Lake and he ignores my warning, shooting me a dirty glance. We agreed to start over this morning and focus on her. Lake knows his comment was a low blow coming from him. He’s the one who gave Jesse his nickname in the first place. Tony curses at the tension and takes another drink from the bottle in his hand. I told him not to bring that shit with us. That’s another problem for a different day because Tony’s a fucking drunken mess these days.

“Go fuck yourself, Masters. I don’t owe you shit and that was Bryson. He said he isn’t on the property because he’s wrapping up a few things.” Jess spins in his seat to stare at Lake wearing a smirk. “Oh, and you need to calm down before he’ll be around you.”

Wes nods and Lake hits the back of his seat, letting him know his opinion isn’t wanted. Jess laughs but it’s bitter as hell then he faces the windshield again.

“Plus, he’s mostly terrified of Mistory and her reaction to all the news. He didn’t tell her we were coming today. Bryson asked Seth to handle it.” I know Jess rolls his eyes at his own comment. Seth isn’t very reliable when he’s been partying. Jess laughs then says, “I’m guessing Jace will be getting a text soon because Seth was MIA last night.”

That makes Tony laugh again and smile. Lake grunts his approval and slaps his knee. They all, like myself, enjoy the idea of Bryson being afraid of her.

Jess adds the next part when he spins around to look at us in the back seat. His dark blue eyes light up with wonder and lust. “He said, we should be scared too because he’s taught her quite a few new tricks and she’s pissy as hell. He said, “Think grumpy lioness.”

That makes all of us laugh. Mistory’s tough, brave and strong as fuck. It’s the first time we’ve shared a laugh in weeks and it feels weird. Our brotherhood has been fractured by lies and secrets. I’m not sure what everyone else has planned but we’re having a family meeting because I’m sick of this shit.

The car stops in front of the huge wooden cabin fit for an army. We all jump out and I sigh. I have no idea how this is gonna go. I look around and spot the guards still lingering around at our arrival. The one who looks like the superior tips his head at us. He gives them a signal and they walk away.

Wise move, buddy.

“I know you guys are upset. I’m upset too but maybe you all should take a deep breath and think about what you’re going to say.” Wes puts his hands up in surrender when we all turn on him. I shake my head and start walking to the door. “Lex is my friend too. She isn’t just a job.”

That makes me stop and glance back. What the fuck does that mean? Lake is on him quicker than Tony’s drunk ass can move to help. Lake knocks Wes out with one punch and thankfully, he stops after that. Lake leans in and checks his victim then straightens, shaking out his hand from the brutal contact with Wes’ face.

Lake looks over at us confused. “He was talking about her. Who is that guy anyway?” The dead expression on his face has me worried.

“Wes,” Jess and I say in unison. I watch Lake to see if the name registered and it doesn’t.

“He’s one of our guards. You just took out a good guy, dumbass.” Jess shakes his head talking shit but he backs down smoothly when Lake takes a step towards him. Tony’s still

drunk but he's recovered some and keeps the peace by stepping in front of Lake.

“Who gives a fuck about any of this? Lexy is in there,” Tony screams and points to the front of the house. Lake's head snaps to the door like her scent just hit him and it's calling to his inner beast.

Lake suddenly sprints past me and kicks the door aggressively. For one second I'm shocked because Lake and his shoes have a special relationship. He backs up and runs at it again using his whole body this time. The stupid ass bounces off the hard surface like it's a trampoline and falls backwards. Thankfully, I step aside in time to miss Lake's big frame flying towards me, but Tony, bringing up the rear, doesn't have the same fate. Lake slams into Tony hard and, from the force of impact, they fall to the ground in a pile.

They both grunt in pain as they detangle themselves from each other. Jess helps Tony up and then offers Lake a hand. Lake stares daggers at him and stands on his own. Once he's done fixing his clothes, he spits at Jess' feet. I can't even stick up for Jess because I don't trust any of them right now. I turn my back on them and walk up to the door.

It only takes me seconds to figure out the handle. I lift the small door and see the panel inside. I press my thumb to the pad and wait. The light flashes green and the screen reads, “Hello Gage.” Fucking Bryson and his gadgets. I reach for the handle but my hand won't turn. I can feel my heart beating in my ears and I may even be a little light headed.

This is the moment I've been anticipating for weeks. I have so many thoughts and questions running through my head. Does Mistory know we're here? Did she feel that undeniable feeling of completion when we stepped foot on this property? Maybe, I'm just being a sappy loser. I have been reading those romance novels lately. My heart doesn't feel like my own anymore. It's probably because she ripped herself from my life for what seems like forever now and took my heart with her. I'm not the man I was before. I feel like a hollow shell of the person I used to be. It's taking everything I have not to blow up and be the predator some people have

living inside them. I have to remind myself that I'm a good man and breathe in deep.

I can feel the guys moving and pressing closer to my back. No one pushes me though. They wait for me and I think they feel the same way I do. We are afraid to face her on some level, but we're also royally pissed at her. How could she make us fall in love with her and then just walk away like that? Lake growls so I turn the doorknob and push it open with a hard shove.

My boys and I walk through the giant door as one. The first thing I see is Jace running down the hall in full fucking riot gear. He dips into a room and we hear a door slam. Normally, the sight of that shit would be hilarious but I'm not sure if Jace is my enemy. Tony has to hold Lake back from chasing Jace to attack him. I glance at Jess and nod when I see his expression. We're in agreement and we'll wait for Jace's story first. We need it all on the fucking table before any of this can get better.

One thing is for sure, there will be no more lies.

I look up to see Alex running down the stairs. He sees us then runs in the opposite direction. *Smart man.* He yells over his shoulder but doesn't stop running away. "We are friends now. I didn't do anything and I'll be back later." He disappears and I tilt my head at the new development.

What the fuck is Alex doing here? Has he been here the whole time? No one said shit about him. Now I'm really glad I punched him in the hospital that day. At least, I feel pure satisfaction when I look over at Jess and see his broody expression. Oh, it seems like Jess doesn't know everything either.

"Why is that fool here?" Tony asks us in a frosty tone. The laid-back fun Tony is gone. He hasn't been around for a while. This guy is an angry drunk. He proves this by drinking from his bottle again and pushing Lake into Jess. Tony spins and he looks around. He frowns and lifts his arms in the air, spilling liquor on the floor. "Where is she?" He demands at no

one and everyone. We hear a door open and Jace runs to the bottom of the stairs. Wes starts banging on the door behind us.

“You guys, we need to talk.” Is Jace really trying to “reason” with us? To talk down the murderous lovers? I chuckle low but it’s not funny. We step closer to him as one. I really hope he isn’t trying to block us from going up the stairs. My eyes narrow at him. Tony isn’t helping manage Lake anymore. So of course, Lake starts to run after Jace but he stops dead in his tracks before he gets to him.

Fuck. They feel it too. We all look up to the top of the stairs and see Mistory standing there staring at us. It’s almost surreal like my heart wasn’t sure I’d ever see her again. She didn’t let me help her and support her when she needed it most. That made me feel like less of a man. I just wanted to be there for her. I did try. No one can ever say I didn’t fucking try.

I stare at her and all the memories of our time together comes rushing back to me. *Fuck, I love her.* Lake begins running again and he hits Jace with a low tackle. They both go flying against the banister and it breaks from the impact of their weight. Tony throws the bottle and tries to pull Lake off Jace.

Jess jumps over them like a track star and rushes up the stairs. I’m confused with his urgency until I see Mistory’s face. She’s bone white and looks unsteady on her feet. I follow close behind Jess and avoid the other three’s flying fists. She’s only standing a few feet away but we don’t make it in time. Jess makes one last effort and throws his body out to try to catch her. Jess manages to save her head at least from colliding hard with the floor. He adjusts his hold on the now passed-out Mistory and cradles her in his arms.

The doctors have told us that she gets extremely anxious and makes herself blackout under stressful situations. I stare down at her in awe. My hands reach out to touch but I don’t dare step forward. I want to take her from Jess but I don’t. I’m confused and being this close to her is driving me crazy. I just stare at her for a minute then turn and make myself walk away.



Chapter 2 - The Game Is Over

Shattered Soul Mistory

The night I was rescued...

...I can hear someone talking loud in my face. Okay, maybe there are two people? They have a bright light that they keep shining in my eyes. I flinch and pull back when my eyelid is lifted again. Shit, that fucking light is bright. It makes the pounding in my head overwhelming and I whine a little from the dreadful pain.

“Stop! Shit, that hurts.” I hope they heard me but I’m not sure because they just do it again with the other eyelid. This time the pain is too much so I try to swing to protect myself. “Aw, that hurts, bitch.”

“Well, at least she’s still got spirit.” One of them says in a beautiful English accent. She almost sounds impressed by me?

“Mistory, can you hear me? Open your eyes and squeeze my hand if you understand me.” Oh, I like this one’s voice. Her tone is warm and soothing too. I try to do as she says. It takes time, but my eyelids finally open on their own. The light is harsh but I keep them open. A beautiful woman in a white lab coat leans over me. She’s holding a pin light in her hand and I frown at it. Her smile is as warm and inviting as her voice. “Hello, my name is Doctor Maraschino. Yes, before you ask, it’s

like the cherry. It's my married name so what can I do?" The nice doctor shrugs and pulls over a chair. The scraping sound makes me panic for a second and my body tenses. I look around to make sure I'm in a real hospital. I can see out the big glass windows and it's the same view as last time.

"Yeah right, you love your name, Ashley." I turn my attention to the other woman in the room. She closes the curtains and moves to stand at the end of my bed. Wow, this chick screams badass and you can just tell she is. Her box braids are long and she reminds me of Rosario Dawson with a darker skin tone. She is also stunning to look at. FBI is written big across the front of her vest and she has a gun on her hip, so I'm pretty sure I know her role here. "Hey Lex, I'm Agent Donaldson and we are here to help you." Tears fill my eyes automatically and I try to blink them away. She folds her arms, uncomfortable with my reaction. The agent glances at the doctor next to me with wide eyes signaling her turn.

When I return my eyes to the doctor, she looks apologetic and sad to be here. The tenderness in her smile makes me settle against the pillows. "I hope you don't mind that I took over your chart. My dear friend, Dr. Riggs asked me to be your doctor. Your parents have already agreed. However, since you're awake now, for legal reasons you have to sign this." She shows me a paper on a clipboard. "If you feel more comfortable with someone else, I understand completely." Her smile is honest and friendly.

I want to cry again because there are so many memories flooding my senses. I shake my head at her question and take the pen to sign the release. The knowledge that Anthony's mom cares about me doesn't help my emotions either. Tamera's words haunt me and I remember all her threats towards the wonderful woman. "OK, now that we've handled the legal stuff, it's time to talk about the hard stuff, honey. I need to give you a physical exam and ask you a bunch of questions. Agent Donaldson can stay or come back and ask you her questions after. Everything is done at your own pace, and we only want to help."

"She can stay. I would rather only have to say this once." My voice sounds small, weak and broken. "And thanks for

helping me. Dr. Riggs is a fine woman that I respect.” My jaw still feels sore from the gag.

Dr. Maraschino smiles and nods. Her bedside manner is on point and I feel relaxed around her. “Yes, she is. My God son Anthony seems to be very fond of you too.”

My heart breaks at her words and I start crying.

“Seriously Ashley, don’t make the poor girl cry.” Agent Donaldson shifts, clearly uncomfortable faced with my tears. That makes me laugh because I guarantee this woman will kill the bad guy without even flinching. Her eyebrows raise at my laugh but she smiles. This woman could have been a model too.

“I’m sorry. Dang, it’s been a long day. Let’s start off with some questions and if it feels awkward just let me know. OK?” Dr. Maraschino waits for my answer and I nod. “Great. Do you currently feel any pain?”

I try to access my injuries and answer honestly. “I don’t feel any pain right now.” I mean, I do, but it’s just in my heart. She nods and checks my chart.

“That’s good. We cleaned and dressed your knife wounds. The cut on your back was the worst of them and it needed stitches too.”

“We heard you’re awesome with a butterfly knife. I should have you teach me a few things. I always wanted to work with knives.” I was looking at my hands but that comment made me glance at Agent Donaldson. She seems impressed again and I give her a small smile. “Your parents are proper chuffed with you.” She laughs at my confused expression. “I’ve lived in America since I was a babe, but I still mess up. They’re really proud of you and were bragging like mad.” She was hoping to get another laugh from me. Unfortunately, I disappoint her. “Oh shit, don’t cry. I mean, crap. I’m supposed to be working on my professionalism. The captain said he doesn’t want any more complaints.” She sends a pleading look to Dr. Maraschino. I can’t help my tears. I want my mom.

“It’s official we are a horrible team, Donaldson.” We all laugh and that helps ease some of the anxiety. “Mistory, do you think you can answer some difficult questions now?” I nod and

she checks her clipboard. I see determination fill her eyes and she smiles at me before gently saying, "Listen, I have an idea. I'm going to ask you all the hard questions at once. Then you can process them in your mind while we have a little chat about something else. When you are ready to submit your answers, we'll come back to them. OK?" I nod because I know once I get this all out, I can start to move on.

She spins her pen then taps the clipboard. "When was your last sexual contact? With whom? Did you wear protection? Are you on birth control? Do you know your attacker? Do you know if you've been sexually assaulted? OK, those are the big ones that matter. You've already had an MRI and CT scan. We had to test your blood to determine what drugs you were given. I did some consulting and worked my magic. I'm happy to inform you that your last lab work showed an almost clean system now. Since you're not feeling any pain, I'm not going to give you any more pain medication now. I have to do a physical exam to collect evidence for Donaldson and the courts when they catch this bastard. I know it sucks and I wish I didn't have to. We're here to help you. Remember, everything will go at your pace. I need to run and get supplies. You think about your answers, OK?" She stands and smiles at me before leaving the room.

"Guess it's my turn. We've already investigated the crime scene and we have a lot of details and evidence. Our perp left in a hurry and couldn't delete everything from the computer we found in the barn." Her intelligent eyes watch me taking in my reaction. She leans over the bed and stares at me. "I only have one question for you right now, Lex. Do you know who killed Tamera?"

I see red at the question because I still hate that woman and she deserved what happened to her. I nod and let Donaldson see my true feelings in my eyes.

"Yes, the masked man. He shot her in the back when she wasn't looking. He did it right in front of me. He had no remorse and she acted like they were involved. She also spoke to him or someone else on the phone. I cut her once when she tried to hurt me." Donaldson sighs in disappointment like I didn't help her case at all, and she gives me the impression she

already knew all that information. Good, I'm not interested in replaying all the events in my head again.

“Thanks for your statement. I'm going to make a few calls and I'll be right back. Thanks, Lex. I know this is hard for you but I promise we will catch him and make him pay for what he did to you.” Agent Donaldson spins and exits the room.

The tears that come when the door closes are embarrassing. I think about all the questions Dr. Maraschino asked me. The pressure in my chest makes me curl up in a ball and cry harder. Why can't I tell if I've been raped? Aren't you supposed to know? I feel numb all over and try to remember more details. It's useless because I don't know what happened in the end. There were too many drugs running through my system. The last thing I remember...chills move over my body from the flashback. The fucking masked psycho was touching and threatening me. Oh, and of course, he injected me with more drugs and I passed out.

More tears come and I grab a tissue next to me. I see all the flowers in my room but this time they don't make me smile. I don't want the guys to see me like this. I'm such a disappointment. I couldn't even push the button on my tracker before Tamera stole my bracelet. I remember seeing her wearing it though before she died. I feel dead inside knowing some other man touched me. I don't even know if it's worse or better that I don't remember. The guys will think I'm disgusting now. Damaged goods. Every time they look at me they'll be reminded of this just like I will every time I look in the mirror. My painfilled sounds are devastating to listen to and they are coming from me. I don't hear the door open but her soothing voice helps some.

“Oh honey, I'm sorry. Let's get this over with so you can see your family.” I don't move away when Dr. Maraschino gently touches my head. I wipe my face on the sheet and look at them. Her voice is sweet and soothing. “This exam is extremely important or I wouldn't even do it.” I nod and silent tears fall from my eyes.

I'm about to find out if I was raped once and for all.

Relief fills my whole body at her words but it doesn't last long. My mind spins with the possibilities of what this means.

"Then what did they do to me?" I yell at her, confused and scared. I want to feel relieved but I don't. "He told me, he made Tamera do something to me." Dr. Maraschino nods and then she explains her thoughts on the matter. I'm in shock at the prospect of this theory and I just shake my head in disbelief. She tells me my options now and I agree with her suggestion. Once decided and done, Donaldson clears her throat and steps forward.

"I want you to know, my mate Liam has asked us to lie on some of your records for now. I know he wouldn't ask this if it wasn't necessary to the case." Liam? That's Lake's uncle right? I'm even more confused by this information. "Honestly, he didn't have time to touch you because your people move fast. Unfortunately, he had a very good alarm system in place around the property or we would have caught him." I know I should feel better about this new development but I still feel dirty and helpless. The doctor had let me shower after my exam. She even brought my mom in for support. I give her a gracious smile before looking back at Agent Donaldson. "The good news is, I'm in charge of your case and I'm an overachiever. The bad news is, good ol' Tamera is causing just as many problems in death as she did when alive. Her father is on a warpath." Her phone starts ringing on que and she looks at the screen then rolls her eyes. "I'll be back. Donaldson..." She answers and walks out.

"I say the piece of shit got what was coming to her. Karma's a bitch when she isn't on your side." I meet Dr. Maraschino's gaze and smile because that's exactly how I feel. Her wise eyes make me feel safe and she squeezes my arm for support. "She tried to kill you and or emotionally scar you for life based on what you told us today. Plus, Tamera was a horrible human being. News travels fast in the medical community and she's pissed off some very important people." The door opens and a nurse walks in giving her the wide eyed signal for let's talk. She nods and turns back to me. "You relax, Mistory and I'll be right back." She smiles at me and I'm glad I don't see pity there. Instead, I see respect and that makes me sit

up straighter. She has a word with the nurse and turns back to me. “Well, it seems like the army you have waiting out there wants to finally see you. They are making a scene too.” She laughs but stops when she sees the expression of panic on my face. “Want to try seeing them? I can send them away in thirty minutes and say you have to rest.”

I nod at her in relief for the offered help. I can do thirty minutes, right? My anxiety says otherwise, I wipe the sweat collecting on my forehead.

Dr. Maraschino opens the door and glances back at me encouragingly. I hope my acting skills don't look fake. Everyone walks in and I feel sick to my stomach.

I wake up sweating and I can feel the tears on my cheeks. The nightmares make me feel weak and fragile. I haven't been able to control my dreams and I hate it. I'm not a damsel in distress. I will fight this but I don't know how. It's been three days and nothing has changed. They are going to release me today, I've dragged my feet long enough. I should be happy but I'm not. The hospital can no longer save me from my life. I've been pushing the guys away as much as possible. I'm thankful that they don't try to talk about what happened. I'm still not myself and I don't know if I ever will be again.

What do I do now? The masked man won't stop coming after me if Dr. Maraschino's theory is correct. I have a feeling he's furious now too because he almost got caught and his plan didn't work. He's straight up delusional if he still thinks he's going to use me against everyone.

Why does he want to hurt me and everyone I love anyway? We still can't figure that part out. One thing's for sure, I won't let him hurt them because of me. I will gladly suffer the loss of them in my life in order to protect them and their hearts from the kind of pain this asshole wants to cause. I need to focus my mind and body on my revenge. If he comes for me again, I'll be ready.

These people are truly evil for what they've done to us. I muffle my sob with my arm. I let myself cry my pain and heartache out in private. My depression is closing in on me and

he is winning. I wipe my face and suck it up at that thought. Donaldson and Dr. Maraschino come into the room talking in low tones.

“The gang’s all here to pick you up and they are pretty excited.” My face must show my distress at the doctor’s statement. She strolls towards me wearing a sad smile. “Are you sure you want to do this, honey?”

“I’m knackered,” Donaldson yawns. “This case is going to earn me a fat ass holiday.” Donaldson looks between me and the good doctor. ” What are you two...” Her face falls and she puts her hands on her hips. “Bloody hell, they are going to be pissed at me. Liam will want to see me too. We have a complicated relationship.” Oh, well now I feel bad for asking. Liam, huh? The badass agent is shaking like a leaf. She stares at me like I’m holding a life line. “Can’t you wait until after I leave?”

“Can you please help me?” That was probably not what she wanted me to say.

“Bollocks, this is what happens when I get too close to a job.” She throws up her arms using a snarky tone. I feel bad for asking but then she starts pacing like Gage and that makes my tears swim. “Well, don’t cry. If I do this, she has to help too. I’m not the only one going down for this.” Donaldson points at Dr. Maraschino and the doctor freaks out.

“No way! This is my hospital and those men are going to go nuts. What will I tell Riggs?” Dr. Maraschino is disturbed and unsettled by this idea.

My hopes are shattered and I begin to cry. “Please, I wouldn’t ask if there was another option,” I beg her and even Donaldson seems sympathetic to my situation. Dr. Maraschino shakes her head but throws up her hands resigned at my pleading expression. The doctor nods once and leaves the room.

“She must have a plan. I hope you get all the answers you’re looking for with this move, but can I be honest with you?” I nod because I’m still crying like a baby. “I’ve been doing this for a long time and I can read people like a fortune teller. Those guys love you, babe and this is going to hurt them

badly. Are you ready for that pain?" Donaldson isn't a fan of my plan.

Her questions don't make me feel any better either and my heart squeezes in pain.

"Can I use your phone?" I don't dare use my own because I don't want them to track me. Plus, I'm asking this person to help me lie to their friends and family. I'm not really sure who my enemies are at the moment. I feel safe with him and I know he will protect me. Donaldson hands over the phone and I dial the one person who feels indebted to help me. I know he's been beating himself up about the kidnapping and I feel bad, but I must use it against him.

"Hi, it's me. I need to disappear for a while. I know what this will cost you so I can ask someone else." He's silent for a second, and I can tell when he's about to protest the idea. So, I stop his words. "No, I know, Jace. This is going to crush them but they'll get over it. Please don't try to talk me out of it." I let him hear the pain and fear in my tone.

He curses and finally agrees before I hang up. The tears won't stop and I can barely breathe at this point. They're better off without me, that's what I tell myself trying to make me feel better. My heart is broken and will never be whole again. I need to prepare myself for the next attack and this is the best way I know how. Dr. Maraschino comes back in with a rolling laundry basket and my eyebrows go up.

"Oh, you sneaky Little Fruit." Donaldson says impressed with the get away prop and I laugh at the silly nickname.

"I saw it on an episode of, 'I Almost Got Away With It' one time. What? It's a good show." She shrugs and we both laugh. Dr. Maraschino pulls out the blankets and points inside. "Get in here and I'll distract your people. Donaldson will just roll you out like dirty laundry. No offense."

I look at the basket again with an open mind. This could actually work and I'm impressed.

"I liked the whole plan until the part where you said 'I'll roll her out.'" My chances are slim to none if Donaldson doesn't help us. She stares at the basket then me. I think she's going to

say no but instead she shrugs. “Well, get in and let’s do this quickly. I’ll need time to prepare myself to see Liam again.” I open my mouth but she says, “Don’t even ask. In or out, make your move.”

I jump out of bed, grab my stuff then walk to the basket. I inspect the inside and I’m surprised to see its roomy. I’ll fit in there no problem, but will it hold my weight is a better question? I glance back at them, looking for answers they don’t have.

“Don’t worry it’s clean.” The fruit tells me then points inside again. That nickname is still funny and I’m going to use it.

I can’t stay here and I can’t go home. So I get in and sit on the bottom crossing my legs for more balance. They both smile at me then cover me up with linens. I can’t see anything in here but I can hear them.

“I’ll hold off the guys for as long as possible. As soon as I get a chance though I’m leaving too. I don’t want to be here when they find out you’re gone.” I feel bad for asking the doctor for help now.

“They’ll ring me first.” Donaldson reminds the doctor, sighing like she just remembered too. “I’m only taking you to the front, Lex. Now be quiet. Shit, here goes nothing.” The agent sounds unsure of our plan. Now I’m thinking about abandoning this idea and my confidence drops. If I get caught, it will be worse.

I’m being pushed faster and I throw my arms out. This may have actually been fun under different circumstances. Time freezes for a second when I hear the door open. The guys don’t waste any time with pleasantries. They’re on my accomplices fast, rattling off questions about me. Everyone’s talking all at once.

“Doctor, doctor? Wait guys, let me go first. Can we go in yet? What’s taking so long? My woman needs me and I need her.” The last part is said low but he’s right next to me. Gage’s voice is filled with so much pain. I know he’s hurting and that makes this all worse.

“I don’t understand why you’re always fighting us and blocking access to her. I don’t mind going over your head. You were picked for this job because we were told you’re the best. I would hate to have to file a report against you. This is unacceptable treatment. She is coming home today, no more stalling doctor.” Lake sounds scared and I want to see his face. I still can’t believe he came back for me.

“OK Big Guy, settle down. No need to throw any threats around to scare the doctor. We understand your frustration and we are trying to help.” She shakes the basket and I know that was an “I told you so” warning. I’m going to owe them big time for this.

“Oh Donaldson, you misunderstood my face. I’m not scared of Mr. Masters. He isn’t my patient though. Mistory is and she needs some time to get ready. I can’t believe I used to like you on Tat Masters. It’s good to see you both again. Your daughter is doing much better.” She huffs at Lake, I’m sure when he growls and addresses my parents again without missing a beat. “Let’s go fill out the release papers and I will answer all your questions. Can you return this to maintenance before you leave, Donaldson?”

“Oh, uh yeah. Sure no problem. I need to run.” Wow, that was slick. Not, but the basket starts moving again. “Well, I’m off to uh...take a nap.” What the front door? I hope she doesn’t try to lie often. She needs to get out of here before she gives me away. I know they are hurting and that hurts me too. I have to hold my mouth because I can’t stop crying.

“Hey wait, we aren’t trying to be Bassholes.” I swear I gasp at the use of my insult. Fuck, this is hard. Anthony has stopped Donaldson again from leaving. “We just want to take her home and keep her safe. We know she needs time to heal but we can help. She is ours. You understand that right, Agent D?” Anthony’s tone begs her to understand and I almost stop this escape.

“I get it. I really do but I got bad guys to catch so I need to leave. Go with the others, Ashley will help you.” I can tell Donaldson feels bad by the tone of her voice.

“Alright, thanks for all your help.” Poor Ant, he’s hurting, but I can’t think about that.

I’m moving again and feel like I’m going to puke. Why is this so hard? I hear the elevator door ding and she pushes me inside.

“You owe me for having to lie to that teddy bear.” I’m about to warn her against my man when she talks suddenly shaken. “Maybe you should take the next lift. There’s not a lot of room, sorry.” Oh no, who is she talking to? “I’m going to the bottom floor.”

“Me too. It’s cool. I’ll just squeeze in the corner right here, thanks.” Wait a minute, what? I hear the doors close. “Hey, uh aren’t you the FBI Agent working Mistory’s case? Remember, you interviewed me about my relationship with her?”

“Alex?” I get up and he jumps back flabbergasted when he sees me.

“Lex?” He hugs me and I push him off. “The guys are pissed and here to take you home. There were too many cooks in the kitchen so I volunteered to get the car and snacks for you...” Alex looks at the basket then he looks at me. He turns to Donaldson and then back to me before shaking his head aggressively. “No way, count me out. Your parents are keeping the men in line, but if I help you that’s out the window.” He shakes his head and huffs. “Please don’t ask, Lex.”

I give him my best puppy dog eyes. I learned this little trick from the guys.

Alex rolls his eyes and sighs loud. “Great, I may as well just kiss my ass goodbye for this and you know it. Do you even feel bad for me? I was actually getting them to like me.”

Donaldson claps her hands together to get our attention. “Well, that’s my cue. I expect a check in call by tomorrow and if I don’t get one, this deal is off. I will hunt you down and deliver you with a red bow on your head.” She gives me a stern look until I nod my head in agreement. “Be careful out there, babe.” Donaldson pushes a button and gets off at the next floor.

I turn back to Alex and he curses.

“Why does she get to leave?” He’s pouting and I do feel a little bad about ruining his relationship with them but I need his help. He can help me train and watch my back.

“Jace is going to meet us out front. I don’t know who I can trust anymore, Alex. I need to be ready when that mother fucker comes for me again. Please help me, Alex?” I let him see my fear and Jace texts me. I’ll have to lose this phone soon or maybe the guys have a program I can use?

“Fine jerk, but you owe me. Get in.” I duck back in the basket and he covers me. Alex pushes me off the elevator and keeps moving. The motion stops and Alex whispers behind me, “OK, we’re almost out. I’ll be right back.”

Where the hell is he going? He better hurry up. I hope I’m making the right decision. I’m scared but I don’t know what to do. I won’t go home and put my loved ones in danger. Plus, I don’t really know who I can trust right now. The guys will hate me. My parents will be worried sick but understand, I hope...

...the distorted voice from my nightmares echoes around me and I freeze like a deer caught in the headlights. He’s calling my name in a singsong voice like a psycho. My blood runs cold and my fear triples when I realize I don’t have a weapon. I can feel the sweat forming on my skin as I hold completely still. I will fight until my last breath because I won’t be taken again, not this time.

“Did you think I was done with you, Little Bitch? Have you been dreaming of me like I wanted? They’re all sad and broken and it’s hilarious. We got interrupted before, but this time I have you forever.” Suddenly, he grabs me and holds the blanket over my face tight. I try to stand and twist, to smack his hands away. If I can just get him to loosen his grip some, but it’s solid and strong. The material’s blocking all my air and I start to really struggle with my breathing. I’m not going to die like this. I’m a survivor damn it....



Chapter 3 - My Broken Lion

Mistory ~ *Mi Sirenita*

“Hey, *Mi Sirenita*, it’s me. Mistory, you’re Okay. That’s it,” Gage purrs at me in his deep voice.

I try to slow my racing heart and blink my eyes a few times. It was a nightmare. *Just breathe, Lex.* I repeat that statement to myself a few more times. I look down at the beautiful man under me and see fear in those stunning green eyes. I have to push down the new part of myself that calls to that fear. I’m starting to like the feeling a little too much. Gage stares up at me unblinking, waiting for me to make a move. This is Gage, my Lion Heart. Is he still my Gage? I focus my breathing and slowly return to my body and mind.

“That’s it. In and out. Good, do you feel better?” His words are encouraging and they actually help.

I nod at him and release more air. It’s been a while since I had a nightmare that bad. Gage’s smile turns fierce, and I tilt my head at him.

“Mistory, I don’t mind you on top. I never have, but can you please remove the knife from my neck now?”

Oh my goodness, I look down and see one of my blades pressed against his throat. I could definitely kill him

with this angle and location. This reaction has become second nature to me. That's the reason Gage hasn't moved. I jump away from him and close the knife as I roll over the bed to the other side of the room. My training has made me tough as fuck. I can do shit straight out of action movies. I've had nothing but time to train and think.

I stand up prepared to leave because I'm embarrassed about the nightmares and the slip of my sanity. What if I actually hurt him? I only make it a few steps before I get an overwhelming sense of dizziness and feel faint. Gage reads me like a book and catches me under the arms before I hit the floor. I don't move and just let him hold me for a second. His big arms feel amazing around me. It's not a hug or embrace, but I don't care. I stare at all the flames tattooed on his forearms, feeling his heartbeat against my back. He's holding his breath, and I'm not sure what that means. I'm still feeling the aftermath of my dream so the comfort is welcoming. I wasn't prepared for the shock of my uninvited guests. The lightheadedness doesn't help the situation and makes the confidence in my skills really go down the drain.

“Easy there. Where are you going? It's the middle of the night. I'm watching you because you passed out earlier. Do you remember? I guess the shock of your past made you sick.” He squeezes me closer to his body to wrap those same forearms around my chest. He takes a deep breath just holding me tight. “You're not even going to let me watch over you while you sleep? I can't protect you from those nightmares either, huh? Why can't I help you?” His words are whispered close to my ear and I can feel the pain in each one like a blade to my heart.

I make myself pull away from him even though my heart doesn't want to. This is too much emotion to process. I need to do this on my own. I grab for the wall and lean against it. I'm grateful for the support holding me up and sigh with the effort. I glance up and his face alone is like solid blows to my gut. All the guys are here, like in the same house as me, and that freaks me the fuck out. I'm going to lose my edge and nerve with them around. My training will suffer, and I won't be ready for the next attack.

“I’m so sorry, Gage,” my tone begs him to understand.

He frowns and drops his outstretched arms then steps back. I can see his face change before my eyes, and he becomes closed off. I’ve never seen him like this before. I almost give in to jump in his arms but I stop myself. *Oh Lion Heart, I know you’re strong and brave, you don’t need to remind me.* I really did a number on the poor guy. All this guilt is heavy for my shoulders to carry and my back is already hurting after day one.

“What exactly are you sorry for, Lex?” His eyes narrow at the question.

I flinch at the name and his tone. Once again I’m thankful for the wall. He never calls me Lex, but I guess I deserve this.

His dark green eyes search mine and he crosses his arms in defense. “Are you sorry you left like a thief in the night? Are you sorry you lied to me?” The questions are a mix of pain and anger.

I start to cry because yes, I am, to both of those questions. He curses, taking a step towards me out of reflex. Then he stops, frowns and shakes his head. His hands are balled into tatted fists. Gage is spitting mad, and I don’t blame him.

“Are you sorry you gave me your body? Are you sorry you gave me your heart?” His words are like knives to the chest.

I shake my head, no. This is killing me. I bend over feeling the pain I’ve caused him deep inside my soul.

He leans closer to me, his voice hurt and pissed at the same time. “Are you sorry you broke my heart? That you made me love you, and then you ripped your heart away from me?”

My legs finally give out, and I slide to the floor. I rest my head on the wall and don’t try to stop the tears. I want to scream. “I’ve suffered too,” but that’s petty and deflecting my own guilt. Deep down I knew this could happen. Gage has

been completely honest about his feelings the whole time. He's a tough guy that has grown so much since I met him. My breathing becomes ragged from the tears and heartache flowing through my veins.

“Shit, why is this so painful? It was never supposed to be like this. We communicate and talk out our problems like all the strong couples in the world.” Gage picks me up off the floor with little effort. I wrap my arms around him and sigh as he carries me to the bed. He sits me down on his lap and holds me close. One of his tatted fingers lifts my face to meet his. He stares at me, his eyes moving rapidly to take in all of my face. Being this close makes my body heat with an uncontrollable need for him. He clears his throat before saying, “I hate being mad at you, but you really hurt me.”

That opens the floodgates and I cry for everything that's happened to us and everything I've done to them. I know I was selfish to leave like that, but they mean more to me than my happiness. I owed them more than what I gave and I regret it most here and now. I was just so damn scared... maybe I'm not anymore. I've strengthened my soul and spirit. Gage holds me and rocks me like a baby. And dang if it doesn't feel good to be a little vulnerable for once.

I can still get my revenge with them in my life, can't I?

“I'm sorry for everything, Gage.” He frowns like he doesn't understand why I'm apologizing again. He's such a good man. My tears return and I hate myself for causing all this extra drama. I hate crying even more because I don't want to be weak ever again.

“No, *Mi Sirenita*, I'm sorry I didn't protect you. I'm sorry I let someone take you and hurt you. I'm not a man anymore. I don't even deserve to be here right now. I just don't know how to live without you in my life. You changed me.” There's admiration and wonder in his voice. He tucks his forehead in my chest then sighs deeply. His grip on me tightens and he sniffs my hair.

“No, Gage, it's all on me. I don't deserve you.” I grab his face with both my hands and stare into his eyes. “I love

you so much, but I'm putting all you guys in danger just being around you. I don't want him to use me against you ever again. I don't want anything to happen to you. I won't survive it." I drop my hands, and he wipes my eyes then kisses each eyelid sweetly. His tenderness breaks through my sadness and I want more of him. I rub myself against his growing erection, and he groans my name. This is just passion and pent up lust, right? We need to talk it out instead of listening to our horny bodies. I try to pull back, however he won't let me go. My insecurities make me look down and try to hide my face before asking my question. "Why would you still want me?" My voice is low when I say, "He touched me, Gage." My heart breaks all over again for the victim I was, but I need to know how he feels about this. Gage curses in Spanish and squeezes me tighter.

"Do you want to tell me all of it now, *Mi Sirenita*? I know everything because I've read all the reports. We didn't want to over step, but we needed to search for clues." Gage lifts my face so our eyes meet. He still looks at me with so much affection that my eyes water again. "I will always want you. I will show you when you're ready. I love you, Mistory. I want forever with you, but no more games. You have to promise to never ever run from me again." He waits for my answer and I nod. Gage is still unsure by the expression on his face. "I need you to be honest with me about something." He swallows hard and his eyes are shiny. "Do you really love me?"

That question makes me start crying again. I can't believe he doubts his claim on my heart. This is how far we've fallen?

"Yes, Gage, I'm so sorry I made you question that." Why am I evil? I cover my face using my hands.

He pulls my hands away and tugs me closer, praising God. I take advantage of his closeness and lick the flames on his neck once. I can't believe I had my blade there. I run my tongue over it again, slower this time. He moans, and I can't hold back my desire. I grab his face and pepper it with kisses. His hands roam my body, and it feels so amazing. Gage pulls

my shirt down and attacks my shoulders using his tongue and teeth. I pant, “I love you, Lion Heart,” and he growls at me. His teeth sink into my skin briefly but hard. It feels like I’ve been marked by him. My moan is loud when he licks the stinging bite.

“I love you too, Lover.” Gage takes my mouth, and our tongues meet in heaven. I forgot how good it feels to kiss him. I turn around quickly and straddle his lap. He grunts when I almost kick him in the nuts but when I freak out and try to pull away, he brings me back. His tongue moves over mine and I’m soaking wet from eagerness. Finally, he pulls back, and I’m really worked up already. “Now can I show you how much I love you?” The fact that he even asked when I know how bad he wants me, makes me giddy and ready for this.

I nod and try to take off my shirt. He knocks my hands away and shakes his head, no. I laugh and lift my arms over my head for him. Gage takes the shirt off slowly watching me with hungry eyes. He stops when the material covers my face and I don’t panic because I trust him. Gage leans into me and uses his mouth all over my chest and shoulders. My nipples harden when he blows on them and I wiggle under him. I love being restricted and restrained, but Gage removes my shirt completely in the next second. He laughs when he sees me pout because the game’s over.

“We’ll save that for next time, *Mi Sirenita*. I’m going to try to be slow and really make love to you, but I would be lying if I said I wasn’t eager to be inside your wet pussy. I want to pound into you until you scream my name. I’m going to brand myself in your heart and soul.” He kisses my neck again, and I shiver in his arms.

Fuck, I forgot how good Gage is at dirty talk and I think I just gushed all over. He smiles because he’s aware of his super power. Gage stands then kisses me once more before he lays me on the bed. His inked hands run over me and I moan his name. The excited and radiant smile he’s sporting makes me giggle. Ever so slowly, he starts undressing me the rest of the way. His green eyes are dark with lust. He makes me feel special looking at me like this. It’s a huge confidence

booster for my ego. When I'm naked he steps back staring hard and appreciation is written all over his face.

“My Goddess, your body would make a man cry. What have you done to yourself?” His eyes travel my body hungrily. Yeah, I've lost my “boyfriend weight” and toned some muscles I didn't know I had. I've been working my ass off, literally.

Gage bites his hand dramatically and that makes me laugh out loud. Oh dear Lord, Gage begins stripping his clothes for me. He could kill someone with that body. I may have a heart attack right now. I didn't think it was possible for him to get any bigger, but he has. His huge muscles were hidden under that big shirt. Gage's tattoos call to my tongue and, like always, he's very lickable. Drool pools in my mouth at the sight of his sexy nipple piercings. I used to secretly be amazed that a man like him wanted me. My eyes follow his every move. He likes to tease me and I like it too.

“Some of us have been training too. Liam is wicked good at what he does.” He unties his joggers watching me closely. I lick my lips super turned on by the show. My anticipation soars when he pulls out the waistband. “Do you want my cock, *Mi Sirenita?*” Gage purrs and I nod because hell yeah! He kicks off his shoes and slides down both pants and boxers in one go. He's so big and perfect, standing at attention for me. His massive dick jumps under my stare. I want it so bad that my body moves closer to him. My pussy is soaking wet just looking at him. I get up on my knees and crawl to the edge of the bed. I try to reach for him, but he's too far away.

“I know what I just said, but I'm not sure I can do it, Love.” What? My face falls and he laughs. “I have to make love to you in my own way. Does that work for you? Do you trust me?” I really do, so I nod agreeing to surrender. The smile that appears on his face is wicked as he touches himself walking to me. I, of course, pout because I want to do the touching. Gage holds up a finger and moves it in a circle. Oh yes! I spin around to get on my knees and hold my hands behind my back. I shake my long hair out and give him a sexy

look over my shoulder waiting. He moves my hair and kisses my shoulder before stepping back. “Good Girl, I want to fuck you from behind, so I can smack this ass of mine. I missed it so much.” That makes me feel like a Queen. I love all his praise. However, I’m appalled a second later and try to pull away when he bends and stares straight at my ass. “Don’t move,” he demands in a deep voice. My submissive side listens to the command automatically, and I hold still. “Did you make my ass smaller, *Mi Sirenita*?” He sounds almost disappointed but leans forward and kisses it passionately.

Gage takes control by pushing me down on all fours in front of him. His big palm rubs my ass then spanks me hard. I moan and throw my head back in bliss. Oh my goodness, that feels so fucking good. He rubs my right cheek and smacks it too. Gage abruptly flips me over like I weigh nothing to him. He kneels before me and spreads my legs open. At the sight of my pussy, his breathing gets heavy and his eyes intense.

“I can’t believe you changed my ass without letting me say goodbye.” Gage actually looks like he’s sulking because my butt is smaller. I laugh and he leans down to kiss my lips, cheeks, and nose. He uses his huge muscled arms to hold himself over me. “You know, your ass and I have a special bond. She likes me to pound her and now, I have nothing to hold on to.” He gives me a pushed out bottom lip.

That’s hilarious, so I start cracking up. My ass is a person now and independant from me? I stop laughing as I feel him close to my entrance. Not wanting to wait any longer I buck my hips into him. His wicked smile makes my cheeks heat because he knows I’m impatient. I run my fingers over his beautiful smooth face and into his black hair. He groans then turns his head to kiss my hand holding his face. His hips rotate and that brings his cock closer to me.

“Oh, you’re so wet,” he grunts, then nips my collarbone. “I’m still going to punish you later, you can count on that.” The promise in his tone is undeniable and I get excited. After kissing my lips once Gage sits up again. I open my legs even wider for him in invitation and he smiles, staring

at my pussy. “I need to watch your face when I fuck you this time. Are you sure about this?”

I nod and look at him like he’s lost his mind. If he tried to stop now, I would kick his ass. I run my hands over my hard nipples and watch his eyes light up with want. Gage reaches out to touch my clit gently with skilled fingers. Then he uses small circles to bring me close to the edge. I grab his hand and try to stop the pleasure. It’s too intense. He backs off, releasing a deep chuckle. I watch as Gage holds his huge erection then he lines it up with my dripping wet center. He enters me ever so slowly, letting me adjust to his size but his cock makes me cry out from the tight fit. It doesn’t hurt, it feels fantastic. I grab Gage’s shoulders with both hands then I lift my hips up to meet him. I moan and he grunts when he slides deeper inside me.

“You’ve always been tight. Don’t get it wrong, Love. But holy shit! You’re squeezing me like a slick small fist wrapped around my cock.” Gage’s words are such a turn on. He keeps stretching me with shallow thrusts.

I moan and pull him closer to me using my new strength. I’m wet enough and stretched enough to push it to the next level. I slam my hips into his with his next thrust so he gets the idea. We both feel him going even deeper this time. Why did I deny myself this pleasure? I cry out when Gage slips a hand between us to play with my clit again. My skin gets hot all over from the agonizing building happening inside me. I can feel my orgasm coming like a tidal wave of pleasure. Gage feels it too and lifts my legs around his shoulders. He finally bottoms out inside me and I feel his balls slapping against my ass. I can feel every inch of him moving in and out of me now. I’m chanting his name and that excites him more. He bends me in half and leans down to kiss my neck some more. His big tattooed hands claim my breasts as his. I moan when he pinches my nipples between his fingers. Gage takes my mouth and our tongues wrestle for power. My nails dig into his back with every hard pump of his hips. I’ve missed his cock so much. I keep panting and calling his name like a broken record. Gage likes me loud during sex and I want to

please him like he does me. I couldn't control myself anyway, this feels so amazing.

Gage keeps moving in and out of me at a steady pace. I can feel myself stretching around him so we can be one completely. I'm leaking all over his giant cock from the pure rapture of our joining. He moves faster and pushes his knees into the back of my thighs. My pussy squeezes him and he says my name loudly. That's my undoing because it's so damn sexy. I come hard in the next instant. He doesn't stop thrusting and laughs when I scream from the sensitivity. I see pure satisfaction on his gorgeous face at my reaction.

Suddenly, he pulls out, and I'm shaking beneath him from the aftershocks of pleasure.

"Turn over, my Love," Gage encourages in a seductive voice backing away so I can.

I do and he grabs one of the pillows. He slides it under my belly and it props me up to the perfect angle. My ass is in the air waiting for him to do as he pleases. Once he's happy with my position, he leans over me to whisper in my ear. "Hold on, Goddess. I'm going to fuck you hard and, if you can take more, I'll make love to you after."

He uses a finger and enters me from behind. That makes my back arch involuntarily and I moan digging my hands in the sheets. I'm really sensitive right now. He moves his big finger in and out of my soaking pussy. Then I feel him move to my back hole. It's his favorite and I start leaking thinking about him there. I love anal sex. That's Gage's hole and we both know it.

"Not now, Little Mermaid, but we have forever." I nod knowing we'll be doing that later. My hands tighten on the pillow preparing for him. Gage enters my pussy with his huge dick and his finger enters my ass at the same time. I push back, loving the feeling of being full.

"Gage, it feels so good. I want all of you in me. I missed your giant cock, Lion Heart. Fuck my holes, Gage." The gratification is glorious.

Gage's hips move faster and faster at my words. My holes tighten around him and I scream from my growing orgasm. Gage leans over me and starts licking along my back. The wet tongue combined with his hot breath is such a turn on. He removes his finger and his thrusts slow. Gage's big hands find my breasts. He pulls my upper body up flush to his like I weigh nothing. This angle makes him go even deeper and his hands wrap around my neck and chest.

"Gage, oh Gage, I'm going to come on your cock." It's so deep.

"Do it, drench my dick. I need all of you, Mistory." Gage's words are like gas to a burning fire.

He leans me forward some and holds my head with both hands pounding into my body powerfully. Our bodies slap together with the force of his thrusts. He turns my face and muffles my screams using his tongue. I come all over and fall forward from exhaustion. Gage rides my limp body hard from behind, until he stops sinking into me one last time. His body jerks, releasing all his cum deep inside me. I've never heard him moan that loud before. *Shit it's so hot that I made him do that.* He falls on me and kisses my back all over.

"Let's go take a shower, *Mi Sirenita*. It isn't as big as mine but it'll do." Gage picks me up, and I groan from the movement. My body feels used and delicious as hell.

I kiss his chest once, just happy to have him here with me. "Do you think one day we'll be happy and safe? I don't want to live my life always watching our backs." I whisper my question and share my fear because I'm scared to be hopeful for our future.

His heart has finally slowed and I hear the steady beat against my ear. I play with his nipple rings and smile. I bought them as a gift before I left. One has a lion and the other has a mermaid attached to the rings.

"Yes, and then you'll have to deal with the show and finishing your book. Have you been writing here?" His hand

runs along my back pulling me closer to him.

I sigh because I haven't even thought about my book. I've been stuck in a revenge state of mind and nothing else mattered. I lean up to kiss his head and he kisses mine in return. I can actually feel my heart healing as dumb as that sounds. I shake my head no to answer his question.

"That's OK, My Little Mermaid, life will be better now that we're together. I promise." His tone's so confident I almost believe him without any doubts.

I told Gage everything when we were in the shower earlier, and he held me while I cried my heart out. Then he made gentle love to me once we got back to bed. OK, and yes we took another shower. I forgot how messy everything gets when you have a very active sex life. He kisses my head and holds me tighter.

I tilt my head up and Gage aggressively takes my mouth with his. I kiss him back then get on his lap. My hands run through his rich black hair. His dick is getting hard again and I'm ready for another round too. I can't get enough of him. I'll worry about my downtown later because I'll definitely be sore tomorrow.

We both freeze when we hear the bedroom door open. I let out a yelp and lay flat next to Gage. I pull up the sheets fast to cover myself and he laughs at my nervous reaction. Anthony stumbles into the room and I just stare at him. I saw him only from a distance earlier. His hands are raised in the air in surrender. He looks devastated and emotionally drained. That makes me want to cry all over again.

"I'm sorry I know we agreed everyone would get their own time with her, but I just need to know. You know?" Anthony wobbles and stares at me. "Was what we had all a dream? Did you really ever feel anything for me?"

Being cut with a rusty blade would hurt less compared to his questions. I can't stop the tears that start leaking from my eyes. Anthony walks closer to the bed and trips over a throw pillow on the ground.

Is he drunk?

I look at Gage and see pity on his face. He nods at my unspoken question. Oh no, that's not like Anthony at all. Has he been drinking this whole time?

"Anthony?" He begins crawling to the bed and I crawl to the edge too. His head pops up over the side as I reach the end of the bed.

"Hey there, Sexy Lexy." Anthony's grin is flirtatious and goofy. It's like he doesn't remember his last questions to me. The gorgeous man is on his knees before me. Then he tilts his head looking sad suddenly. "Did you know I cried when you left me? I've never cried over a woman before in my life. It's not really manly you know? I didn't even cry when I stopped playing ball." He shakes his head and tries standing using the bed for support. He leans over me grinning and then he falls on top of me. I tumble over laughing at him. His face is very close to mine. "Fuck, I missed the sound of your laugh. I love you, Sexy *Mistress*."

Anthony blows me a kiss and I take his mouth with mine. Yep, definitely drunk because he tastes like Jack. Our tongues play with each other, slipping and sliding. His tongue ring is smooth and rolls over my tongue. He starts grinding against me and whispers his love over and over again. Anthony pulls me with him as he rolls over. Just like most drunk people, he misjudges his coordination. He falls right off the bed and lands on the floor hard. Thankfully, Gage is quick, and he catches me before I can follow.

I look over the side of the bed to see Anthony face down and unmoving. Wow, he's wasted. I jump out of my skin when Anthony suddenly breaks out in song. What is he singing? My tears swim when I recognize "Waves," by Mr. Probz. Gage sighs loudly and rolls closer to me to see what Anthony's doing. I wipe my face, and Gage kisses my shoulder trying to comfort me. Anthony hasn't moved but I faintly hear him still singing. What did I do to them?

"Okay Romeo, are you staying or going because I think you're a little too drunk for anything other than

sleeping.” Gage kisses my neck this time then my head. My guilt and pain are clear to him now. I still can’t believe he thought I didn’t care. He rolls over stretching to shake Anthony and that’s when I see a new tattoo on his side. I literally gasp and grab at him with both my hands. He chuckles when I climb on him and awkwardly bring my face close to the new tat for inspection.

“What’s this?” It’s so fucking magnificent, I just stare. I’m not conceited or anything but it truly is. The tattoo is two different heads pushed together to make one. Half is a Lion and half is *MY* face. Both my hair and the lion’s hair are long, wild and free. We are drawn to be stunning and staring right at you when you look at it. *They are one.* It’s an absolutely perfect tattoo to represent both of us. I stare at it for a second longer then meet Gage’s green eyes. “Can I have one?” I wipe my tears and he nods, grinning at my reaction. He leans in and kisses both my eyes gently.

“I was hoping you would.” He takes my mouth and I kiss him with all the love in my heart. I hear a glass shatter and gasp, breaking away from Gage.

Anthony’s standing there and his fist is covered in blood. The dresser mirror is toast now and glass is everywhere. Anthony takes off his shirt and wraps it around his hand. I’m definitely worried about his behavior, but I would be lying if I said I don’t get distracted by Anthony’s perfectly ripped and fine ass body. Looks like he hasn’t stopped working out either. I wonder if Liam has been training him too?

I don’t get out of bed and go to him like I want to because I’m not sure of his mood right now. He did just punch a mirror. Anthony looks at me like I just shot him in the heart. He turns and starts walking towards the door.

What should I do?

“Tony, where are you going?” Gage kisses my back and chills run along my body. Anthony spins on us fast and his eyes are twin balls of fire. He marches to the edge of the bed again and points at me.

“Do you still trust me?” Anthony waits for my answer while crossing his arms over his dark naked chest. I nod to him, scared to talk because I don’t want to cry anymore, my poor Ant. I need to help him get over this. I pat the bed on the other side of me and Gage. Anthony lets out a defeated sound and crawls on the bed next to me. He lays his head in my lap and rubs against my stomach. “I’m sorry. I’ll leave you alone if you really want me to. But I’m begging you please don’t say that’s what you want.” Anthony’s pleading words echo off my skin. I hold Anthony tighter and Gage kisses me before he gets up.

“It’s okay, my Ant. Just go to sleep and we’ll talk about it in the morning. I love you, Tony.” He hugs me closer and whimpers in my lap like a wounded puppy. I rub his head feeling all the torment I’ve caused.

Gage comes back minutes later with bandages and stuff to clean Anthony up. He gets to work and Anthony just falls asleep on me. Once Gage is done, I thank him and he leaves for the bathroom. I do my best to help Anthony move over and get comfortable under the blankets. His arm shoots out to grab me around the waist and he pulls me closer to spoon me from behind even in sleep. Gage returns wet and slides in the bed facing me.

“I’m sorry, Gage. Thanks for helping me with him.” I touch his smooth face with my hand and look into those killer green eyes. Gage takes my hand to kiss the palm.

“Don’t be sorry, *Mi Sirenita*. He needs you. We all do.” Gage leans in and kisses me deeply. Anthony tightens his hold when I try to scoot closer to Gage. We both laugh at the big snoring man behind me. Gage kisses me again then holds my body where Anthony isn’t.

It’s going to be OK.



Chapter 4 - The Truth

Shameful Jesse

“Hush Hush Baby,” by Lxabdra pours into my ears as I watch her sleeping on the bed like a beautiful Goddess and wish more than anything that I can touch her just once. I’ve been listening to her playlists on Spotify, and this one was under my name. She hates me, and I know it. Why didn’t I just tell her? I know why, because I thought I knew better and didn’t trust her to be strong enough to handle it. *I was a fucking fool.* This is my punishment and sacrifice for trying to keep everyone safe. I kick the dresser letting my mood get the better of me. Maybe I should start taking meds too, though I’m not sure if they’re helping Lake at all. Oh, is that her perfume? I get too excited and almost fall on my face, but catch myself at the last second on the dresser. I glance over worried about the noise and freeze before pulling out my earbuds.

Lex’s eyes are open and locked on me.

“I’m sorry. I’ll leave as soon as I’m done.” Her bright blue eyes stare at me with indifference, and it’s like a kick to the nuts. I clear my throat and motion to the mess on the floor. “Tony said there was glass and I didn’t want you to cut your feet. Gage took Tony to get his hand looked at this morning, but they’ll be back soon.” She doesn’t say anything and I don’t

have the balls to hold eye contact. I decide to act like I'm doing something important by getting busy cleaning this mess.

The water from her shower lets me know I'm finally alone in the room. I release the deep breath I was holding. I knew this would be difficult, but not this hard. I need to get out of here before she's done and I catch sight of her wet. After making the pile of glass, I use the dust pan to collect the broken shards. I bend over and inspect the floor one more time. That's as good as it's going to get without a vacuum. I swipe the wet rag over the area and feel satisfied with the results.

I straighten and stretch, sighing to myself. I'm so fucking tired because I don't sleep anymore. I take a deep breath as I walk to the trash can and toss the glass away. When I turn around, Lex is standing by the dresser getting clothes out.

Fucking hell!

She's totally naked and absolutely perfect. From here I can tell her body is different, and my eyes roam all that glorious skin. My stomach drops at the thought of her not eating properly. Why do I have the urge to order all her favorite meals? I watch her move and my hands itch to paint her. My love of art disappeared when she did. I spin around fast when she faces me with raised eyebrows.

"Sorry, it took longer than I thought." I quickly gather all my supplies, intending on leaving. When I look at her again, she's wearing a sexy black matching bra and panty set. I could definitely paint her in that. All the lace makes my mouth water. She glances at me again, probably wondering why I haven't left yet. "Uh, I also wanted to tell you we'll be having the meeting as soon as Gage gets back. I've got the conference room all set up." With my head down I start walking towards the door.

Her cold voice stops me before I can even reach it. "That's fucking it then? That's all you think I deserve, James?"

Everything I'm holding falls to the floor at that name. My body moves on its own, and I'm at her side in an instant. I reach for her wrist to stop her from brushing that beautiful long dark hair again. She's acting like she didn't just hit me with her words. Lex's scent fills my nose and I almost die on the spot. It's the same and that smell has haunted my dreams for weeks. She's shocked that I'm touching her, so I lean into her personal space to make my point. I'm not going to let her just attack me for no reason. That name is a low blow and she knows it.

"Don't push me. I promised everyone that nothing will be said until the meeting. Do you want me to break my word again?" I snap in her face because my mood is bitter and showing today.

Lex just glares at me with disgust in her eyes. I almost break down and beg for forgiveness. From her expression I can see she really does hate me, and there's no hope for us. There was always a possibility, but I never believed it was over until now. I drop her wrist and back up devastated. My eyes betray me to roam her body one last time. *Yep, still hot as fuck.* I gather the supplies again and curse under my breath. A wave of regret washes over me as I walk to the door a second time. She'll learn the whole story soon enough.

"Whatever you say, Jay." The sarcasm is clear in her tone.

Wow, kick to the nuts number two. I keep walking and don't address the jab.

"Why would I deserve to know what happened at your open house, right? I'm the one that embarrassed you and got drugged like a moron. Oh, and I'm not Jennifer either. I didn't help you with your dream or anything." The bitterness has been eating at her and my guilt doubles.

She's got it all wrong and I'm kind of pissed, Bryson didn't tell her anything. I get that he was following through with our plan and all, but dang thanks for letting her hate grow like this. I need to see her face but I can't bear to look at her.

“For your information, Jess-eeee, I found the No. 2 building months ago. Feel free to check my computer if you don’t believe me. I just didn’t want to pressure you. You do remember that owning your own art gallery was mine and Gage’s idea right? Jennifer wasn’t in bed with us that night at Gage’s farm.” I throw everything against the wall hard. This is so fucked up and all wrong. “Sage suggested I ask Lake to help me but you know how our relationship is. Then I planned on showing you and surprising you with it. I knew it was perfect. I even had a dream that you would make it your own. You didn’t need me though you found it without me.” Her voice breaks behind me and she bumps me with her body because she’s still mad.

What? No fucking way! Is this a sign that she was always mine?

I turn around and take her in my arms like I’ve been wanting to do for so long. My mouth lands on hers like a heat seeking missile. Her hands find my hair and I groan at the contact. She opens her mouth and kisses me back with the same need I feel. My cock rubs against her, begging for attention. I’m not even sure I’m the one that moved. He wants her just as much as I do. My tongue dances with hers, and it feels like I’ve just created a masterpiece. Lex is a fucking fantastic kisser and I lose myself in the kiss.

Unfortunately, frustration, hurt and confusion brings her back to reality sooner than I hoped. Her small fists pound on my chest a few times but I don’t stop her. She shoves me away from her hard using both hands. I don’t push my luck and stay back like she wants. The sparks flying between us are undeniable but she shakes her head trying to clear them. I almost forgot what it feels like to be with her.

Almost. Liar!

“You still haven’t told me shit, Jesse.” Lex’s arms are wrapped around her naked middle. She’s furious but there’s pain in her blue eyes too. “Answer this one question for me.”

I lift my hands telling her to bring it, and I wait for the dreaded question.

“How long did Jennifer work with you? No, not that question. Did you feel bad for lying to me every time you canceled on me for the “art show”? Did you think about me when you were fucking her?” There is real pain in her tone.

Tears are in her eyes but she’s strong and they won’t fall. This is pure torture having to see this.

Lex wipes her face and steps back again. “What? I didn’t give you enough attention? So instead, you went to someone I hate just to fucking hurt me? How could you look at yourself in the mirror? Never mind. I don’t care. I knew this would never work.”

She turns her back on me and that’s not OK. I spin her, pick her up, and slam her against the wall. I made sure my arms took the impact but it felt amazing to hear her loud sexy gasp. I set her down then put my arm on the wall and lean over her like they do in the movies. I can be romantic, and Bro, my girl’s so fucking gorgeous. I kiss her head and sniff her wet hair. I don’t even give a shit if it’s creepy. I turn her face in my direction using my gloved fingers and let her smell the leather. Those blue eyes widen when the smell hits her nose.

Oh, I remember Sweetheart.

“You didn’t think our relationship would work? How can you say something like that?” She just stares at me and I almost lose my shit. “That’s fucking bullshit, Lex. I didn’t know what to do. I couldn’t let her die.” I step back and hit the wall then stomp away from her. I’m always the bad guy. I don’t care how hard I just slammed that door behind me either. I’m not even going to clean up my mess and I’ll keep thinking about it all day. My OCD wouldn’t have it any other way.

I’m not going to stand there and listen to all the reasons she doesn’t love me. I knew this whole thing was too good to be true. I’m the one who said this kind of love and relationship was a dumb idea. Gage swore our love was different, and we would make it work.

I walk down the stairs making new plans and fixing my hair. I’ll tell everyone my side of what happened. Then I’ll listen to their ideas about what to do next. I’m going to help

them catch the bad guys and make sure she's safe. After that I'll go to school in New York and get out of everyone's hair. I'm done with this life. It's time to start over because she doesn't love me. I won't be able to be around her and not want to be with her. The conference room will be just how I left it this morning. I'll check the files again to pass the time until they get here.

Last night, I made myself stay in there the entire time and it was torture in a bittersweet way. That room is right under hers and even though this house is expensive and built by top notch people, I could still hear her sounds of pleasure when Gage took her almost all night long.

I reach for the handle and begin to open the door. A knife goes sailing by my head and sticks in the wood by my nose.

What the fuck?

There's a loud thump, and another knife barely misses the top of my head. I look up at the knife that could've killed me. Is that my hair caught on it? My hand goes to my head to check. I spin to see Lex staring at me with anger written all over her face.

Holy mother!

Lex's dressed in black leather now and my heart just stopped beating. Wow, I shake my hand like John Travolta from Grease and fall against the door. Olivia's got nothing on my woman. Looks like she's a badass bitch wearing tight ass clothes. My cock is instantly beyond hard at this point. Once again, I think her body looks different and I want to study all her new angles and curves. I'll text Gage to bring food home. Mexican food will make her eyes light up. Somehow even in that outfit, she still looks broken and aged. It makes me sad to see all her hard edges. We'll help bring Lex back to life. If we try, maybe we'll be better than before.

She gets impatient with me and lets me know she isn't messing around. Another knife comes zooming in my direction. I move and stand in the direct line of fire. Lex screams and her eyes go wide. I roll to the left at the last

second and feel the wind from the knife that landed next to me. I'm grinning like a mad man when she stops running towards me at full tilt.

She loves me!

“Wipe that smile off your face, Jesse, right this minute. You think you can say shit like that and just walk away from me? Fuck that, now spill it all.” She lifts her hand and there's another blade in it. Damn, Bryson wasn't kidding about teaching her everything. He said there was an impalement expert working with her, but I didn't think her aim would be this good already. I'm definitely scared to see her in hand to hand combat after learning she was trained by a soldier that ran The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, (MCMAP). She is going to kick my ass. My eyes narrow, searching her body. Where is she getting all the knives?

I make a break for it and jump through the door. I know she'll follow me because she wants answers. Once inside, I hide behind the door and wait for her. When she walks in, I pounce on her but she's ready for me. Lex flips me over her back effortlessly. I let out a rush of air as my back hits the floor hard.

Ouch, that really hurt.

Lex slams the door and crosses her arms looking down at me. I sit up on my elbows, watching my beautiful tough woman. I'm really proud of her. Plus, bro, she is fine as fuck in all that leather. Lex strolls over to me and pushes me down flat with the toe of her shoe. My head hits the floor and she grins down at me. OK, I deserve that and it's super sexy. She squats over me then sits on my chest hard.

Oh, man, she has another blade. Isn't this getting out of hand? She doesn't seem as upset anymore, so I push my luck and stick my tongue out at her. Her eyes narrow and she points the knife at my nose, leaning into me close.

“Listen Jesse, I'm not in the mood to play. Tell me what you meant this minute. Let who die? Spill it. All. Of. It. NOW,” she growls and I'm sorry, but I chuckle. “I'm serious. No more jokes and no more games. I don't care who you

promised. What matters more to you, Jesse? Me or everyone else?”

Well, that question is very simple to answer. I lean up to kiss her knife and her eyes widen.

“You, it’s always been fucking you.” My voice shows the bitterness I feel that she would even ask.

Lex seems dumbfounded by my answer so she pulls back and sits up out of my face. The knife disappears and, once again, my respect for her doubles. She begins to stand, but I pull her back down on top of me. I hold her thighs with my gloved hands. The leather on leather makes the sound we’ve grown to love. It reminds us of hot mind blowing sex. We talked about it one time in the room I built for her.

It looks like she’s lost her fight by the way her eyes keep finding my chest instead of my eyes. *That’s bullshit.* Where did her fire go? I swear, I never meant to hurt her. She’s right, fuck everyone else. I’m sick of being a martyr. I sit up and arrange her on my lap so we can talk.

“I never told you about Jennifer, and I regret that so fucking much.” She tries to pull away because she still has the wrong idea. I shake my head at her and tighten my grip. “Just listen, please?”

“I don’t want your excuses and it will break my heart to hear the details of your affair. This was a bad idea, just forget I asked.” Lex wounds me when she acts like my words won’t matter. Her mind is already made up.

“First and foremost, I have never, and will never, cheat on you. Not telling you about Jennifer was disrespectful and stupid, but nothing happened between us. Everything was moving so fast, and I had a lot of pressure on me. That’s not an excuse, believe me, I know that. Honestly though, I didn’t think about it, and once I decided to tell you everything, Bryson kind of distracted me.” I can still see doubt in her eyes. “That’s not an excuse and that will never happen again. I’m sorry I made you question my loyalty to you. Loyalty means everything to me. You have no idea.” I won’t bring up my

father and what a number he did on me. I'm just glad I didn't turn out like him.

"Okay, maybe you "forgot" to tell me. But then you acted like you were dating her in front of everyone. People were watching us when you made a fool of me." That hurts because it's a true statement and I can't go back in time to change it.

"I know. After Bryson told me his suspicions, we had to come up with a plan. We decided not to tell everyone and that was another mistake. It wasn't that we didn't trust you guys, but Bryson had already found evidence that we were all being hacked and monitored. We couldn't just tip off the bad guys and show our hand." She's frowning but still listening so that counts.

Her eyes narrow, "You said bad guys? Like Tamera and Deadman?" Gage's nickname for that Fucker is popular. It fits perfectly if you ask me.

"We didn't know shit about Tamera, but yeah, we think there's multiple people involved. On top of all that, I was constantly busy planning the show and getting shit ready. It's not easy to create art on demand when your mind is racing. I was nervous too because it was my big art debut." I share my true fears with her.

Lex stops me by holding up a hand like she always does. Total Nerd, but she's so fucking beautiful and I kiss her knee. "Wait, Bryson knows who kidnapped me?"

I shake my head because I see her temper increasing at the very idea. Now she's sporting a deep frown so I gently trace my glove over her face.

Her smile is quick and radiant. "I'm really confused, Jesse. What do you mean 'we' think?"

She stands up and holds out a hand to me. I take it like it's a life line. We walk to the large conference table together and I sit in the closet chair. I'm only disappointed for a second before she sits on my lap instead of her own chair. I wrap my arms around her and breathe her in. Fuck, she sm-

“Dang, you smell great,” my words come out in a rush of air.

“I was literally just thinking the same thing about you.” I tickle her neck using my beard and kiss her there. “All the details will be revealed at the meeting. Bryson actually hasn’t told me everything yet. I never liked that part of the plan in the first place. Lessons learned, I guess.” I hold her still full of regrets. She snuggles into me and I think I can feel my heart healing. “I’ll tell you my part though. We basically figured out that someone has been bugging everyone in The Crew for a while now. Our phones, cars and computers, even TNT, so basically everything.”

“Like an FBI phone tap type thing?” I nod and her mouth pops open in shock.

I swallow the lump in my throat before I tell her the next part. It’s hard to even think about. “Then someone started blackmailing me about three weeks before the show. At first, it was just empty threats about my reputation. The Kelly Brothers had already stepped up security. They were watching us like hawks so I wasn’t worried. All that shit didn’t bother me at all. You’ve seen how some people get around celebrities. It can definitely get a lot darker when dealing with people who have mental health issues. We’ve had stalkers before so I think that’s why we all didn’t panic right away.” The thought of someone stalking her though drives me mad. I squeeze her close and she hugs me tighter. “So I ignored them for the most part, until they got out of pocket. They made the mistake of telling me I had to dump you. I went into a fit of rage and destroyed a few art pieces I was working on at No. 2.” I sigh remembering how that all went down.

“Oh, not your art.” She turns around and kisses all over my face. I take her mouth working magic with my tongue, but I pull back before it gets too heavy. She needs to know, and now I want it all out too.

“Yes, it sucked because I had to replace them with less time after my mood settled down. Anyway, that night Damien was there and saw my temper tantrum. He was there most of the time by the way. If he wasn’t, I just locked my studio so no

one could interrupt me. I never wanted to be alone with Jennifer, not because I couldn't trust myself, but because I found out what a bitch she is. I guess, I've never spent enough time with her before. I never liked her like that. It's always been professional and she's referred a lot of clients to me. That's it. Plus, I've always been good about not mixing business with pleasure. Oh, and Gage was a broken record about that rule too."

Lex shifts, uncomfortable with me talking about other women and I get it.

I run my glove over her face and she smiles flirtatiously at me.

"I trust you, and I'm happy you didn't cheat on me. That whole night really sucked. When I saw Jennifer I was still in shock from seeing all those pictures of myself so she caught me off guard. Plus, I had no idea why she was there. Then she started talking shit about me being with all of you." She gets mad all over again because that's always been a sensitive subject for her.

I turn her face back to me and tell her how I feel. "You changed everything in our lives, and I love you Sweetheart." We come together with a burning passion that I've never felt for anyone else. The kiss gets smokin' hot fast but she pulls away and I protest trying to pull her back.

"I love you too, Ocean Eyes. Now hurry up and tell me the rest so you can fuck me." That makes me groan and laugh out loud. How can I argue with that?

"Okay, I'm going to say this fast because it's still hard to talk about. Then I'm doing all the things I've fantasized about to you. Any more details will be revealed at the meeting with the guys."

She nods agreeing to my terms.

"Damien ended up telling Tony about my blow up at No.2. Tony thought I was stressed out so he confronted me but I told him what Bryson had said and he asked to see the blackmail evidence. Sage just happened to walk in on us

talking about the whole thing and that's how she got involved. That's why we didn't go to the escape room in Vegas. Sage was pissed and wanted to tell everyone but we decided to make a plan instead, with the help of Liam." I sigh and try not to get upset. She kisses me sensing my anger. "Our bulletproof plan went to shit fast and the night at the show should've ended everything. We had a group of people in on it too. I'm still pissed because it was a solid fucking plan. However, 'they' had a trick up their sleeve none of us saw coming. They couldn't have pulled this off without multiple people. That's why I say they." I kiss her once more and she returns it. It's hard to talk about this, and I'm not sure if I'm making sense. "The day before the show I received a package." I release air and shake my head thinking about the panic and fear I experienced when I opened the note. "Someone was watching my mom and they were threatening her life. There was a CD inside and the video showed two bombs meant for my mom. One in her bedroom and one on her car. They said there was more and if I didn't comply, she was dead. My mom has always been there for me, Lex. Always. I didn't want to lose her. That's why she wasn't at the show that night." She gasps and my face gets hot but I don't cry like I want to. I'm grateful she likes my mom because they both mean the world to me.

"Oh my God, you had to be scared shitless. I'm so sorry, Ocean Eyes." She hugs me and holds me tighter. It feels so good to be this close to her, I pull her even closer. The void I've been living with lately is just gone, like it was never there to begin with.

"You weren't supposed to be there either, but everything got fucked up fast. Liam got my mom out of the house and took her somewhere safe to watch over her. Sage's job was to distract Gage from going so she made up some story. I don't know all the details. You were supposed to have a flat tire and not even show up. Wes just had to be Mr. Fucking Fix It. He found the slow leak in both tires before they even picked you up. Then once you were there, we panicked. Bryson dropped the ball because he couldn't get you to leave when you arrived. In his defense, he did run into his own problems that night. We felt a little relief knowing Wes

was watching over you, then even that went to shit. How were we supposed to know Wes would get drugged and put you at risk?" Her eyebrow goes up at the tone of my voice, but she doesn't know it all, yet. I kiss her neck and she laughs for me. "That was another surprise which no one anticipated. We also didn't expect Tony to get distracted by his family either." She starts to protest so I hold up a hand to tell her. "Which is understandable given the events in his family prior. However, that's not how the night was supposed to go. I even had another show planned before all this other shit happened." She has tears in her eyes and that kills me. Lex rubs her head on my shoulder. I make her look at me for this part. "I'm so fucking sorry. They're all dead. I'm not just saying that like some cheesy movie, or book. I'm dead serious. They will suffer for what they've done to our family. There's no redemption or coming back now." My words are final. She snuggles into my embrace and I know they've crossed her moral line along the way too. Justice will be served at our hands now and nothing will stop us. I rest my head on hers.

"It's crazy sometimes to sit here thinking about everything that's happened. How is this my actual life? I could literally write a book based on it." She lifts her head, touches my face gently and smiles at me.

"I bet it would be good too." I kiss her lips and she returns it. She laughs and I lift my brows because I wasn't joking about the compliment. She can do anything. I've read her stuff and I'll do anything in my power to help.

"Yeah right, can you imagine me writing Lake's character? I'd get banned from Zon for all the fucks and fuckings." We both laugh at the idea and she rests her head on me again.

"Plus, he'll probably get all pissy if he reads the real him." She nods and giggles. "Honestly, now that I'm thinking about it, I'm scared to see my own character but I still think you should do it. I'll read it with you if it makes you happy." She kisses my neck and plays with my beard. Gage said writing was a sore subject for her. I know he's been reading, not that he told me because he isn't talking to me, but I saw

books on his nightstand the other night. Lex's eyelids get heavy as I rock her in my arms. I give her a toothy smile then kiss her nose.

"I'm sure Wes didn't want to be drugged. It felt like shit. My stomach hurt for days after. Hurry up, Buttercup. I'm getting sleepy. Do you think they'll bring me coffee?" She yawns big and scratches, lifting her arms in the air. Her boobs hit me in the face and they're begging to be released from that leather.

"I still can't believe you were fucking drugged. I hate myself for failing you and not catching that fucker before he took you. Well, we all do. There's more that happened that night that you don't know. I was going to wait until later but this is about our life and moving forward." I kiss her and she nods agreeing with me. I lift her chin looking deep in her eyes. "I hope you know, I would never actually talk to you like I did at the gallery, if I didn't have a justifiable reason." She pulls away as if remembering my words. "It broke me to see that look on your face. I know my words hurt you because they hurt me too. Honestly, I don't even know what I said to you. I was so fucking scared and praying to God for help. I couldn't even move when Jennifer touched me because I was afraid it would set him off. My hand froze on her arm when I saw the red light on your forehead as a warning to follow directions." She looks at me confused by my confession and I sigh. The fear feels fresh just talking about it again. "You had to leave as soon as possible. They figured out we were trying to set them up. I got a text that said, 'You want to play ball? I've got a gun pointed at your little girlfriend. Tell her to leave or she dies.'"

I remember the words by heart because I've read the text over and over again. I had to convince myself I did the right thing by hurting her. Lex is speechless and trying to process this new information, I totally understand. The red light terrified me and I had nightmares for weeks after. I'm choked up just thinking about what could have happened to her that night.

"I know I fucked up by not telling you about Jennifer. I told her to fuck off and I wasn't going to deal with them ever

again. However, Bryson told me his theory, and we don't know if she's involved. Bryson couldn't find anything on her computers, but we can't rule her out either. I'm personally leaning towards no." I run my gloved hand over her face and she inhales deeply. She's turned on but she looks at me pouting. "Oh, stop frowning, not because I give a shit about her. I have never touched her, or thought about her in any way that counts. I've never thought about anyone how I think about you and touch you." She gives me a shy smile. The one she used to get before all this made her hard around the edges. "Sweetheart, you know I love you. Lex, I would never do anything like that if it wasn't extremely important. I will never cause that look in your eyes again." She takes my face and kisses me with so much heat that this kiss may actually burn me.

She's my woman again. It's time to make her mine.



Chapter 5 - "O's and X Plans

Jesse In Charge

My leather gloves rub along the leather of her outfit. She turns around quickly, straddling my waist. Her mouth only leaves mine for a second as she takes off my shirt. Her tongue is fighting mine for power. Lex's being aggressive and taking charge and I'm down for all of this. My hips move up on their own, and she pulls back laughing. She stares at my tattoos, licking her lips. Soft fingers trace my accident scar, and I know she's thinking about what could've happened to me. That tree almost went through my chest, but I was lucky. I forget about all that when her small hands start to roam my body. It feels heavenly and I groan deeply as she works the tight muscles in my shoulders.

"Fuck, your hands are so good at massaging. I've missed them big time," I praise her and she leans forward to kiss my scar.

"Oh, you've only missed my hands? That's sad. I'll help you remember the rest." Her seductive wet tongue travels over my skin. My cock rubs against her, wanting a taste too.

Her confidence is super fucking sexy. I crave this woman with every part of my body, mind, and soul. Disappointment hits me, and I frown because I don't have my

gloves here. A light bulb goes off in my head when I get a great idea. Let's see how dirty my woman can get, shall we?

She bites my neck and rubs herself against me like a lioness in heat. That turns me on and freaks me out. Those pictures were mind blowing and Lex laughed her ass off when she told us that fun fact. Just look it up. As a male it's too painful to talk about.

I kiss her pretty little mouth that I'm about to make dirty shortly. Her tongue never leaves mine and my hands find her breasts. Unfortunately, our combined leather doesn't let me feel much. I let out a frustrated grunt, and she laughs that musical sound. I shoot her a nasty look for making fun of me. My woman makes up for it a second later by sitting back and taking off her top. Lex shakes her head when I reach out so I don't touch her yet. I stare at her sexy black lace covered chest, until she clears her throat. When I look up, flirty bedroom eyes meet mine and she smiles at me. She uses her hands behind her back to free herself from the sexy bra and huge tits that I've envisioned for weeks spill out before me. I grab her arms and hold them behind her back firmly. Lex's eyes light up with lust. I nod, letting her know who's the boss. My mouth finds her waiting nipple as I lean into her and I run my tongue around it twice, then suck before nipping it. She cries out and grinds into me harder. I move my mouth slowly to the other nipple, watching her the whole time. Foreplay with eye contact, and the right person can blow your mind. Using my long tongue I worship her chest like an ice cream cone.

My voice is muffled from her peak in my mouth but I know she hears me. "I don't have my gloves, Lex." I roll my tongue again, and she moans for me. My cock is begging for her wet hole. Shit, he'll take any of them. I stand picking her up with me and lay her on the long conference table. I push her down on the surface when she tries to kiss me again.

"Wait, let's get some more of these clothes off." I unbutton her pants and look up at her beautiful face. She helps me out by lifting up as I pull them off. Her expression is filled with need and want, so I lick all the new skin I've uncovered

with zest. We are both restless for more and our eager hands don't stop exploring. The thong is next to go and I fling it across the room. "No more underwear," I growl at her and she laughs. Fuck, I missed her. A second or two goes by with me just staring at her. "Beautiful, you're mine. Always mine, Lex."

She anxiously spreads her legs wide because she knows what's about to happen. I grab her calves and wrap them around my head and lean down to attack her soaking wet pussy, using my tongue, lips, and teeth. She screams my name in ecstasy. I swear, it makes a man feel ten feet tall to please his lady. I've missed her saying my name while getting pleasure. Her uncontrollable sounds are music to my ears. She pulls my hair, losing herself in rapture. So, of course, I lick her harder and pull her closer to my mouth. Lex grinds against me, but then tries to get away when it becomes too much to handle. Nope, we are far from done, but I know she's close now, so I latch onto her clit and suck hard. She comes in my face, her hands deep in my long hair. I could do this forever. All I want to do is make her happy. I back off and I'm geeked to see she's a panting mess. Lex looks all flushed, fulfilled, and content.

"Jesse, no more. I need you now." She's still out of breath, and I get even more excited about this idea.

"Do you know where we are, Lex?" I ask her and lean in again to lick the inside of her thigh a few times. I've confused her even more than the after orgasm haze. I chuckle and she narrows her eyes. Lex sits up to look around the room, but gives up a second later. She drops back to the table like a lifeless body. My ego and head are going to balloon up at her reaction to my oral skills.

"I'm still coming down from that orgasm, but yes. This is the battleground, or something like that. Bryson has weird names for all his stuff. I'm so fucking mad at him. He's dead when I see him again. He lied straight to my—"

Oh, no I don't think so I bring her focus back to me by licking her stomach a few times.

“Dude, you’re a dork. I was talking more about the location of this particular room. Did you know ‘The war room’ is right under your room? You know, the room you were in last night.” I can see when she starts to catch on to what I’m asking. I bend to lick her clit this time and she moans my name. That makes me smile. “I heard Gage fucking this pussy all night long.” I lick her again and her hands hit the table hard. “Do you know what else I could hear?”

She covers her face, clearly embarrassed. I lick her wet clit again and she squeezes my head.

“I heard you, coming all over his cock. Tell me this... did you like him in your ass when Anthony was fucking your pussy this morning too? I loved hearing you with them.” Lex gasps at my naughty talk. I bend over her to take her nipple in my mouth. My jeans scrape against her sensitive pussy causing her back to arch off the table and into me harder. I move to the other breast, looking up at her the whole time. “Do you want to know what I was doing while I listened to you take them?” I suck the nipple into my mouth playing with her.

She grabs for me, but I back away teasing her. Lex nods when I stare at her waiting for the answer. Then she gasps when I quickly lean in to bite the inside of her thigh. I know she likes a little pain during sex, and I like to give it to her. My mind screams to take her now and my cock begs the same. I don’t listen to them, instead I stay hyper focused. She pouts as I back away once again. The glove is still in my pocket and I get it out. I block her view by kissing up and down her legs. Always the curious one, she sits up on her elbows watching me.

“What were you doing besides listening?” Her face gets redder and she rolls her eyes.

I lift my hand and show her the glove. “Open your legs and show me your pussy, Sweetheart.”

Her eyes spark bright blue. Lex does as I asked and she is so wet. “Tell me.” It’s a demand now from the *Mistress* of the house.

I just laugh because I have no problem sharing power. However, I'm in charge right now. She runs her hands over her breasts, trying to egg me on. Fuck, I need to paint her like this. Long dark hair covers parts of her perfect body. It's erotic to see all that skin and nipples through the draped silk. I make sure my next words sound sexy.

“Oh, just thinking about you and stroking my huge hard cock with this.” I hold it up to let her see the glove again. This is a turn on for both of us. I remove the leather glove on my right hand to replace it with the softer one. I still have on my thin gloves so there's no need for my alarm. The softer one has little ripples along the fingers too. “It's still dirty from me. I came all over it last night and this morning. Do you want to taste it, Sweetheart?”

I see the curiosity in her big blue eyes and maybe I've just unlocked another kink. That's my dirty girl. She nods happily and I change my mind. I take one ribbed finger and run it along her wet opening. She moans then I push my finger into her slowly just to tease her. I fuck her with that finger a little before adding another, and she thrashes against the surface of the table. My gloved fingers work her over good until I pull them free. I use my other arm to help her sit up.

My dick can't take much more of this teasing. I bring the glove to her face and her eyes widen. “Taste both of us, Lex.” I groan when she doesn't hesitate, just licks and sucks on my fingers. She holds my hand in both of hers, cleaning the glove with her mouth. It's super sexy how eager she is to please me.

Fuck this!

I open my jeans, ripping them down with my boxers quickly. She scoots down the table to make room for me to climb on. I'm on my knees praying to her body in seconds flat. Her smooth glorious legs open wide for me. I dip the tip of my head into her to make sure she's wet enough. *Oh God, she's ready.* “Are you ready to feel my cock ring tickle your insides, Sweetheart? My cock has missed this pussy so much.” I smack her with my dick and we both groan.

My first thrust into her is deep and hard. Her legs wrap around me tight in reflex, but I take them in my hands and keep them open for me. I pump into her body again and again. Once we find a rhythm, I start twisting my hips at the end of each move. My hips repeat the motion like my whole body's been waiting for this moment. Her pussy is so warm and dripping wet around me. I can't believe I thought I remembered how good this felt. The dreams of her were a hundred percent underrated.

I bend forward to suck on her nipples as my hips move at record speed. Lex has deep sounds coming from the back of her throat and I slow my pace, leaning on one arm. I hold my dirty gloved hand above her and she reaches up to suck on a finger. Once it's nice and wet, I move that hand lower to her aching pussy. The view from here makes my heart race and my dick jump. Her pink clit is swollen from all the attention, and I watch my cock slide in and out of her at a steady pace. I use two special fingers and start moving them in small circles while pressing down. She bucks hard against the table and tries to grab my hand. I knock her hand away and use my thumb instead. I know it feels intense so I fuck her faster. Her hands reach out again, and I stop with my hips still deep inside her.

"Don't you dare touch, or you'll be sorry. Put your hands over your head now, Lex." I want her to get my point so I pull out and slam back into her.

She moans and does what she's told. I use my glove again. It's wet and she's been dripping this whole time. Plus, I know she had Gage this morning so I tell her, "Spit." That dirty girl spark shines in her eyes again. Ever so slowly, she lets spit fall from her mouth onto my waiting fingers. I thrust my cock three times hard then pull out. "Sit up and watch it enter your ass." She bends her body in half using her flexibility. We stare as my finger slides into her back hole. Fuck, that makes my cock pulse and get tight. I smack her pussy with my cock again. That makes her groan and push against my finger.

Suddenly, the door opens and Lex pulls me closer to cover her body. All that does is make my cock and finger sink deeper inside her. She moans then we both remember the door and turn at the same time. Lake's face shows shock, but it's quickly replaced with desire as his eyes travel our entangled bodies. He begins growling deep at us the longer he stands there. Lex glances up at me asking if he can stay and I shrug. Him and I aren't the best of friends right now but I'm not selfish. I know his pain because it was my own until recently. She stares at him in wonder. Lake tilts his head at her questioning, and she nods. His shoulders relax as he walks in and shuts the door behind him.

I pull out of her and take her mouth once more. Lake throws me a pillow from the couch anticipating my request. My hands are made for catching so I snag it out of the air and lay in on the table facing him.

"Put your knees on the pillow, Mistory and face me now." Lake's demand makes her snap to attention. She follows orders kneeling naked before him. Her back tattoo is so sexy and bro, that ass is a masterpiece.

I get behind her, bumping her with my erection. My arms wrap around her and I use my gloved hand to play with her pussy. I lick and kiss her bare neck. She moans, grabbing my head from behind. I turn her mouth to mine and our tongues meet. Lex knows he's watching and it's a kink for us both.

"Get on your hands, now." Lake's voice is low but she hears him. I kiss her once more then push her down. Her hands hit the table making a slapping sound that has Lake grunting in satisfaction.

I hold my cock in my hand and grab a handful of her hair using the other. When I pull, her head falls back. I know that brings her eyes level with him. Lake stares at her touching the outside of his jeans.

"When Jesse enters you, I want you to be very quiet and don't look away from me. Do you understand my request?" Lake's tone warns her to obey his order.

“Did you say you wanted to hear her scream my name and come on my cock? Me too.” I tease him and Lake’s eyes narrow. I shoot him a wink and lick her spine. “Challenge accepted, bro.”

My cock pushes into her hard and fast. I pull her hair speeding up my hips. She doesn’t just sit there either, letting me do all the work. Nah, my woman slams herself on me. I’ll give her credit she tries to be silent, just grunting and breathing hard. My dick is top notch though so after a couple minutes, she starts moaning my name.

“Jesse I’m already close, so close. It feels so good.” Lex pants under me.

I look over and Lake’s staring at her. He meets my eyes then tilts his head. He wants to join. I nod, laughing then smack her ass.

Lake walks to us with a tent in his pants. He stands in front of her and wraps his hand around her throat. I release her hair and adjust my hold on her hips.

“I told you to be quiet. You don’t think you owe me that? I can fill that loud mouth with my cock and then you won’t be able to talk at all.” Lake growls in her face, squeezing her neck.

That sounds very kinky and I’m turned on by the idea. My hands move up around her stomach. I bring her to my dick harder and she screams my name again.

“Take out my cock and choke yourself on it now.” Lake moves her head down with both hands around her neck. I hold her up so she can unzip him and pull down his pants. His dick springs free like it’s been waiting for this and she engulfs him as much as she can.

Lex starts gagging when I push her into him harder. Lake bends to whisper something in her ear but I can’t hear him. My pace doesn’t slow as I pump into her wet pussy but I want more of her attention so I decide to stand above her. I get into a squatting position behind her and grip her shoulders.

The first pull to myself takes her off Lake. She screams for me and I grin at him.

Lake loses his cool then begins fucking her face. I know she likes it because she's squeezing tight around my cock. I lean into Lex and lick along her back. She pushes back onto me, moaning around Lake's cock. Our bodies slap together as I ride her body hard. Lake grunts, then groans her name when she adds her hands to the mix. I smack her ass again getting close to my own release. Lake thrusts up and holds her head in place. He comes in her mouth, she chokes but finishes for him. Her head hits the pillow when Lake backs away. This angle sends me deeper inside her. I know my piercing hits her just right because she comes all over me. Four more pumps and I follow her over the edge. I pull her up and twist her head to kiss her. Lake picks her up when I pull out to clean up. He wipes her down, showing a tenderness I've never seen from him. They kiss and damn if that isn't the sweetest thing. Lake leaves her sitting on the table to search around the room for her clothes.

Lex stretches across the table. She winks at me and blows me a kiss.

"I love you, Blue Eyes." I lean over grinning like a fool and kiss her lips once more.

"I love you too, Ocean Eyes." She says before curling up and closes her eyes worn out from our activities.

I stare at her for a minute before getting my pants from the floor to get dressed.

"She was wearing this?" Lake holds up a pile of leather in his arms. I nod, smiling at him and he looks at her. "No wonder you guys were getting down."

Lake helps her sit up and get dressed, caressing her skin gently. She laughs at him when his eyes go wide, drinking her in.

"I love you in all that leather." I tell her as I replace my own leather glove.

“Oh yeah, well, I love you shirtless.” She points at me giggling.

I can see Lake’s uncomfortable with us talking about love. That’s his problem because I’m never going to lie or hold back my feelings again. He should have never left her in the first place.

We hear the knock at the same time and everyone finishes getting dressed quickly. Lake’s done first, he checks us before opening the door. I pass out all the papers and make sure everything’s ready. Tony and Gage come in, sporting huge grins on their faces. Tony’s hand is wrapped now, and he looks better. I think he’s sober too. He makes a beeline for Lex. She giggles as he picks her up by the ass, and they kiss like teenagers who have never fucked before. He could care less what she’s been doing with her mouth, and I know exactly how he feels because I don’t care either.

Gage sits down at the table and starts reading the notes in front of him. Lex walks back to me and sits in my lap. I kiss her deeply then with regret, I push her to Gage. She winks at me so I return it. Lake snags her hand as she walks by, and he gives her his cheek. *What the fuck?* His dick was just in her mouth. Of course, she makes him mad and licks his face. He grabs her by the neck and pulls her face to him. I touch my cock because I’m getting hard again. We have catching up to do, if you know what I mean. Lake uses his tongue and kisses her. Gage grunts and Tony groans while watching the show too. When Lake finally releases her, she’s unsteady on her feet as she walks to Gage. She sits in his lap and he takes his turn, kissing her greedily.

Jace and Wes walk in holding bags of food and set everything on the table. Wes has a black eye courtesy of Lake, but he’s being a good sport about the whole thing. I open the mini refrigerator, grabbing some beers and I hand one to Wes. He takes it gratefully, then tips it at me. Jace hands Lex coffee and she gives him a high five.

The whole gang gets up to start filling their plates. Food’s always important when you’re burning calories like we do. We need energy and the food will make this a less formal

meeting. Plus, what if something happened? Lex hadn't eaten for sixteen plus hours when she was taken. Thankfully, she had just had lunch. What if she couldn't fight him off? What if she didn't have the strength to stab Tamera? Those thoughts twist my stomach and I'm not hungry anymore. I've read all the reports from the hospital and law enforcement agencies. Since Donaldson's a badass, she has a lot of clout. They are giving her the lead and that will help us jump over all the red tape. Donaldson has been forthcoming with everything she knows too.

I stare at Lex like a love sick man because that's what I am. She shakes her head at something Gage says, and he kisses her head. He places a plate loaded with Mexican food in front of her. Bro, why didn't I do that? She tilts her head back to kiss him. Lex glances over at me and winks. I return it and her grin widens. Tony sits next to her carrying two plates. He's a kiss ass but I smile when she starts eating from both plates.

I look around to make sure everyone has food. They're all sitting around the table chowing down. Let's get this over with. I walk to the front of the room and uncover the white board with all my notes.

The next hour is spent reviewing reports and sharing secrets. I tell the guys everything I already told her about my actions prior to the kidnapping and Anthony tells his side and the others ask their questions.

Lex gets up to start cleaning off the table. I would offer to help but I know this helps settle her anxiety. Jace still asks her anyway, and she says no thanks. See, I knew that. She doesn't need to pass out from the information overload.

"Okay, I get all that crazy shit that happened. I even understand how the plan fell apart, but I just can't wrap my head around all of it. Why would you guys let me walk out of No. 2 alone like that? Wasn't I basically a walking target? Did you guys use me as bait?" She's confused and clearly hurt by her tone. I don't blame her.

"Never in a million fucking years!" I yell so she understands that was never on the table. "You should have

been watched the whole time.”

“Yeah, you left alone, but that wasn’t part of the plan. No one knew you were drugged yet. Unfortunately, a lot of the security detail was putting out other fires. I’m sure the sniper’s laser was Jesse’s number one priority too.” Wes defends me and I tip my head at him.

I nod at her, agreeing with him and swallow hard. I hate talking about this. The guys shift around me uncomfortable with this topic too.

Wes lowers his head before speaking again. “I should’ve known better than to take that water bottle from the waiter. I figured it was safe because it was still sealed.” Wes glances at Lex with remorse. He seems disappointed in himself.

Lex returns to the table to find an empty chair. “We aren’t pointing fingers just talking it out.” She’s always the pleaser. She gives him a high five across the table and he smiles at her. “Well, I hate to state the obvious, but who do you think it is?” She looks around the room asking all of us.

“Didn’t you say Tamera was dating the Deadman?” Tony asks Lex and she nods. She told us about Tamera’s bragging before she stabbed her. “Well, I knew Tamera and she would never date someone in a lower class than her. She was stuck up and cared a lot about money and power.” Tony glances at me, frowning and thinking. “Bryson didn’t find information about a boyfriend on her computers?” He sounds hopeful at the idea.

I shake my head, that would’ve been a big help. “No, and according to Lex’s statement, Tamera was using a burner phone they didn’t find at the scene.” I hold up a picture of Tamera’s very distinct red phone. “Is this the phone she used to talk to him?”

Lex shakes her head, “No, it was black.”

Tony starts talking about Tamera’s father and all the drama he’s causing Dr. Riggs.

I'm not listening to him though because I'm watching Lake. He went to the refrigerator a second ago and now he's just standing behind Lex holding two drinks. I can see the internal struggle on his face and I think he's talking to himself. He doesn't know how to be gentle and caring, but he's actually doing a great job. Maybe I'll tell him later if he talks to me. Finally, he shakes his head and steps up to put a drink in front of her. Lex spins around to stare at him in disbelief which doesn't help his confidence. Lake rubs his neck and she gets up to pull him to the chair she was occupying. He sits down frowning, and the shock on his face when she gets in his lap is hilarious. I didn't know he could smile that big. Lake leans forward like he's been doing this forever and opens her drink.

"Thanks," she tells him before kissing his cheek sweetly.

Lake tightens his grip on her snarling because he didn't like her response. When she looks confused, he releases a low intimidating guttural growling sound staring at her.

Her eyes bug out then she clears her throat and whispers, "Thank you, Master."

He touches her nose and she sticks out her tongue for him. It's this thing they do for their Dom and Sub relationship. Tony tried to explain it one time, but then Lex started changing in front of us so I stopped listening to him. I don't try to understand every little unique inside thing she has with each of us. I already know what we all share is special. They need to decide once and for all what they're going to do about their relationship because I'm ready to be happy again. They are currently having a staring contest like little kids.

"*Mi Sirenita*, you just looked at my big muscles out of the corner of your eye. You lose," Gage says and fist bumps Lake.

"Yeah! Sorry to break it to you, but she was looking at me." Tony stops talking to Jace and Wes to add his opinion.

Lex pouts, crossing her arms because she's a sore loser, until Gage leans over to take her mouth. Their kiss gets steamy

fast and Lake doesn't even care that she's sitting on his lap. It's good to see him accepting the idea of us being polyamory.

I grab the sheets to pass them out to everyone. It's a list of suspects Tony and I made. Lex touches my butt when I hand her a paper and I send a wink her way. "Bryson has made it clear that he believes there are two front runners that aren't on this list, but he hasn't shared who they are yet." My tone is bitter when I share that news. Bryson's still on my shit list for lying to me, and his plan was bullshit.

"This list isn't long. We should go pick everyone up and interrogate them. We'll find out fast who's involved." Lake says as he gets a wicked glint in his teal eyes.

"Not a good idea. Donaldson's on our side still, but she won't be if we do that." Wes tells him, avoiding eye contact because Lake's temper is epic, the black eye's proof of that.

"He's right. I have guys on all these people and no one needs to get arrested. That's just extra heat we don't need." Jace shakes his head and goes back to playing on his phone. Lake throws something at him and Jace jumps up pissed but sits back down when Lake waves him forward. They need to patch up their relationship and talk about what happened but I get it. Lake feels like he can't trust his best friend anymore. Jace was hiding our woman from us and that's a punishable offense.

Lex smacks Lake defending Jace then gets up and sits on the table. She shakes her head when Lake grabs for her, and he grunts, backing off. Then she feels bad and sticks out her tongue again. Once again the dude grins like a fool.

The intercom in the center of the table beeps and the room becomes silent. Lex's eyebrows raise and she leans over to push the button, "Hello?"

"Hey Lex Luthor, how ya doin'? Are you still mad at me?" Bryson reluctantly questions through the speaker. He tries to sound friendly, but you can hear the sadness and fear in his tone.

“Fuck you!” Lex screams and shuts off the com then flips it off with both fingers. Yep, she’s still pissed. I glance over at Gage, and he just shrugs at me because he doesn’t care.

Some of the other guys laugh, upset with Bryson too, but I know he had good intentions. We all did. I mean, I still want to punch him in the gut. I’m only forgiving him because he kept her safe and built her self esteem.

“You can’t ignore me forever, and you can’t shut me out of my own war room.” Bryson’s voice echoes around us. The projector screen drops down in front of the white board with the sheet I just handed out on it.

Jace laughs knowing his brother well, and Lex smirks like she knew he was listening the whole time too. The room begins chattering about the list and Lake’s crazy ideas. Lex snaps her fingers then raises her hand to get our attention. Lake tells us to quiet down like he’s her bodyguard. Lex smiles wickedly at him and he puffs out his chest all proud of himself.

“I will deal with you later, Bryson.” Lex’s voice is laced with warning. “Since you’ve been spying on us, fill in all the holes.”

Both Anthony and Gage start laughing, acting like a couple of teenagers. Okay, it was kinda funny, and a chuckle slips from me. We do like to fill her holes. Lex rolls her eyes reading us and Lake growls his disapproval.

“Well, there’s a few things you didn’t think about before you started accusing us of making you a target and putting your life in danger. For example, we thought Jess was the target the whole time. Yes, you received texts and an email but it always referenced Jess. However, it was logical for us to think that with the threats on his mom and the blackmail to dump you, that you were just a weapon to use against him. We had no idea they would drug or kidnap you.” Bryson clears his throat. “You and I need to talk, Lex. You should know by now how sorry I am for what happened to you. I swear the guilt I feel is very real.”

Lex shirks into herself and her smile disappears. Lake pulls her off the table and into his lap for a snuggle. I step forward automatically and the others reach out to touch her. That's what she does to us. Our loyalty and need to protect her is fierce, even for a badass like Masters.

"The art show was more like a shit show. Plus, I was putting out other fires that night. I didn't get all the important information until Lake called me." Bryson tries to explain by defending himself.

"What were you doing?" Lex whispers from the safety of Lake's arms, surrounded by her men.

I back up and lean against my hands on the wall because I want to hold and comfort her too. This is a lot of heavy shit to take in all at once. That night flashes through my mind and the image of the laser in the middle of her head still haunts me.

"That's kind of my fault," Jace says and her head snaps to him. He's been chillin' on the couch but now he's sitting up, uncomfortable with the topic at hand. "No one expected me to have a melt down and get wasted before things even kicked off." His tone shows frustration and guilt.

Wes nods because they were supposed to be working together.

"Why were you so drunk?" Lex sounds confused but there's also a hint of curiosity.

"It's a long story," he says without making eye contact. The phone chimes in his hand and he huffs. "What will I do with this guy? I should fire his ass," Jace says walking to the door. He opens it, shaking his head. "Bryson, are you seeing this shit?"

Seth's standing there sporting a massive grin. He has a keg in the wagon trailing behind him as he strolls in. "What? Bryson already saw me," Seth says, waving at everyone and carrying a cup.

"You're late again, Seth. What's going on with you? We aren't in college anymore. Please tell him Lake. He looks

up to you,” Bryson scolds Seth but Lake looks mystified at his comment.

I hear the male’s voice in the background and so does Lex. She stands suddenly, tilting her head. That’s a scary ass smile decorating her gorgeous face. She starts pacing and spinning a knife she pulled out of thin air.

Oh, shit. I begin walking backwards to the exit anticipating her next move. Jace is watching her, slowly moving to the door. My eyes narrow and he glances over at me shrugging his shoulders. I didn’t realize he was that in sync with her. I think it’s time to ask Jace about his feelings towards Lex.

“Bryson, where are you right now? And don’t you dare lie to me Bry.” She throws a knife at one of the speakers in the corner of the room. Fuck, that’s hot and all the men around me agree, including my cock.

“Now Lex Luther, that’s not cool fool. Why are you breaking my stuff just because you’re mad at me? I said I was sorry. Ple-...Lex, what are you doing?” Bryson’s voice turns high-pitched.

Jace opens the door for her as she races out. That was timed perfectly. He’s smart enough to let me go first but he’s right behind me. Wow, she’s fast, disappearing in front of us. The wood floor is slick under my feet and I skid around the corner. I pick up my pace and reach her as she makes it outside.

“He’s probably by the training center,” Jace calls from behind me before breaking off to the right.

Lex sprints forward with determination. She’s really fast, but so am I. I match my pace to hers and bump her with my shoulder. “Hey Blue Eyes, what are you doing?”

“You’ll see,” she says and speeds off.

There’s a massive badass RV to the left and she books it in that direction. When she gets there, she grabs the handle and swings the door open. Lex disappears but I’m on her tail. I

jump in the RV and run into the couch. My head spins to the left and I spot a familiar face but he doesn't see me yet.

“Hey Lex, what's up?” He's sitting at the table on a laptop looking at her curiously.

I must have made a noise because his head twists in my direction. My ego soars when I see his eyes go wide.

“Oh shit, you brought them?” Alex gets up quickly diving in the bathroom and shuts the door. He locks it at a record speed. Where's Guinness World Records when you need them? “I didn't do anything. I'm trying to play in the NFL this year, guys. Quarterbacks don't work with broken arms.”

“Shut up, you scaredy cat.” Lex looks back at me rolling her eyes. “He's normally not a pussy.” She smiles at me then uses her palms to hit the door. Alex screams terrified that we're here for him. We both laugh at his ridiculousness. Now that I'm thinking about it, maybe I should break down the door and ask him what his intentions are with my woman.

Lex just spins, then continues walking to the rear of the RV. I hear the sound of crashing glass. She heard it too because she starts running full tilt towards it. She tries opening the door using her shoulder but it doesn't move. I try to pull her back but she pushes me aside and kicks it in. We see Bryson's legs on the ladder to the far right. Then his feet disappear through the roof and the latch closes.

Oh shit, Lex springs into action.

“You're a backstabber, Bry,” she yells at him. The ladder is short and doesn't reach the ground, so I give her a boost. Okay, I just want to feel her ass in my palm again. Fuck, this whole game is sexy and my heart is pounding with excitement. I want to see her new fighting moves. Strong women are hot as fuck.

She opens the door and we both climb out. Bryson has already jumped off the RV by the time we make it outside. He looks over his shoulder, and I see fear in his eyes. Lex doesn't even stop and leaps off before I can grab her. She rolls as she

hits the ground and gets up running after him. He's yelling at her to relax and calm down. Lex isn't far behind but Bryson ran track so he's fast. I jump off the roof and bend my knees with the impact. Fuck, I should have rolled too. I chase after them and hear shouts behind us. Bryson is putting distance between them, and Lex is cursing at him.

Suddenly, a car comes skidding to a stop ahead of them. I stop to watch the action unfold before me. Bryson slides over the hood like a stunt double. Lake jumps out of the driver's side and punches Bryson right in the gut. Bryson takes the blow like a champ and barely shows a reaction. Then Lake pushes him in the car and shuts the door. Bryson peels away a second later, tires kicking up grass. Lake stands there and crosses his arms like a boss. He stares at Lex with...I have no idea what emotion that is, but at least it's not the blank stare he gets on meds. Lex is close to Lake now. She tries to stop her forward momentum and her arms do a whole windmill thing. Then she shocks the shit out of all of us and does a flip like five times in a row. I didn't even know she could do that.

"Holy shit, did she learn all that in a few weeks?" I ask myself amazed at her talent.

"Nah, she took gymnastics as a kid. Her mom showed me pictures one time," Gage says standing next to me now. He touches my shoulder in support and I'm grateful. We should have a discussion soon too because I lied to him.

"What are we going to do about the clown in the RV?" Tony asks when he reaches our side. He's finally sober and almost back to normal. This is what she does to us. We are different around her.

We all watch as Jace zooms by in a golf cart. He stops by Lex and she jumps in the seat next to him. They go off in the distance to chase Bryson again. They won't catch him, and I think everyone knows it. Maybe she's running from us too. She might need a little time to process everything because a lot of information was exchanged in that meeting. I think we all have some reflecting to do.

“And what about him?” Lake growls at all of us crossing his arms. He gestures his head in the direction our long time friend and the oldest Kelly brother went. We all nod in agreement. It’s time to discuss that and decide what we want. Things are different now and we will always work as a team.

I gave Mistory a chance to walk away but she didn’t take it. Now, I will have her forever.



Chapter 6 - Breathless Confusion

Lex aka Shorty

I yawn and stretch my arms over my head then hop out of bed. There's barely any sunlight coming through the curtains covering the windows. The chilly air tells me it's the butt crack of dawn, but I've been slacking the last few days catching up with my guys. I'm trying to be quiet, so I tiptoe to the dresser to get some workout clothes. I throw on underwear and a sports bra as I sit down on the edge of the bed. My leggings, socks and running shoes go on next.

Anthony runs a long finger down my back tattoo, and I almost jump out of my skin. It feels amazing when he starts to massage the tight muscles in my lower back. No joke, these guys have given my body intense "personal workouts." So technically, I've been still training, if you know what I mean. A laugh escapes me when Anthony runs his tongue piercing along my shoulder because it tickles. I'm still dying to know what Lake's tattoo looks like. Even after everything, I never looked at the design. My Master has demanded obedience, and it's hard not to follow orders from him. Anthony places open mouth kisses down my back and I moan this time. He's been sober since the first night and I'm so proud of him. He tried to

give me the credit, but it's his willpower and self control that won over the need. Addiction is a disease and it has taken over some amazing people.

Anthony leans into me and whispers against my skin. "Word on the street is...you're letting Gage give you matching tattoos." He kisses my neck using his tongue.

Oh, I see where this is going. I stand up and turn around to face this amazing man of mine. He's pouting at me and blinking those long eyelashes which is absolutely freaking adorable. I laugh but then feel bad when I actually see sadness in his eyes. I bend down to kiss his talented full lips. We wrap our arms around each other, enjoying just being together again. His tongue darts out to join mine. The ball of his piercing rolls over my tongue causing me to step even closer to him. His big hands take my face and I moan, knocking them away. I grab his face instead, looking deep in his dark brown eyes. I bend down, nipping his bottom lip. That will remind him who's in charge here. Anthony groans pulling me closer, like I knew he would. He loves every minute of this game we play. This time I control the kiss by being more aggressive. He can't stop rubbing himself against me. Normally, I would punish him for that, but it feels good to see what I do to this giant man.

We pull apart a few minutes later, just to stare at each other. I give him a peck and make myself pull away. Anthony's on his knees with his erection pointing right at me. This man is extremely ripped and beautiful. All his piercings are back to sporting blue jewelry in them. I reach over to touch his belly button barbell then my hand moves to his nipple ring because I can't help myself. There's satisfaction in his smile as he watches me. I run my hand over his face piercings next and he kisses my fingers, trying to lick them.

I pull my hand away, raising my eyebrows because he thinks I'm staying. "You're so bad and very distracting." When Anthony's long arms make a grab for me, I jump back and step to the left giggling like a loon. "You stay back. My vagina is trying to think for me, damn it." He laughs and tries again, but I dodge him. I have to cover my mouth and hold in

my laughter as he loses his balance and falls off the bed. “Are you okay? That serves you right.” I don’t help him up because he’ll just pull me down if I get too close. Anthony gets off the floor to sit on the bed facing the dresser. “How did this conversation even start? I can’t even think straight when you guys are around.” I run the brush through my hair to start the braid. I hear his bark of laughter again but I ignore him. “Oh, yeah. Gage picked his first design for my sleeve. I promised Gage and Jesse that they each get an arm. Well, if they want too, I’m not sure you guys are going to still like me covered in tats. Have you seen his new tattoo?”

“Yes, your face is gorgeous like always.” Anthony pulls down his shorts and points at his hard cock like that’s answer enough. His piercings shine in the light and they make me stare.

I cover my eyes and look away bright red. “Stop it, you evil butthead. Anyway, I freaking love his tattoo, but is it weird to get my own face on me? Maybe it should be his face instead and a lioness head for the other half. So it will be like his but opposite. What do you think?” I glance in the mirror at the man sleeping on the other side of the bed. I love Gage so much. He has massive brown muscles for days covered in tattoos. My eyes find Anthony sitting there staring at me. Damn, maybe I should go back to bed?

“Fuck yes, I want my face on you. Thanks for helping my dreams come true, *Mi Sirenita*. I love you more than the sun...but please shut up and leave now.” Gage’s muffled voice fills the room, but he doesn’t move an inch.

I laugh at the grumpy sleeping beauty and lean over Anthony to reach him. My tongue travels along Gage’s back tattoo like a cat. I pretend his back is his mouth and give it a sloppy sexy kiss. Anthony pulls me to the safety of his lap just in time.

Gage growls deep in his throat like the lions tattooed on him and flips over. “That’s not funny. Just come back to bed and I’ll run with you when I wake up.” Gage beckons me forward with his hand not bothering to open his eyes. His

black hair's all messed up and inviting to my fingers. He likes his hair styled perfectly with various hair products usually.

I want to touch his eyebrow piercing too but he'll probably bite me. Instead, I kiss Anthony smiling then crawl over to kiss Gage's lips once. I pull away quickly so he can't grab me. I'm not waiting for him, and it'll be hotter later. "Nope, sorry Lover, no can do."

Gage puts the pillow over his face, he's sick of talking. He's a huge baby when it comes to his sleep. I can't help this wickedness in me. It's great to have them back. Anthony chuckles because he knows me and can tell I'm up to no good. I bend one more time to pull down the covers over Gage's lap, then I lick the spot right above his cock. It's only half hard but it actually jumps and hits my cheek. I'm completely shocked for a second.

Anthony starts roaring with laughter and I join him. Gage pulls the covers back up aggressively and mad dogs Anthony for teasing him. I back up covering my mouth trying to act like I'm not laughing at him.

"Mistory, leave now or you won't have a choice." Gage's tone is stern and his green eyes narrow on my smiling face. That challenge is so flipping tempting. Instead, I'll be a brat and he'll punish me later for it. I like pushing him so I mimic him like a parrot and he throws the pillow at me. "Out, *Mi Sirenita*. Please, I just need like two more hours. I'll make it up to you later." Gage blows me a kiss and turns over again to bury his face in the remaining pillows.

I hold up my finger over my lips to show Anthony. He picks me up and grabs my phone off the nightstand. He holds up the phone to take a picture of us like a social media pro. Yay, it makes me happy he used my phone because I get the copy of that photo. I grab it and stare at the image of us. He's smiling like the joker while I kiss his cheek. I totally love it so I text him a copy too. Anthony carries me out of the room, quietly closing the door behind us.

When he turns right, I figure out where he's taking me. I rain kisses all over his face in appreciation and he kisses me

one last time using the fabulous tongue piercing like a sex machine. Then he pushes open the door at the end of the hall.

Jesse is across the room with headphones on and doesn't hear us come in. Jace was super cool to set up a mini art studio for him here. Jesse had mentioned wanting to paint since we've made up. I'm glad he's got the itch again because I had no idea he stopped. I watch his long sure strokes, amazed again by his level of talent. Somehow, Jesse senses us and spins around holding his brush out. He tries to cover the move with a blinding smile, but I saw the sharp edge of the tool.

Wonder where he got those?

Jesse sets down the art supply, or weapon, I guess. His smile is breathtaking when he begins prowling in our direction. Anthony lets me down and I run to Jesse like every cheesy romantic movie I've watched. He doesn't disappoint and lifts me up to spin us around in a circle. I kiss his face and he tickles my neck with his long beard. I laugh because this feels amazing in his arms. This is what they do to me. They're all healing my wounded heart with little effort.

"Where are you going, running again?" Jesse asks, frowning as he bends to tickle me again. He uses a long stroke of his tongue to lick my neck and I moan pushing into him.

"Yes, running again. Before you ask, no, I won't wait for you either. Anthony has made me lose track of time multiple times already." I tell Jesse, shooting Anthony a scowl. "Plus, you'll distract me." I kiss Jesse's lips again. "You won't let me run, then you'll end up fixing me pancakes after sex and that's more calories."

"Absolutely! That's a fucking awesome idea and sex burns calories. Everyone knows that." Jesse says, getting geeked at the idea that just popped out of my big mouth. He kisses me deeply now, and I feel Anthony move closer to my back. Jesse tilts my head grinning at me. He bites my neck gently and Anthony blows on the same spot.

"Yum, pancakes and syrup, *Mistress*. What a delicious treat after taking our cocks for breakfast." Anthony's tone is sexy as sin and he bumps me with his erection.

Holy mackerel!

It's official. They are all pros at dirty talk 101. Shit, they're so good they can be the professors of the class. Now cue the naughty thoughts.

“Oh, I can see it now...I walk down the hall and look around, the school's surprisingly empty right now. I'm so sick of college, and this stupid uniform they make us wear. I pull down on my pleated skirt then take off my tie. I look at my phone and see I'm already late. They're going to be pissed. Allegedly, I've been accused of cheating in all my classes by my hot professors. They've called a private meeting to discuss the punishment for selling my work to other students. I take a deep breath and open the door, walking inside. They all go instantly silent when they see me standing near the door. Professor Masters waves me forward and they all stare at me intently as I walk slowly to the front of the class. Professor Lopez steps forward to take my hand gently and guides me around the large desk. Professor Riggs takes my backpack flashing me a smile that I return. They ask me to accept their punishment without complaint. I agree not seeing another option since I don't want to get kicked out of school. Then I gasp loudly when Professor Jesse rips off my white shirt, popping buttons on the floor. My bra is removed next and my boobs spill out showing my hard nipples. Riggs kisses my shoulder then backs off when Masters growls. They don't touch me like I want them to, but their eyes never leave me. Jesse spins me around and pushes me against the surface of the cold hard desk. Masters begins skillfully tying my upper body to the desk with the ropes he's holding. Lopez lifts my skirt up and smacks my ass cheek with his big tattooed hand. I buck against the desk and cry out in pleasure. Riggs removes my thong then licks my sore red cheek. Jesse shows me the ruler he's holding and my eyes go wide. He runs a leather glove over my face and I sigh. When I try to look over my shoulder, Professor Masters pushes me down again, licking up and down my back. The first hit makes me soaking wet and I pull against the ropes hard making them bite into my skin. Hands begin caressing my body through the holes of the tight ropes wrapped around

me. Professor Riggs steps forward and puts his hand near my mouth telling me to bite when I feel pain. They all take turns, whispering in my ear before punishing my ass. The pleasure and pain take over my body and I shake in ecstasy. I bite Professor Riggs when I need to, he moans every time my teeth sink into his skin. Finally, Professor Masters orders Professor Riggs on the ground to eat my pussy. Professor Masters adjusts the ropes and turns my head by holding my neck tight with both his hands. He wants me to watch Professor Lopez and Professor Jesse play with both my holes. This goes on for what feels like hours of fun and blissful delight. Then they explain the next part of my punishment. I have to take their cocks while calling my classmates on a conference call to apologize for letting them cheat. They promise to teach me how to talk dirty, if I be naughty all night long.

That's a scene from 'My Professors Talk Dirty 101' unedited."

I shake my head and the daydream disappears but the wetness from my pussy doesn't. That's a fantasy I wouldn't mind acting out. I shift my feet worked up by my own words. Dang it, I've been destroying all my underwear lately.

"Lake, we need a desk and school girl outfit, right now." I spin around and grab at Anthony's phone until he hangs up. It starts ringing right away but he ignores it staring at me with desire consuming his face. "*Mistress*, please skip the run today. Let's make this happen. You have to tell the others that hot ass scene too." He wiggles his eyebrows then licks his full lips slowly reminding me about the eating part.

Jesse's gloved hands land on my hips and he pulls me closer to his hard dick. He leans into me, tickles my neck, then whispers, "Yeah Blue Eyes, let us pound your cakes."

What the fuck?

We laugh at him and I push them both away when they try to surround me.

"You ruined the mood, man. That was so corny." Anthony kisses my head, knowing I'm gone and this fantasy

will have to wait until later.

“I knew as soon as I said it, but what can you do? Sit on my face?” Jesse flicks his tongue at me and I moan, wishing I could say yes. Then the Bassholes high five each other. I flip them off, quickly backing out of the room.

“You,” I point at Anthony and he touches his bare chest innocently. “Thank you for bringing me here. I may even have a new toy idea for us to try, but I need to check the internet first.”

Anthony’s smile widens and he adjusts the massive tent in his shorts.

“And you,” I point at Jesse and he winks at me, “keep up the good work. I love all of it, Aquaman.”

Jesse blushes at the nickname and plays with his hair embarrassed. I saw the gorgeous painting of us, he’s trying to hide in the corner. In it, he’s Aquaman holding me and I’m a stunning mermaid. I’d call dibs on it, but then he’ll want payment for it now and I need to workout. If they keep staring at me with those hungry expressions I won’t have the willpower to leave right now. They both tilt their heads and lick their lips.

Shit. “Love you!” I shout as I run out of the room. They call out pouting and whining but I keep moving.

I swiftly make my way through the house and open the front door. A guard is there to greet me and he closes the door for me nodding in respect. I nod back at Kevin and show him my fists. He laughs because I kicked his ass last week during training. I know all my guard’s names because it’s disrespectful not to know the men protecting my life. I wave bye and he does the same talking into his hand walkie like a secret agent. I stroll to the little pond and begin stretching out, watching the water spill over rocks.

Jace steps around the side of a large tree and scares the shit out of me. I sigh, grateful he’s wearing a shirt today. Jace’s tattoos are distracting and I want to look at all the details. He has this whole pirate ship with a buried treasure theme going

on. It's super cool and the art is amazing work, but I can't just stare at him like that. He puts in headphones scowling at the ground. He looks up at me like I'm not even here and he can see through me. *What the fuck? Headphones?* Jace starts stretching then jumps super high in place. I stroll over to him feeling uncomfortable and baffled about what's going on. Did I do something wrong? I try to recall our last interaction and conversation. Jace glances at me, huffs and runs off.

Do guys get PMS?

Six days a week for four weeks we've been running, and today, he wants to listen to music and ignore me? I didn't bring my headphones because we always talk. What do I do now?

I run after him, but I can't let him mess up my pace. He's running too fast and I don't want to burn out with the distance we normally do. My sneakers hit the hard dirt path at a steady pace and my arms swing at my chest.

Maybe he's upset that everyone's here. I should tell him to take a day off or something. Gage already mentioned going home soon, which both scares and excites me. Jace is probably sick of watching me 24/7. I've totally appreciated all his time and companionship when I was alone, but I don't want him to feel like I'm a burden.

My nightmares the first few weeks were horrible. He would get up to run or spar with me. It never mattered what time it was. We trained together, watched movies and played games. He let me cry on his shoulder when the heart break was too much for me to go through alone. Jace still felt guilty about my kidnapping, so he trained hard every day to be a skilled fighter like me. My dad set the foundation and Bryson hired people to fine tune the rest. I still have work to do, but I'm a lethal machine now. My targets on the training course speak for themselves.

There he is!

I can see Jace up ahead, so I make a break for him. My legs are pumping hard, using toned muscles to make the incline look effortless. It's not, trust me the burning is killer.

The first time I tried this route, I fell over and had to be carried back down. At least, Jace has taken pity on me. He's finally slowed down and is waiting for me. My mouth opens to tease him about his behavior, but he runs off again. Okay, fine he wants to fight.

Let's do this.

We agreed to always have each others' backs and that we wouldn't keep secrets from each other. So, what's his deal? I turn up the speed and catch up to him once again. My hand lands on Jace's arm and he aggressively shakes it. I stop running and expect him to do the same but he doesn't. I can only take so much bullshit before I snap. We don't have time for games so I run after him again, and body check him hard. Jace stops astonished then pulls out his headphones slowly glaring at me.

"What the fuck is wrong with you today?" I ask him, throwing my hands up in frustration.

He ignores me, puts in the headphones again and actually has the balls to run off, faster this time too. Well, that pisses me off to no end. I give chase and cut right through the heavy pine trees and up the steeper climb. There isn't a path here so I have to be careful. I watched Alex run into a tree once when he was talking and not paying attention. The huge knot on his head wasn't a pretty sight, and it's a perfect reminder for me to slow down. I pick up my speed and jump out of the trees in front of him.

He skids to a stop, curses, and rips out his headphones once more.

"What the fuck are you doing? Do you want to leave? You should go back to the house with Seth. He'll take you out for some much needed partying." I wiggle my eyebrows and he shakes his head with a sour look on his face. Why does that make him more upset?

"Are you serious? I knew this would happen. I should have known better." Jace spits the words like I just assaulted him.

“Should have known what? I’m sorry, but I have no idea why you are mad at me.” I try to read his expression, but come up empty handed. He’s giving nothing away and making zero sense.

“You just don’t get it.” Suddenly, he sprints to the left, off the path and up.

Wait, what just happened?

He’s gone before I can process his comments. Jace just left me here more confused than I was a second ago. How long has he felt trapped here? The guilt of my selfishness weighs heavy on me. I didn’t really give him an option at the hospital. I just demanded he come help me because I’m a bad friend.

“Looks like you should get running.”

I jump when Lake’s voice comes from right next to me. I twist to stare at him in disbelief. How did he sneak up on me? I didn’t hear anything and I’ve got ears like bats.

He lifts one perfect eyebrow, his shaved head calling to my hands. “I think you hurt his feelings,” he says, shrugging like he doesn’t care, he’s just letting me know.

I feel my eyebrows pull together. What? Jace? Why? I go to ask him but Lake steps into my body throwing off my train of thought. His body is warm from his run and he feels amazing this close to me. My mind blanks as his bare chest bumps into my arm. Skin to skin with him is explosive.

“Run fast, Sex. He’ll wait for you and circle around if you take too long. We’ll talk later.” He blows on the sweat on my neck. Goosebumps break out along my skin and I shiver. “Remember you owe me for running away. I’m going to collect soon. This is your warning.”

I spin around and freeze staring because he’s shirtless. My eyes roam all the tattoos covering his glorious body. I can see the erection in his shorts which is fucking hot. Lake watches me with his unique teal eyes like a possessive man. He reaches out to touch my face, but drops his hand before he makes contact. “Do you remember our first time, well our only time together really?”

“Yes,” I glance towards the path, scared to keep eye contact while he says the next words.

“I went back to check on you,” he whispers.

My head snaps to his in shock. Did he really?

“I’m not any good at the soft emotional stuff, but I wanted you to know I did go back.” Lake runs away growling to himself. He calls over his shoulder, “Better run.”

Has Lake been following me?

Okay, shit. I follow the direction Jace went but he’ll be long gone by now. I think Lake is trippin’. The trees are thicker here and my lungs are burning from my pace. It’s official, I like the paths better than the natural terrain. Thankfully, I’ve been running almost everyday so my stamina is impressive. There were a couple hangover days so I just ran at night and if the nightmares haunted me, I ran twice those days.

I have a hard time believing this is my real life most days. Yeah, because it’s so exciting. Not! I’m extremely lucky and fortunate for the people in my life, and I know that. Honestly though, who would picture their life going like this? How are stalkers a real thing? Jace filled me in on some of the ones they’ve dealt with over the years. Bryson had files on all of them too. I never truly understood what being famous costs celebrities and I’m not even famous. I stopped going on social media weeks ago because I don’t even want to know what the world is saying about me. My family is finally visiting tomorrow and it will be nice to spend time with them.

Holy shit, my breathing is heavy and I pump my arms faster. You can only keep your mind busy for so long and these hills are fucking killer for cardio. I think I hear footsteps on dry leaves around me and I stop to listen better.

What the hell? I turn around but no one is there.

“Jace, where are you? Stop running. What did I do? FYI, I’m always running on the trail from now on. My legs are fucking killing me.” Well, I can’t see him so I’m basically just

talking to myself. Maybe, it wasn't footsteps. That totally could've been a bird knocking down pine cones, right?

I start running again but my pace is much slower now because I've given up. I'm not going to catch him. Why didn't I bring headphones today, too? Dang it. I'm trying to dodge pine cones when I step on one I didn't see. I start to fall because the velocity and speed has me off balance. Abruptly, someone grabs me before I go down.

My training takes over instinctively and my mind tells my body to react without thinking. In one motion I flip my attacker over my head and pull the knife from my ankle sleeve. I'm about to jump on him but stop just in time. Jace stares up at me flashing a huge grin. *Basshole*. Now I want to kick him.

"Nice work, but you hesitated," Jace scolds me, sounding disappointed that I didn't stab him.

"No shit, because it's you. I can see your face, you know." I tap my chin walking closer to him but not close enough for him to grab my leg. "Though maybe, I should kick your ass for scaring me like that. What the hell is wrong with you? Just be honest and get it out so we can move on." I look down at him begging him to tell me his feelings.

"Fine, listen. I think..." He trails off, his eyes glazing over as he disappears into a thought. I take a step closer and he throws out his hand, snagging my ankle as he laughs loudly.

My reflexes kick in and I jump up, dislodging his hand before he can get a good grip. I turn my momentum into a backflip but he's on his feet when I turn around. We start to circle each other preparing for battle. Jace swings for my ribs, but I duck and spin around on one leg. My other leg connects with his and he falls again. I laugh, my hands on my hips. Wait a minute. He's not normally this easy to beat. My eyes narrow at him from the idea.

"Are you letting me win? You really are trying to offend me today, aren't you?" I reach out to help him up and that...was fucking stupid. My back hits the ground with a thump once he's on his feet. Luckily, I save my head from any

rocks or trauma. I look up and stick out my tongue like a sore loser.

“No, I’m the one who should be offended. You told me to leave like a service dog that was no longer needed.” Jace kicks the ground and plays with his phone avoiding my eyes.

“How did I do that?” I jump to my feet and begin dusting off. He still doesn’t say anything so I glance over at him. “That’s a shitty allegation, Jace. Explain.”

“It’s nothing. Never mind, I don’t know. I’m just stressed and stuff. If you want me to leave because the guys are here, that’s cool. Just remember what you learned. You’ll need to be ready once you’re back out in public. Don’t let your guard down, Shorty.” He winks at me using my nickname and that makes me smile at him. I guess he isn’t mad anymore.

“FYI, I don’t want you to leave. I thought you were sick of me and feeling stuck here.” He frowns and briskly shakes his head. “So, that’s it, you’re just worried about the real world?”

Jace opens his mouth then closes it instantaneously.

“What’s up, Jace and Shorty? That always makes me laugh because you are short.” Alex holds up his hand showing me how tall I am. He looks between us with a hurt look on his face. “Why did you guys start without me?”

Alex has bad timing and Jace won’t share anymore now that he’s here. That makes me grumpy so I kick him in the shin before Jace and I start running on the path. I hear him hiss in pain but I know Alex is fine because he catches up to us a second later.

“First off, don’t call her that. That’s my nickname for her.” Jace says clearly not willing to share the nickname I’m still not sure I like. “Second, who said we invited you in the first place.” We high five, smiling at each other because picking on Alex is fun.

I gasp when Lake runs up beside me and playfully bumps my shoulder. Alex stops in his tracks and Jace roars

with laughter at his panicked expression. I'm so awestruck, I just look up at Lake running next to me.

“Alex, we have no beef and you look like a pussy.” Lake's deep voice rumbles, while shaking his head. He grins and winks at me and I almost trip.

I look over my shoulder and see Alex's chest puffed out. He catches up to us again but still stays behind our group. We all run in silence for a few more minutes then Lake suddenly bumps into me again. “Want to know a secret?”

I stop running and my hands automatically go to my hips. “You got a secret, Lake? We said no more secrets. I'm beginning to hate that word because we're always saying it.” I think about threatening him with one of my knives.

Lake stops and strolls back to where I'm standing flexing muscles for my stare. His finger goes to my nose and I stick out my tongue at the touch. It's his way of getting me to submit in a public setting without it being obvious to other people.

He leans into me and whispers in my ear. “Not that kind of secret, Sex.”

Lake's breath sends chills over my warm skin. “Then what, Master?” I can see the effect my words have on him and his cock stands at attention for me. I want to be naughty, so I step close and rub myself on it.

“Bad, bad she devil.” He bumps me with it but backs off and laughs when I moan. “Not now, my pet. But I thought you would want to know...Bryson is on the property right now.”

I grab Lake by the shoulders and use my foot to flip him over my head. I hear his grunt when he lands on the ground, but I don't care. I jump on his chest and I hear the other two guys laughing. They're used to this by now. I've been training for my life up here. I lean down and get in Lake's face. The blood at the corner of his mouth almost makes me stop, but then I remember Bry's betrayal.

“Where, Lake?” I demand close to his face.

His eyes sharpen and I know he's mad because I stopped playing along. Too bad, this is personal.

I move my legs closer together and dig my knees into his chest. My tone is fierce and controlled when I speak again. "We can play later. I need this Lake. Don't get in the way."

He tilts his head watching me but then he gives in and grins at me showing a wicked smile. "Kiss me first."

I waste no time taking his lips, and our tongues meet in a frenzied kiss that promises mind blowing sex later. Lake's skilled tongue combined with his piercing makes the kiss even better and I moan in his mouth. I pull back and he growls deep in his throat. "You will be mine again soon."

I nod telling him what we both know.

"He's in the main house." Lake informs me finally.

I kiss Lake once more, then jump up to sprint as fast as my legs will take me to the house. I hear Alex cheering behind me and know he's excited because he won't be the one getting hit this time.

I race across the grass and hear a guard calling for me. He thinks I'm in trouble but I don't have time to explain the situation. My feet hit the cobblestone at record speed and it's not uneven with how fast I'm going. I skirt around the colorful rose bushes then climb the stairs two at a time.

Unexpectedly, Sage opens the front door and steps outside right in front of me. I'm flabbergasted for a half second before pulling her in for a tight hug. We spoke last night about everything, but I didn't know she was coming here.

"It's so fucking good to see you, girl." She hugs me tighter and I don't fight the tears.

I pull back to wipe my face. "I can't believe you're here. No one told me." We smile at each other and she's got tears too. I don't know why I thought I had to do this on my own. I missed my family and friends so much.

“I know I’m your surprise from Bryson.” She holds out her arms, showing off herself laughing.

I look around but don’t see his car. I wave at X, the guard that chased me and he rolls his eyes before moving back to his post.

“Bryson’s already gone. You’ll have to forgive him sooner later, you know. Bry has a good heart and he really cares about you. It’s freaking beautiful up here.” Sage smiles with a sweep of her arm.

“Yeah, and I tagged along too. What’s up, Lex? How have you been doing?” Zeke walks up the driveway smiling at us. He hugs me when he gets close and I know why Bry left quickly. It’s nice to think he was scared of me, but not realistic. Damn it, now I feel sorry for him.

“Let’s watch a movie or something,” Gage says out of nowhere. Where did he come from? “*Mi Sirenita*, I missed you.” He kisses me then picks me up over his shoulder. “We’ll meet you guys in the living room soon. My lady needs a shower.” Gage smacks my ass, “Poor baby.” He makes those words sound sad.

“Baby?” I ask confused because he never calls me that.

“I’m not talking to you. I’m talking to your ass. She’s smaller and I feel bad.” He’s totally crazy and we all start laughing.



Chapter 7 - Dinner Party

Anthony Proud & Sober

I glance over to see Lexy checking her face using a small silver mirror. I decided to hire a driver tonight so we can be hands free and talk on the ride over. I feel great and I haven't had a drink in over a week. She's nervous and I feel bad about that. Maybe, I pressured her into coming when she isn't ready to face people yet. We did go on live TV professing our love for her to everyone who was watching. So I get why she's gun shy. Well, that and there's a stalker to worry about. I'm really glad she agreed to come with me though. Lexy looks drop dead gorgeous in that tight red dress. It fits her body perfectly and makes my mouth water. I made sure my suit has matching red accents and my jewelry is rubes too.

“Do you want to go somewhere else? This party's stupid and my parents will understand if you need more time, Lexy.” She grabs my hand trying to reassure me and smiles warmly. I take our joined hands then kiss where the thumbs meet. Her smile widens and she repeats the move kissing them too. I'm so happy to have her back in my life.

“No, your mom was really excited when we spoke earlier and I know security will be tight. Plus, I have these if anything goes down.” She lifts her dress and I see the rows of knives strapped to her thighs. It's sexy as hell. The knives are

in a red lace garter belt with black leather straps and sleeves. My dick jumps and we hear a bell. Her eyebrows raise flirtatiously before she licks her red painted lips. “That was such a great idea. I’m going to be wet all night just thinking about it. Oh, ring for me, my little Ant.” She reaches for my lap and the bell sounds are more frequent.

The ringing that comes from my new jewelry makes us both hungry with desire. She bought me a gift and I’m thrilled I get to wear it for her tonight. It’s a chain that runs from my ball piercing to my crossbar piercings. Nothing special, but on the chain there is a bell. So anytime my cock gets hard, moves or jumps, “He plays music for me,” were her exact words. I adjust myself and push down my own needs which feels good. I’m down to torture myself with prolonged gratification. We were researching edging yesterday and the different techniques. Lexy’s all dolled up like the Queen she is and I don’t want to mess her up before the party. It would stress her out and embarrass her to walk in there after having sex. The waiting will cause some pain and that’s what I enjoy. So, I don’t act or take her right here like my cock wants.

”*Mistress*, I need to behave or you won’t punish me tonight like you promised.” That comment sparks her appetite for being naughty. Her blue eyes caress my body like a touch. I slip into the role that makes the ringing from my bell start up again. She promised me some new toys tonight. Amazon has been her best friend lately, since she doesn’t leave the house. We don’t let her train all day anymore either.

“Okay, you’re right. We have big plans tonight. I almost want you to touch me before we get there now.” She taps her chin as if thinking about it and I groan. Shit, that does sound nice. My bell starts ringing and she giggles, getting anxious. She’s so beautiful like this, happy, carefree and confident.

What will she look like in twenty years? Will she still stare at me like this? Screw it, I wrap my arms around her and bring her closer to me. I lick the seam of her lips and she bites me. That makes me moan and automatically grind into her.

“Did I tell you how amazing you look tonight? It sounds sexist but I feel lucky to have you on my arm. You’re walking candy, Lexy.” I lick her again to prove my point. “Yummy,” I say against her skin.

She smacks my shoulder embarrassed and her face turns bright red to match her dress. Then she rolls her eyes, giving my appearance a once over. “Oh, please. Did you not look in a mirror this evening, Anthony? You are beyond gorgeous and every woman’s wildest fantasy.” She straightens my bowtie, smiling at me. “I love that you’re matching me tonight too. Plus, I’m the lucky one, I know what you look like naked.” She winks at me then leans over and kisses my lips. Her small hand finds my dick and gives it a squeeze of pleasure. I grunt, biting my tongue because I know better than to touch without permission. “And you’ve already flattered me enough, darling. Let me see that tongue again.”

I stick out my tongue showing her my piercing and the jewelry I picked tonight. It’s one of her favorites. I seductively wiggle my tongue how she likes. She throws her head back groaning, wanting the real thing. We come together fast in a wave of ecstasy. I kiss her breathless and she moans when my tongue plays with hers. This jewelry can be a little sharp but I know she likes a little pain. Nothing like me, but just enough to make it fun. I poke her again and she moves closer. Her arms wrap around my neck but I pull back before we can get down and dirty.

“Not nice,” she says sternly.

I laugh giddy because she’s pouting and that’s a huge confidence boost. I remind her with an arrogant look and point at her dress. That’s why sex in the back of a limo is a bad idea before the party.

She sighs, “OK, you’re right.” She moves back in her own seat adjusting her dress and checking her hair.

Now I sigh from the loss of her weight on me and adjust my jacket sleeves. Lexy gives me a flirtatious smile knowing I’m regretting stopping. I reach over and try to tickle her but she knocks my hands away. Her laughter fills the car

and it's infectious like her. I swear I'm bewitched by this woman. Lexy is truly everything I've ever wanted and needed.

This is what it feels like to have it all.

We get off the freeway heading for our destination in record time. My mom will be pleased because I'm not late like usual. Lexy bounces around on the seat all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. It makes me delighted that I've caused this reaction in her. Parties, galas and charity dinners are common for me so if I can convince her to go, I won't have to keep canceling.

Lexy glances over and shyly says, "Don't say anything but I'm so happy to be off that property and out of the house. It's better because I'm with you and feel safe for my first test. I need to make myself face people again and I'm starting to feel kind of like a prisoner there." Her confession makes me want to protest, but she covers my lips. "Plus, I can't let everyone see your fine ass alone. You are mine, Mr. Riggs." She smiles and leans in to kiss me.

I pull her to my lap, feeling all warm and fuzzy in my chest. Fuck, that was freaking sweet. Possessive women are sexy when you're in love. My heart is finally full again. Lexy kisses me and smiles while pulling back. "Oh yeah, and I want to see Tina." I smack her ass for ruining my conceded thought and she freezes. Lexy's eyes flash with passionate yearning. She inclines her head at me thinking about being naughty again.

"OK, if at any time you want to leave, just say the words. I've missed you so much, Lexy." I kiss her forehead, holding her close. My world feels right and I'm completely sober.

She puts her head on my shoulder and kisses my neck. Her words are whispered on my skin. "Oh, Tony me too." She snuggles into my chest, and I hold her even tighter.

I'm never losing her again. We sit like that until the car rolls to a stop at one of my parents' houses. Our driver opens the door and I step out nodding to him. I look around spotting more guards watching us and feel a wave of security. I hold

out my hand for Lexy like a true gentleman and help her get out.

She steps from the car like a queen arriving at a grand ball. I kiss her senseless and she giggles before spotting Wes a few feet away. They hug and I tip the driver, thanking him.

“Holy shit, Lex. You’re smokin’ tonight.” I step up to Wes and put my hand on his shoulder in warning. I’ll give him credit because he doesn’t even flinch, just smiles at me. He wiggles his eyebrow and I frown. “You too, big guy. What are your plans later tonight?” Lexy laughs and I try miserably not to smile at his joke.

“He’s all mine. Get your own date, Wes.” She grabs my arm, staking her claim on me and I don’t mind at all. “You changed your MIB uniform for James Bond tonight I see.” Wes looks down at himself grinning like a kid and nods. She laughs again but looks around then freaks out when she sees the line of cars behind us. People are trying to enter the property to get to the Riggs’ party. “Anthony, let’s go, everyone is waiting for us to move.”

The panic in her voice makes me unhappy. “So let them wait.” I shrug but don’t want to stress her out more. She takes my offered arm and we walk down the gold carpeted path together. Wes and his partner flank us. The two security guards at the door wave us forward and nod to me. My mom has really outdone herself this time with metal detectors right outside the entrance.

Once we enter the house there’s a line of servants waiting along the way to direct people or take instruction. Rich people are snobs that are used to being waited on and my mom knows that. We stroll to the grand ballroom slowly. Lexy points out all the expensive artwork along the way. I heard her and Jesse play a new game with gloves and famous artists. I don’t know all the details yet.

The two large guards at the ballroom entrance nod at me. I recognize the retired Secret Service Agents from Riggs’ personal security detail. Dr. Riggs is very good at throwing money around and stealing loyal employees. My parents are

very wealthy and quite famous. They rub elbows with people of the same caliber so security is always top notch.

Lexy gasps as we walk in and I chuckle. Yes, this ballroom looks like something from a princess movie. I know that's exactly what she's thinking. Groups of people are scattered around having boring conversations as we walk further into the room. Lexy's grip tightens on my arm as her eyes travel over all the guests. I pat her hand with mine, letting her know I'm here.

Tina sees us from across the room, the same time I spot her. She shouts Lexy's name and makes a beeline for us. The women hug and dive into an interesting talk about a smutty book they're reading. Apparently, Tina's loyalty lands over there, since my PA and good friend was still in contact with Lexy this whole time.

"Well, don't you look happy as a clam? Oh, and at a Riggs' party nonetheless. Maybe I should take a picture?" My cousin Cash teases me while we do the typical guy hand shake.

He's right and I chuckle because I feel high on life. It feels fucking amazing too. I squint my eyes using my best Chris Tucker voice. "Nothing can ruin this for me, Man. You can take a picture, write it down, I don't give a fuck." He laughs because "Friday" was our favorite movie when we were younger. Well, that and "Boyz n the Hood".

Cash stops a waitress walking by and he grabs champagne for the women. He uses his Michael B. Jordan swagger to make them giggle as he hands the drinks out. Then he tries handing one to me but I stop him with a shake of my head. Lexy makes me jump when she takes a handful of my ass in her hand and squeezes hard. My *Mistress* knows what I like. I bend down and kiss her head.

Cash bows at the waitress then smiles at me. "Can you please bring my cousin a coke?" She agrees happily and walks off to fill the order. Cash looks me over, his intelligent eyes see too much. His hand moves to my shoulder and squeezes in solidarity. "I'm proud of you, Ant."

I laugh, understanding what he's referring to. I'm not making light of my situation because I've been there before when football was taken from me. In some cases, alcoholism hurts family and friends most of all. They want to help but they're on the outside looking in. No one can be helped if they don't want the help and see a problem. Cash glances at Tina and his eyes stay locked there.

"Thanks, Cuz. Why don't you ask her out on a real date. You think she doesn't know the fake dating thing isn't going to work forever? You're going to lose her and then you'll be a miserable mess like I was." I look at my woman and actually feel butterflies in my stomach.

"Yeah, right. Tiny's just my partner in crime. She helps keep my sanity at shit like this. Besides, she doesn't like me like that. I'm her homie." I watch him stare at Tina or Tiny. He's such a liar and a total goner already. Cash could still fuck it up though, if he isn't careful with her heart. Guys are notorious for that when starting new relationships.

"No pressure, just a friendly reminder, Cuz. I'm feeling all romantic and shit. Love is in the air, I'm telling you. My woman's back in my arms and the world is right, Cuz." I stare at Lexy, enjoying seeing her light shine brightly again. Her musical laugh sprinkles the air like candy on a sundae. She's so sweet like this.

"Love looks good on you, cousin." Cash pats my shoulder again smiling but then it drops and his tone becomes serious. "I've filed the new orders of protection on all the suspected players. Most of them will be simple but Rick's people are pushing back because they want more details. They're nervous about the media getting this information. The Masters name holds a lot of weight. Shit, even more these days with Blake's new movie, and Lake turning into a good guy. Everyone loves Mister freak in the sheets, Masters." We both laugh at the nickname the media started using. It's true though Lake has tons of new fans after the Vanessa episode.

"I'm glad you guys think you're so fucking funny. When are we getting in the ring again, Cash? I'll knock your ass out with my one, two punch, Bitch." Lake makes like he's

going to do just that and his fist flies towards Cash. Lake stops his arm at the last second joking and not making contact. We all laugh then Lake turns to me. “Tony, I don’t know why you’re laughing. I’ll just have Mistory kick your ass for me.” Lake tips his head at us only half teasing.

Little does he know, that threat has the opposite effect on me. My bell rings happily in my pants. I quickly glance over at Lexy and she hears it too then looks in my direction. Her eyebrows shoot up until she sees me watching her. My *Mistress* licks her lips and blows me a kiss. I almost lose it right here playing Jingle Balls for anyone to hear. I have to admit Lake telling *Mistress* what to do to me sounds off the charts exciting.

The waitress from earlier hands me a coke and I give her my thanks. I focus back on the guys’ words and catch up on the conversation. It doesn’t take long for me to wish I didn’t because there’s nothing like cold water on an erection to ruin the mood. I’m still working through my emotions regarding Lexy’s kidnapping. I glance back at her and she’s in the middle of an animated story with Tina.

“Fuck him and his lawyers. He’s lucky I don’t kill his ass.” Lake says dead serious with pure hate in his tone, even Lexy looks over concerned.

“Lake, it’s my job to advise you against killing people. Never admit to anything and never speak without your attorney present.” Cash replies casually like this is a normal caution for him and flashes a smile at us.

“I’m only waiting on one more piece of information, but I’ve decided to move forward with my plan anyway. Let’s just say a big star in Hollywood is gonna fall when I’m done.” Lake rubs his neck then drops his hand when he glances at Lexy. She’s staring at him already and I can see the heat in her glaze as it moves over his body before reaching his face again. Lake does look O.G. in his black and teal suit tonight. He cleans up nicely while keeping his bad boy image.

We all do, I play with my piercings out of habit and see all the people staring at our little group.

“What are you planning, Lake? I’m your lawyer. You have to tell me stuff so I can protect you.” Cash rolls his eyes in frustration but he’s used to this type of behavior. Lake’s the boss of his own life. I’ve always admired that about him and he doesn’t take shit from anyone.

“The paperwork will be sent over first thing Monday. No worries Cash, I’ve got this. Let’s go surfing tomorrow?” Lake changes the subject effortlessly, controlling the conversation like a pro.

“Yeah fine surfing sounds good. This new development will be picking at my brain until Monday and the waves could help. I’m probably going to get drunk now just to forget so I’ll meet you in the afternoon.” Cash sighs deeply, grabbing more champagne from a waiter. Tina reads his mood perfectly and walks up to take his hand. I see his shoulders relax and his posture change at her touch.

Just friend, sure buddy.

“Hey, what’s up my people?” Damien throws his arm around me and smiles at Lexy and Tina like the charmer he pretends to be. He’s dressed in a white and gold Gucci logo tuxedo and my eyebrows raise. Who is he showing off for?

Oh, what do we have here? Ethan shakes Lake’s and Cash’s hand before nodding to me. Lexy’s cousin Shawna looks...well she looks sexed up. Her hair’s messed up and I think her dress is crooked and twisted. Lexy whispers in her ear then glances at me, shrugging her shoulders when I tilt my head.

“Not much, Damien. What’s up with you?” My tone is suggestive like I already know. Is that a lip print on his neck? I wipe his neck and he ducks away from me. Yeah, lipstick, I raise my eyebrows showing him the maroon color then I use the napkin from my drink.

“Don’t touch me, Bro.” Damien shoots me a dirty look and pushes at my arm pissed off. He walks over to hug Lexy and Tina hello. “How much longer until we eat? I’m famished.” He says flirtatiously while staring at Lexy’s cousin.

The women next to Shawna laugh when she blushes looking at the ground.

“I’ll bet you are,” Lake says grinning madly at Damien. That comment makes everyone laugh louder and it helps the tension.

Ethan gets upset and bumps Lake with his shoulder which makes him growl but Cash stops Lake from acting on his anger. Ethan ignores them both and moves over to Shawna to put his arm around her. She graciously accepts his support. I’m amazed when my brother doesn’t get mad either.

Hmm.

My mother spots us from across the room and I swear her face lights up. She heads straight for us, waving at people as she walks. Lexy smiles when she sees her too and glances at me. They really do like each other now. I make my way to Lexy’s side and she squeezes my ass again on the sly. I wrap my arm around her waist, pull her close and kiss her head.

“Hello children, thanks for coming tonight.” We all snicker at her greeting because we’re hardly children. “I can’t wait to talk to all of you but will you excuse Anthony and Lexy for a moment, please?” Mother smiles at them all and touches Damien’s arm nodding to him.

Everyone agrees, looking between us like we’re going to see the principal or something. We nod and I take Lexy’s hand to kiss it. My mother herds us to the corner, where it’s more private. Lexy’s hand is sweating in mine and I feel bad for her stress.

“Dr. Riggs, thanks for having me at your beautiful party. Everything looks spectacular and quite perfect.” Lexy beams at her because she’s serious and means it. I squeeze her hand letting her know she’s already loved and I’m here to support her.

“Hello Lexy, it’s great to see you too. Thanks for the compliment and for coming tonight. I’m really glad you’re here, dear. I’m going to introduce you to some pretty snobby people. If anyone gives you a hard time let me know. This is

my event and of course, smart people are scared of me.” Mother gives Lexy the look that screams power and demands you see the truth in her words. Then they both laugh together like old friends.

Lexy gives my mother a radiant smile like she walks on water. I can’t put into words what this feels like knowing they get along. I’m pretty sure, I just stood taller with pride. They talk about Lexy’s parents and her siblings like a true family. This is all I ever wanted. I invited her family over to go horseback riding in a few weeks. We haven’t decided when she will move back to the beach house. I know she’s sick of the mountain but she has to be safe.

My dad walks up to our small group and kisses my mother’s head. He nods at me and smiles at the ladies. Lexy charms them both with a story about The Kelly Brothers. My parents fully belly laugh and people look our way. I pull Lexy closer to my side enjoying the attention and kiss her head. She blushes but keeps talking, entertaining my parents with another story. Lexy laughs and I can tell she’s nervous about the looks our way. Shit, I personally want them to see us together and happy. They can all take a picture now and splash that shit everywhere for all I care. No one will ever use her against me again. I make myself focus back on their conversation.

“Well, I’m not sure. Is that really a good idea? Maybe...” Lexy glances up at me, asking for my opinion on a topic I didn’t hear. Her body in that dress has me forgetting everything to just stare at her. Even in her heels she’s still short. I bend to kiss her bare shoulder and she gets embarrassed.

“You’re turning as red as your dress,” I whisper next to her ear and use my tongue piercing on her shoulder this time. Then I pull back and take her hand in mine instead. She’s lucky I don’t start rubbing on her with my cock. I want to get punished but not denied, so I’m not pushing it even though she makes me crazy with need. Lexy’s desperate for my mother to like her and I get it. I want that too. I look at my parents and finally decided to acknowledge them. “What were we talking

about? I missed it.” My mother stares at me appalled by my statement and honesty. Father coughs, “fool” and shakes his head in amused disappointment. It’s his way of saying listen to the women or they’ll get mad. He doesn’t understand Lexy isn’t like that...*oh shit*. Her death glare is locked and loaded in my direction. “Sorry,” I tell her, trying to use my signature smile to win her over. It’s been in commercials...but unfortunately it doesn’t work here.

“Anthony, really? Wow, Lexy, I swear I taught him better than that. Well, I asked your girlfriend to come talk to Dolly with us later on.” Mother points towards the location of her gardens. *No way!* She wouldn’t just call anyone Dolly casually like that. My eyes snap to Lexy and I see the fear on her face. That definitely takes the wind out of my cocky sails about tonight.

“Not tonight, Mother.” I decline her invitation speaking for both of us.

“Why not?” The two women gasp at the same time. Their expressions match and they’re outraged by my declaration. I show them my hands in surrender then they face each other and begin laughing at me.

“Just quit while you’re ahead, son. You have to know when to abort the mission. Hold up the white flag and wave the son of a bitch.” Dad’s sound advice makes us all laugh.

“My man is absolutely brilliant, Lexy.” My mother purrs, smiling proudly at my father. He takes her into his arms and kisses her like no one is watching.

Lexy puts her hand over her heart and grins at me because she loves romance. I’m sure she’ll ask to write their story when she gets more comfortable with my family. She was brainstorming a new book idea with me yesterday and I can’t stop thinking about it.

“He’s daydreaming again, I think.” Lexy taps my arm, rolling her eyes when I look at her confused.

“Anthony, I’ve already explained. Lexy doesn’t have to give an interview if she doesn’t want to. Maybe she’ll decide

to just take a picture with the family.” Mother shifts uncomfortably and my father kisses her head in support.

“Your mother was only trying to help, Anthony.” My father scolds me, hugging her close.

“It’s alright, Honey. I’m not looking to cause any stress.” She smiles at Lexy. “I only made the suggestion so you can talk about your books. Maybe shout out, the new project you have going on with Sarah.” Oh brother, I shake my head. Did she say, “shout out?” Mother glances at Lexy hoping she understands and I can tell she really wants this.

Lexy turns to me wide eyed. “Is that OK, Anthony? I wouldn’t want to pressure you.” Her voice is unsure but curious of my response.

“If you really want to?” Why wouldn’t I want to brag that she’s mine? I’m currently dumbfounded by her way of thinking.

“I mean, I wouldn’t want to impose on a family article.” Lexy looks to my parents still bewildered that we would want her in it.

My mom grabs both her hands wearing a warm friendly smile. “Girl, I told you this will be fun. I promise and you need to get used to this because you’re part of the family.” She hugs the choked up Lexy. The women strike up another conversation, laughing with each other. Before long they just walk off together like we don’t exist. Mom calls over her shoulder as a second thought. “Honey, tell Caesar it’s time to eat.”

“Yes, wildcat.” My head snaps to my father and he shrugs at me, not embarrassed at all. “My woman’s in charge and I’m OK with that. Don’t kink shame me, son. That doesn’t hurt my ego at all. I’m in charge all day at work and I need a break when I get home.”

I’m not even going to respond because I understand where he’s coming from, but this is weird to talk about with my dad. He lifts his hand and Caesar knows what’s up. Dad’s arm goes around my shoulders and we follow the women out.

“Son, don’t be a prude,” he says laughing at my shocked expression. The dinner bell rings and Caesar asks the guests to find their name tags on the tables in the grand hall.

My mom’s going to make me cry like I’m a kid starved for a “that a boy.” Our relationship has grown by leaps and bounds recently. This has been the best night ever and I hope I never forget any detail. I’m even thinking of her as a mom and not just the titles I often call her. If I’m honest, she has been supportive for a while now. Asking Dr. Maraschino to help with Lexy was a big deal for her. My mom knows the risks when medical licenses are involved. My parents were encouraging when Lexy left after her kidnapping too. Mom was confident Lexy would come back stronger than ever, and I just needed to trust the process. As I look at her now, I can see my mom was a hundred percent right.

Dinner is almost done and there will be dancing after, but I’m itching to leave already. Lexy has been teasing my erection ever since the appetizers were served. Once again, I think how lucky she is that I’m keeping my eye on the prize tonight and not attacking her. She acts like I give a shit what anyone thinks. I lean over to kiss her mouth again.

“You are pushing it, *Mistress*.” Her eyes widen when I bite her lip.

“Oh, you will pay for th-” she suddenly stops talking.

Confused, we both turn to check out the commotion across the room. Loud hostile voices get everyone’s attention, including my friends and family. I look over at my father to verify he doesn’t want my help. He shakes his head once quickly frowning in displeasure.

Lake gets up and stares at me, I nod. I’m in charge of watching Lexy. Lake runs a finger over her shoulder before walking away. Ethan and Kevin follow him adjusting their jackets. Cash stands to get behind Lexy next to Wes.

“You all are eating with a murderer!” That makes me flip and so does my chair when I push back from the table.

Lexy stands and grabs my hand, not wanting me to move. I squeeze it gently while clutching my jaw. I can see Tamera's father screaming at the guards. He's as angry as a bee's nest getting attacked by a bear. "No, I'm going to say my piece." Caesar holds up his arms blocking the hysterical man but Rodney tries to scream around him. "How can all of you be smiling and laughing when she killed my sweet Tamera." He's fucking delusional and playing with fire.

I can see Lake and a shit ton of security waiting to the right looking this way. What the fuck are they waiting for? I don't get it. They need to make him leave or I will.

Then everything becomes immediately clear to me and I feel like a fool for not seeing it until now.

My dad kisses mom and she stands slamming her hands on the table. Oh shit, the Queen of the house is royally pissed. My mom pats her mouth with a napkin and walks to the scene that's interrupting her party.

I pull Lexy closer, blocking her with my body. I want her to hear this but I don't want him to see her. My woman startles me by stepping out and around my body. Lexy looks up winking at me and shows me the slit up to her thigh. That's my reminder of what's resting inches above and I bow my head at her in respect.

Mistress Badass Lexy!

My mom glances at Lake as she walks by him and he nods at her. He gets along with parental figures so well and they always like him. I get it now, Lake was showing respect for my mom by not jumping in and that makes me smile at him.

He rubs his neck and stares back at the action by the doors.

"Rodney, I understand how upsetting this must be for you but care to take this to another room?" My mom sounds polite but her tone is lined in steel.

He doesn't move an inch and just glares at her. Mom snaps her fingers then two guards pick him up like he weighs

nothing and drag him out of the room. I can hear my dad address the crowd as I follow my mom. Lake and the rest of the gang exit to join us. We all enter the room adjacent to the grand hall and Wes closes the doors behind us.

“What are you doing?” Rodney looks around the room scared for the first time. “You’re a traitor,” he yells at my mom pointing at her. I step forward then realize she has a metal chain that looks like a whip in her hand. You learn something new everyday. I don’t really know her, do I?

“You are done, Rodney. Your daughter tried to kill my future daughter in law. Tamera’s fucking lucky she isn’t still alive or you wouldn’t have had a body to bury. You spoiled her and raised a brat. She’s an embarrassment that you should pray the medical community forgets about. Your daughter had three class action lawsuits against her at the time of her death.” Cash hands her a large yellow envelope. She gives it to Rodney and I know he doesn’t believe her. “Your anger is misplaced. You aren’t welcome in my home ever again. Honestly, I should make you apologize to Lexy for your awful treatment of her.” She turns and looks at Lake. “I’m done here, dear. If I don’t see you again, tell your parents “hello” for me. I’m excited about the Hawaii trip.” Mom flicks her wrist and the whip turns into a necklace. Cash walks next to her as she puts it back on. She stops in front of us with a friendly smile. “Well, thanks for everything tonight. I had a blast. Maybe, I’ll even have a few drinks for your father.” I want to plug my ears but it’s too late.

Mom steps forward to kiss Lexy’s cheek and then they hug. She exits the room waving at everyone like Miss America. Her personal guards follow her out, nodding at us before closing the doors again.

Rodney looks up from the papers shaking his head. “These are all lies.” He seems more calm until his eyes land on Lexy. “You, little cunt. You’re going to suffer for what you did.” He screams and begins moving in our direction.

The whole room reacts simultaneously but there’s no need for alarm. Lake, minus his jacket, steps forward and punches Rodney in the gut hard. He falls to the floor and

Masters slowly starts rolling up his sleeves. Lake's a scary s.o.b when he lets the beast out. Wes and Kevin step forward to pick up Rodney under his arms.

Lexy shifts next to me, discreetly rubbing herself on me.

Mistress likes this and my bell rings. A couple of security people look around and Lake laughs. Does he know?

“Listen here, old man. I've been real nice to you but you've crossed a few lines tonight.” The guys release him disgusted like the rest of us. A security guard hands Lake a water bottle. He in turn tries to hand it to Rodney as a peace offering. Too bad Rodney's a fucking moron because he smacks it and the guys grab him. Lake growls deep in his throat and gets close to the moron's face, his anger unleashed. “If you threaten my Mistory again, you'll stop breathing shortly after.” Rodney spits at Lake's feet so he punches him in the face. Rodney's head snaps back from the force and I think his nose is broken. Wes and Kevin let him fall to the floor. Lake bends over him and sneers. “You're probably thinking you're going to call the police and file charges against me. I get it. You're hurting but your daughter was a fucking bitch. My Mistory didn't kill her, but if it makes you feel better at night to blame someone, blame me. Do you want to know why Rodney?” Lake calmly fixes the bleeding man's collar. “Because I would have put a bullet in her head right in front of you for what she did to mine. I suggest you retire and move far, far away.” Lake stands without a care in the world and begins fixing his sleeves again. Ethan hands him his jacket and Lake elegantly puts it on. Wes speaks to my mom's other security and we all move to the door. Lexy's body is vibrating with intense sexual passion.

More of our group is waiting outside the doors when we open them. Everyone starts to crowd around but Lexy pulls on my arm. We slip down the hall and into the shadows without being seen.

“Come on, I have a surprise for you.” Her eyes flash bright blue with untamed lust. She holds up her purse teasing me then runs off.



Chapter 8 - Time To Face The Music

Lake Mother Fucking Masters

I stopped taking my meds as soon as we got here because I hate the control they have over me and my emotions. Over the years I've learned how to gauge when I need them and like most people with mental health issues, I don't like the side effects. I'm starting to feel more like myself now, and I know she has something to do with it. The party at the Riggs residence a few nights ago may have helped too. It felt incredible to release some of my pent up rage. Mistory was a true vision in that red dress and it was almost impossible to keep my hands off her. Somehow, I can just breathe easier when she's in close proximity to me. Too bad that fucking fact makes me beyond angry because that means I need her.

She's going stir crazy here and I don't blame her. I want my seaside mansion and the waves myself. I also want a cig but instead I unwrap the apple jolly rancher and pop it in my mouth.

I watch as she opens the window then climbs out before closing it again. My heart lurches in my chest as she jumps to the big tree and scurries down it. She glances up at the house and smiles to herself like she just outsmarted us all.

Mistory wipes her pants and adjusts her clothes as she walks by my car. By the grin on her face, you can tell she's pretty proud of herself. It's time to crush her fantasies of a life in crime.

I step out of my hiding place and grab her from behind, pulling her close to my body to growl in her ear. She gasps loudly but doesn't try to escape my hold. I know she isn't scared and can hurt me in a flash. I've been keeping a close eye on her since I arrived. Bryson sent me her training videos too so I've studied her moves.

Why isn't she pulling away or fighting back?

"Get in and shut up." My voice sounds a lot calmer than I feel right now. I make myself release her from my stronghold and drop my arms. My hand itches to wrap around her neck and demand answers. I exercise complete control by stepping away from her body. My cock wants to fuck her right here on the hood of my car but my mind is smarter than him. I'm fucking mad at her for fanning this burning need inside me. For hurting me and causing this pain I feel deep in my bones. I don't take that shit lightly. The beast is silent but I know he would agree with me this time.

My frustration gets the best of me and I bump Mistory in the shoulder as I walk to the driver's door. She just stares at me without moving a muscle. I point at her side growling and dare her to argue with a stern look. I can tell from her bright blue eyes that she's thinking about testing me. However, I see fear in them too and that makes me smile because I'm not a nice person. I unlock her side and she gets in as I do.

How could she do this to us and not feel an ounce of remorse? She makes me doubt myself, and I despise that lack of confidence that makes me feel. Did she ever really like me? When she was taken, I came back as soon as I could. I thought I was protecting my heart and mind by leaving but I should've been there for her.

She's staring at me when I glance at her quietly sitting next to me. I take a deep breath trying to find peace and patience. Which of course, makes me mad again because her

sweet scent fills my senses. Jesse was fucking right too. *She still smells the same.* I didn't realize some people have a familiar scent until she walked away from me.

I grab the steering wheel tight with both hands hoping it will help me relax. It definitely doesn't do shit. I'm staring straight ahead because my emotions are being pulled in two different directions. How do I talk about my feelings and concerns? It's not a normal problem that a person like me has to face. I'm not the sharing type and some of these feelings are new to me. Most of the time I just focus on pushing down the rage and paranoia.

Now that I'm thinking about it, this is my first time being alone with her since we found their hiding place. I want to hold her and hurt her at the same time. She probably thinks I'm not even mad because the other guys forgave her so easily. Technically, my actions could be considered confusing because I couldn't keep my hands off her. My mind flashes to the war room briefly, but I shake the vision away. It isn't fair what she did to me. She made me want her and care about her just to throw it back in my face. I left because I needed to think and do some soul searching. Then I made a complete ass of myself. Shit, we all did, on national television to get her back.

I glance over once more then start the engine and put the car in drive. The tires spin and squeal at my aggressive speed. I make it to the back gate in seconds and slam on the breaks just before we hit it. My arm automatically goes up in front of her and her chest hits my forearm. At least, she's smart enough to be silent. She seems calm like she trusts me, and I'm not sure how I feel about that. I take another breath and turn to look her over. Mistory is fucking beautiful.

My tone is ice cold, "buckle up, Sweetheart." Her bright blue eyes widen and she moves to do it quickly because I'm still staring at her. When I know she's safe, I let my foot off the brake. We speed down the steep gravel driveway as soon as the gate opens. I don't bother waving at the security because there are heat sensors on the gate. They know who's in here and we will be tracked the whole time. I glance over to

make sure she's wearing her earrings. Bryson made her new trackers since her last one was turned into evidence. When I suggested an under the skin newer model I've been working on with Seth everyone flipped out. Hopefully, we can revisit that topic in the future. I plan on making my family and friends get them too, they just don't know it yet.

Mistory stares out the window in silence like she owes me nothing. She doesn't care about my feelings so why should I care about hers?

My focus returns to the dangerous and winding road ahead of us. We aren't on the main highway yet, so I don't have to worry about other cars. The road, however well maintained, still takes skill and determination to travel it at a high rate of speed. Let's hope I'm not rusty.

She needs to know how I'm feeling and this is the only way I can describe it. So I speed up around the first corner and the car hugs the road. Mistory's hands fly up to brace herself when the momentum moves her body. She has one on the dash, and the other one on the door handle. Her head snaps in my direction but she doesn't show fear at my reckless driving. No, instead this woman actually looks thrilled or like she's plotting against me, I'm not sure.

My eyes return to the road but I don't slow down. It's narrow at this section so I watch the road closely. I only remove my eyes from it to check the child safety lock. I push the gas paddle harder thinking about everything I've been through lately. I'm positive I feel her burning a hole in the side of my head with her furious glare. My eyes move to her when it's safe again. She returns her stare to the front windshield after mad dogging me.

The gasp she releases when she sees the next curve in the road makes my cock hard. It looks a lot scarier than it really is. I take the corner like a pro and don't pump the brakes once. When you have as much money as I do, you have a lot of free time on your hands. So you pick up random skills and driving has always been a thrill I love to indulge. I'm even a silent partner in a race car too. Of course, Nascar drivers want tattoos like everyone else. I have no problem giving tats in

exchange for pointers and driving lessons. I'm a sucker for high adrenaline activities.

She releases a huff of irritation before speaking. "You're not going to scare me and I think this temper tantrum is ridiculous. You know what we both need and we should just do it already." She leans forward like I know what that meant and starts fiddling with my radio. I knocked her hand away and she laughs at me rolling her eyes. "Just FYI you could ask me out for once too."

Well shit, that comment felt like a burn. The next corner needs my focus and I try to concentrate as she plays with the radio again. I don't slow down because I need to keep myself busy. I keep my eyes on the road and I'm fucking proud of my control.

"What are you talking about and why are you touching my radio again?" My tone sounds more curious than upset and that's not the mood I'm going for.

She sits back smiling wickedly at me and gets her phone out of her pocket. Her fingers move quickly over the screen and she ignores my question. Alright, I guess she doesn't want to talk so I return my eyes to the road.

Damn it!

This woman is going to be the death of me. Now she's connected her phone to bluetooth and she's trying to change the song. Mistory glances over and smiles at me like someone trying to convince you they're innocent when you know they're not.

"I'm distracting you so you slowed down, duh and I'm talking about a real date." She smacks her forehead and I slam on the brakes because I hate it when she does that. Her hands hit the dashboard to stop the sudden whiplash. "What the hell? Never mind, I'm not interested in a date anymore." She turns bright red and she looks anywhere but my eyes. "I just thought you would want to go to your...um...you know what, just forget it." Mistory turns her whole body away from me, facing the door now.

“You can’t just say that and not follow through with your thoughts.” She ignores my comment with her back to me. I don’t dare touch her because I’ll never stop if I do. What is she talking about? Is she offering herself to me? The night I found her down the street from No. 2, she promised to give herself to me but she was on drugs then. I’m terrified she’s going to say she never meant it in the first place. The guilt from my actions after picking her up ate me until I made myself leave. I’m not a monster and I would never force myself on a woman. That’s not something I would ever enjoy and I have morals. Real rape is not a kink.

I pull back onto the road and continue speeding down the mountain. I don’t know where I’m going, but I need to keep moving. My plan worked out well, she needed to get away for a while and I needed her away from the house. I really want to forgive her for hurting me. Although, my need to punish her for the sins she’s committed against us rules my emotions right now.

She owes us...She owes ME.

I’ve taken this road and made it my bitch today. I speed around the next turn even more cocky than the last. The trees zoom by me at record speed as I push the car faster. My heart’s pumping rapidly in my chest and the rush is undeniable. I know I’ve never driven this good before and that makes me go faster. Mistory’s hand touches my leg gently bringing me back. I ease off the gas automatically and quickly pull over, kicking up the gravel on the side of the road. I’m shaken that I’ve lost control of my mind again. I rub my neck because I feel choked for air.

Sympathy, pain then remorse moves over her face when I look at her. She starts silently crying and I don’t know what to do. Do I scare her?

“I’m fucking sorry you had an episode because of me and without me there to help. Do you want to talk about it?” My mind rejects her words for what they are. I look at her confused and she becomes shy like she regrets saying them. *Does she really know?* I pull away when she tries to touch me

again. “Don’t get mad. Your mom called me because she was so scared. How much time did you lose?”

I’m fucking flooded and I feel betrayed. My mom likes this woman enough to call her about *MY* mental health?

“My mother called you? When?” I know my tone is harsh but I’ve been blindsided by this information and I’m upset.

“She only called to talk really but she broke down because I kept asking about you. Lake, it was when you were in the hospital. I wanted to see you but there were strict orders regarding visitors. I made her tell me all of it and it killed me that I never knew. She explained your medical struggles and your parents were afraid you wouldn’t share them with me.” Mistory’s voice begs me to understand.

“Well, they were right and that was completely inappropriate for her to do. I should be able to share my own problems if I want.” I look out the window and feel bitter but also a little relieved.

“Would you have told me?” She sighs when I don’t respond. “Yeah, I already know the answer to that. Lake, if you really want me, you’ll have to share everything with me eventually. Even the hard stuff. How do I help you if I don’t have a clue what’s going on?” I turn to her and see tears in her eyes. “I’ve grown up so much in the last six months, even more this last month. Walking into TNT that day changed my life. I’ve decided not to waste my time holding back. I’m going to follow my heart and dream big. Are you interested in any of that?”

I stare at the woman who causes a guy like me to hope and believe in the impossible. I clear my throat and take a deep cleansing breath before I start.

“I was diagnosed with bipolar when I was fourteen. I went to my parents and explained my feelings and what I had researched. I’ve been able to control it for the most part, but every so often I need assistance. It usually gets much worse before it gets better. I’ve done tons of research over the years. I truly believe everyone’s experience with the illness is

different.” Mistory cautiously puts her hand on my lap. She’s still afraid I’ll reject her, but instead I’m going to share everything. I take her small hand in my big one and squeeze it tightly, then don’t let go. This whole support thing is kinda nice.

“You don’t have to say anymore.” She stops talking when I hold up our hands and kiss hers. I see real shock in her blue eyes and that makes me chuckle.

“No, let me lay it all on the table.” I go to rub my neck feeling uncomfortable. She raises an eyebrow and I drop my hand. She catches on fast. “Sometimes it feels like the dragon’s tail is choking me. Like life, you know.” I’m referring to the tattoo I have around my neck. I chuckle and smirk like I’m crazy but she just nods calmly like she understands. Does she? “I’ve always referred to the other part of myself and personality as the beast living inside me. That’s mostly because that’s what it feels like sometimes. Someone else controlling my mind, body and thoughts.” She doesn’t seem to be freaked out by that information and I sigh.

“Like you’re hovering above yourself, but you can’t make yourself listen to the commands.” Mistory says that so nonchalantly but that’s exactly how it feels. Her eyes widen when I just stare at her in surprise. “I uh, know someone, and I did some research after talking with your mom. Knowledge is power and I want to help because I care.” She kisses our joined hands and it makes me want to do the same.

Am I the one being trained here? As long as I have control in the bedroom this is cool, right? Masters get your mind out of the gutter.

“When I first met you my beast was at ease in your presence which surprised me but frightened me even more. I have never felt that way before. You seem to calm my inner turmoil and make me feel relaxed without really trying. I’ve never wanted to be a better person until I met you. Well, I still don’t give a shit about other people, but I do want to make you happy.” I search her face trying to understand the tears I see falling from her eyes. “I’m willing to try anything to make this work. You just have to know, I’m going to fuck up all the time.

You're going to hate me sometimes. Hopefully, you'll start to care about me too one day." I reach up and wipe her face with my thumb.

"I already do care, Lake, more than you know," she whispers, running her sleeve over her face.

"That's good, Mistory because so do I." I rest my forehead against hers. "Are you sure you're prepared for this ride? I can't control how this will play out and that's an extremely unsettling feeling for someone like me." I want her to be completely warned.

Mistory nods and jumps in my lap like her seat is on fire. I hold her close and breathe in her familiar scent that I've missed so much. I know about Gage's secret tip too. Mrs. Crocker is my homie after all. I slept in Mistory's room before I lost it and was admitted to the hospital. Mistory holds me tighter and I never expected to like snuggling.

"Thanks for sharing, Lake. I know how hard that was for you and it's such a precious gift." She rains kisses over my face before pulling back. "I'm honored that you trust me. I, one hundred percent trust you too. Oh, and don't get me started on the night of the party. That was so fucking hot when you were kicking Rodney's ass for me. Though I could have -"

I shut her up by covering her mouth with mine. My tongue reaches her lips and she opens her mouth accepting me greedily. I use my piercing to caress her tongue. She moans rubbing against my erection like the little she-devil she is. I control the kiss using my hands around her neck. She kisses me just as eagerly back and she's panting now. My phone rings but I ignore it. I palm her breast and move my mouth to her neck. I'm all too happy to indulge in her love of neck play. I bite along her silky skin then use open mouth kisses to soothe the ache. Her hand finds my cock and I grunt while she moans. My phone rings again and she pulls away.

"Do you want to get that? Back to back calls could be important." Her lips are swollen from mine and the red marks on her neck are as sexy as diamonds. My phone rings again and I curse when I see the screen.

Why did I have to plan this? I would much rather fuck her right now. My cock screams yes, but I just push it down in my pants.

“We need to go, Sweetheart.” I kiss her pouting lips and move her to her own seat. I use my phone to return the text with a status update. “Buckle up.” I start the car and wait until she does before flipping a bitch. It’s more like a three point turn because this road is narrow.

“I hate feeling insecure like this. Especially, because we just started talking again.” I glance over and she’s wringing her hands avoiding eye contact. “I totally understand men have needs and you had-”

“Don’t you dare finish that thought. I would pull over right now and spank you but I don’t want to be any later than we already are. Plus, if we pull over I’m fucking you until we can both no longer think.” I touch my cock again because he likes that idea. Shit, my words are causing vivid pictures in my mind. She shivers when I glance at her. “OK?”

“OK,” she shifts, uncomfortable and unsure and I hate it.

We finish driving the rest of the way in silence but I take her hand. She doesn’t pull away so it feels like a victory. I speed up when I hear a text notification. The security detail waves us through the first gate and a laser comes out to scan the car.

“Isn’t this part so cool? You should have heard dad grilling Jace about it the other day.” I laugh because her dad missed his calling as a special ops guy. She smiles brightly at me before saying. “My parents actually asked about you when they were here but you were hiding somewhere.” That comment stuns me. Well shit, I guess people really do like me.

We’re cleared and the second gate drops into the ground. I pull into the property and a huge smile spreads across my face. Mistory looks at me like I’m nuts and she’s thinking, why would anyone be happy to be back here, but she has no idea. I laugh because I do and kiss her hand in mine.

She's watching me with a raised eyebrow and a smirk. "What's so funny?"

"I have a surprise for you." I stop the car in the middle of the driveway and turn to her. She's fucking beautiful and those bright blue eyes widen at my comment.

"Really?" She sounds curious and delighted. She's giving me one of those rare smiles she only gives the other guys.

That makes me feel all warm in my chest and I rub the spot but I don't hate the feeling.

"Yes. I hope I can trust you this time." I try not to growl the words or say all the other stuff I want to. I want to demand a million promises from her. To make her submit to me forever. She lied to me and hurt my heart, damn it. I start driving again and I see all the cars parked ahead. She sees them too because Mistory squeals so loud. I wince and laugh a second later at her elation.

"Oh Lake, thank you so much." She takes off her seatbelt reaching for me and starts kissing all over my face.

"Fuck, wait I can't see." I slam on the brakes and grab her before she goes flying. I bring her to my lap and kiss her mouth. She opens for me and my tongue meets hers all over again. I skillfully use my piercing like she loves. She moans and my hands roam her body. The loud banging on the glass makes us break apart. "Go have fun with your friends. Do you, uh want to like...go on a date or whatever?" Fuck, I sound like a chomp.

She kisses me again and I grab her by the ass bringing her closer.

"See that was easy. I'm looking forward to that, Master. I'm planning on being your best pet yet. I'll make you happy." She turns and is about to open the door.

I reach over and close it, then lock it. She gasps and I grab her hair. Not hard because I know what I'm doing. Her head snaps back and she gives me the moan I want. Lex's

mouth drops open and I kiss her again. I lean in close to whisper against her ear.

“Oh, my sweet little Sex, I can’t wait to chain you up and fuck that dirty little mouth of yours proper.” I bite her neck then lick away the pain. She hisses and moans for me. “Don’t insult me, or disrespect yourself. I have never had a pet. You are mine and I am yours. Do you understand Mistory? You’re my sweet Sex, right?” My words command an answer and I bite her earlobe to hear her cry out.

“Yes, Master.” She smiles and her face is red from her desire. I kiss her nose and unlock the doors.

The door swings open and a woman I’ve only spoken to on FaceTime pops her head in the car. Mistory freaking screams this time.

“Sarah? Oh my God you brought Sarah?” The women hug and begin talking all at once.

We get out and I lean against the car watching her brighten like that star she is. Sage, Victory, Tina and her cousins come running down the path. They all hug in a big circle screaming with excitement.

“What’s this I see? Is that a real smile, Masters?” My grin can’t get any bigger and I don’t try to hide it when I turn around.

“My smile is breathtaking and don’t you forget it asshole.” I shut the door and hug my old friend. I appreciate what they’re doing to help Sarah and Mistory follow their dreams. We trail behind the ladies and I get an idea. “What’s up with you, Langston?” I race past the women anticipating his reaction. Everyone laughs as Stone curses and starts chasing me.

Mistory makes me different, and I chuckle smiling like a clown running for my life. I feel like I’m in high school again.



Chapter 9 - First Day Back

Mistory ~ Lex

I'm singing "Girls Just Want To Have Fun," by Cyndi Lauper with Sarah and the guys are laughing their asses off. Wes changes his voice and joins in from the driver seat. The SUV rolls to a stop outside the new massive gate. Jesse taps my shoulder, motioning me over. I crawl over his lap to look out the window to where he's pointing. That looks really cool just like Gage said it does. My eyes move over the tall new walls erected around TNT. There's a brief sting of guilt even though I know this is not my fault. Jesse kisses my head reassuringly sensing my emotions.

"Holy shit, that fire looks badass. Is it real?" Sarah glances at us and we nod.

"I know, right?" Kevin turns to smile at Sarah. "Gage likes it hot," he says, wiggling his eyebrows at us. Wes reaches over to smack him but he dodges the assault. Sarah and Jesse howl with laughter because they know what he's referring to. Of course, I turn bright red with embarrassment. There was an incident this morning that we aren't going to talk about. Let's just say Gage wanted to give the cabin a proper goodbye. "I'm only joking...or am I." They all think that's so funny and Kevin laughs then winks at Sarah flirtatiously.

Oh, brother.

Sarah was talking about the flames Seth installed on the fence surrounding the firehouse. All the vehicles are scanned as we drive through the gate. Luckily most of the clients at TNT are famous so the new security could be justified for their safety. That and the show will be taping here soon.

Jesse wraps his arms around me and runs his gloved hand down my face. I breathe in the sweet familiar scent of leather and sigh. He does the same to himself then grins at me. I play with the hair around his face and lean up to kiss his lips. Wes parks near the front door and we all pile out. Lake and Ethan get out of his car next to us. They went surfing this morning with Cash and Anthony. The roar of Stone's motorcycle dies when he parks by Lake. The men all start talking and move towards the shop.

Sarah waits for me to tie my shoe as she stares at the sexy biker. I finish and walk right by her because she's daydreaming.

She runs up and bumps me talking low so only I hear. "Don't let me be alone with him in there. Tattoos make me horny." I stop walking abruptly and laugh so loud everyone turns in our direction. "Shit, nothing to see here. Carry on with the manly greetings." They all give us confused glances. She leans into me growling and I laugh harder. "Can I trust you to be quiet now?" I nod and she removes her hand over my mouth.

"I guarantee you guys have sex at least one time while your here." Sarah looks back at Stone then shakes her head aggressively.

We meet the guys at the door and Wes holds it for everyone. Lake turns off the alarm. Jesse flips the lights and heads for the radio. Kevin sets the breakfast goodies on the large coffee table.

"Who's doing you, Sprite?" Sarah almost trips over her own feet but Stone moves fast and catches her before she can fall. He has her bent backwards in his arms like a dip your

partner does when dancing. He stares down at her and flashes a wicked grin. Sarah's tongue tied and she pulls away standing on her own. She stares at him in stunned shock and he chuckles. "Your tattoo, Sprite. I'm talking about tattoos." His face becomes serious and stern. "No one's touching you while I'm around." The steel in his voice is a warning to anyone listening.

"Oh, shut up, Rock." Sarah calls over her shoulder but makes a beeline to the bathrooms. Stone releases a deep laugh and walks to Lake's office with Ethan.

I walk to my desk to turn on my computer and get ready for my first day back. My chair is still there with the little back support Lake surprised me with one day. It feels like it's been years since I worked here. I take a seat and just look around. Jesse approaches holding a cup of coffee and puts it down in front of me with a warm smile.

"Thank you, sir." I tell him and stand when he gestures with his hand.

He takes over my chair and pulls me on his lap. His eyebrows raise and he tickles me with his beard. "Sir, huh? We can do that if you're interested?" He tugs on my hair playfully, but then he becomes serious and frowns at me. "Are you sure you want to do this? It's your first day back to the real world. We can go home anytime you want." He's stressing too much so I give him my best sunny smile for reassurance.

"You just want to take me to our special room." I wiggle my eyebrows and lick my lips seductively.

"Fuck, yes I do." Jesse groans, squeezing me and looks at the clock. "Are we staying a full day?" He sounds so hopeful that I don't want to disappoint him.

I move my mouse to look at the calendar and see a packed schedule, but all the appointments are early. "We'll see how it goes, but to answer your question I'm beyond ready and really looking forward to getting on with our lives."

We need to catch the Deadman and he can't find me hiding in the mountains.

“Our lives...that sounds great, Blue Eyes.” Jesse kisses me deeply before picking me up. He puts me in my chair and backs away winking. “I need to go set up for my first appointment but I’m just a room away, OK?”

I laugh and wave him off. “I know, I’m not worried.” The TNT phone starts ringing and I pick it up.

I hear Jesse say, “but I am,” under his breath before walking away.

“Hello, Top Notch Tats, this is Lex speaking. How can I help you today?” My professional tone slips into place naturally. It’s just like riding a bike.

“Lexy, how the hell are you, woman? How’s your first day going?” Tina’s voice comes over the line.

“Tina, I’m great. We just got here because we had a late start this morning.” I’m not talking about the incident because it’s TMI and I’m still embarrassed. “What are you up to?”

“Just finishing the last minute details for the Halloween party next week. What are you guys wearing? Anthony has gone all out to impress you. It’s really sweet and kinda over the top. We need to plan another read-a-thon sleepover in a couple weeks t-” I hear someone yelling in the background but the phone gets muffled, and I can’t hear what they’re saying. Tina uncovers the phone because the line becomes crystal clear, and I can make out the words now.

“...I’m not going to stand here listening to you catch up with *her*. You were supposed to get Jesse on the phone and tell him to come down here.” *Jennifer!* She’s at No. 2 right now? This bitch has a lot of nerve. Yes, Jesse lied to me but she played along like they were actually having an affair. My temp spikes and my hands shake from the fury living inside me. Unfortunately, with all the training came the side effect of mental brainwashing. It’s hard to control this new side of myself. The part that seeks revenge for everything that happened to me and my family.

This is everyday life and I'm just a receptionist at a tattoo shop. I repeat the information a few times and loosen my grip on the phone.

Tina tells Jennifer to shut up and get out before she calls the cops.

“What’s going on, Tina?” My tone shows no sign of the rage building inside me.

“Sorry, Lexy. This chick doesn’t have any manners. Anyway, as I’m sure you’ve heard, Jennifer’s here wanting to speak to Jesse about the papers she was served regarding herself and Susan. I explained she’s violating a Judge’s order just by being in the building but she’s clueless to the facts of the *LAW*.” Tina spits the last part at Jennifer.

“Tina put me on speaker phone, please.” I’m going to sound like a jealous girlfriend but I don’t give a shit.

“Oh, hell yeah, my pleasure.” Tina turns it on then says with a smirk in her voice, “Tell her what’s up, Lexy.”

“Jesse has a client that will be here shortly and he has nothing to say to you or your boss. Cash made everything perfectly clear in the letters and restraining order. The check Susan wrote was never cashed and contracts were never signed. Now I’m asking you to leave Jennifer, or Agent Donaldson will be notified about this.” That should work, Donaldson is scary.

“Oh shit, I met that Brit and she’s a badass.” Tina laughs, enjoying my threat. “You should see her face, Lexy. No wait, I’ll just take a picture for you.”

“Don’t you fucking dare take a picture of me,” Jennifer screams at her. Tina must have me on the art studio’s line because I can hear the two women arguing. There seems to be a tussle over the line. “You stupid fucking bitch. You’ll pay for this.” I hear stuff being knocked over then a door slamming in the distance.

“Hello, hold on a second,” Tina says before disappearing. She comes back a short time later huffing. “Damn it, the guys don’t have any ice here. I punched Jennifer

in the face when she tried to pinch my hand and break my phone. Damien's in class until later today then he has practice, so I need to close up to go grab some ice. We'll talk later, OK? I'm happy you're back, Lexy."

"If you want I can call one of the guys and see who's close to you? They can bring you ice. Although, if it's broken, I can ask Windy or Dr. Maraschino if they're busy." I wish I could have seen that punch.

"It's not broken thank God, but she does have a hard ass face. Could you really? I hate to close this place. We have an art class coming in a few hours, and I still need to set up the room." Tina definitely needs help then.

"It's no problem. Someone will be there shortly. Please call Cash and let him know what's going on. I'll tell Jesse. Thanks, Tina. I really appreciate it." I mean that a hundred percent.

"It's my job, Lexy." She's confused about what I meant.

"I mean for hitting that stuck up bitch." We both laugh and say our goodbyes.

I pull out my cell and text The Kelly Brothers.

Kelly Bros: Need a favor...please send someone over to No. 2 w/ ice ASAP

Bry: On it

Jace: What happened? You're supposed to be at work.

Seth: Busy I'm off until later

Me: I am Dorkface. It's for Tina. Jennifer went over there causing a scene and Tina punched her.

Jace: LOL

Bry: Derek's close and en route. The police have been notified with video evidence. I copied Donaldson on the email. This one's for you...link

Jace: King of effectiveness...fucking hilarious

I click the link and the video starts.

It's the view of the lobby at No. 2. I can see Tina and Jennifer arguing then they come together with their heads bent fighting over the phone. Tina steps back and Jennifer swings on her. Tina dodges the other woman's fist and then lands a hard right to Jennifer's face.

I don't watch the rest of it and text Bry instead.

Me: That's definitely worth some brownie points

Bry: I try. It was extremely funny

He's right it was.

Sage walks in holding her helmet and rockin' a smokin' hot outfit. She stops by the entrance to finish her conversation on the phone. I wait for her to look this way but her head's down, and she doesn't glance my way.

I can't hear her because she's speaking in low tones. I give up waiting and finish my email to the artists. Maybe it's more like a complaint on my part, but I'm pissed off. I'm going to type up a standard operating procedure so they remember how to do it. Before I left I set up an ink inventory system that my team forgot how to use apparently in my absence. Now I must go to each of their offices to count bottles. I bet they screwed up the supply room too. My mind fills with dread at the vision that pops in my head.

"Lex!" Sage screams and runs to my desk. She leans over and I stand to hug her. "I knew you would be here but damn, it's awesome to see you at this desk. So how's it going?"

I'm about to answer when I hear cursing coming from behind me. We twist to check out the commotion. *Oh, shit!* Every guy in the shop is standing behind me staring at us. Some have weapons, some don't but they are all ready to kick ass.

"Sorry," Sage says sounding genuine, lifting her hands in surrender.

“Thanks guys, but I got this covered.” I want to ease some of the tension so I show off a little. I flip out my butterfly knives, one in each hand and spin them simultaneously. The smile I show them is full of revenge without mercy. Yep, I’m a badass bitch.

“Shit, that’s hot!” Sarah says, tipping her head at me in respect.

Stone begins laughing like the joker. He wipes his eyes and looks at Lake. “You guys are screwed.”

Lake crosses his arms, nodding and I can tell he’s proud of me. I want to fucking blush, damn it. Jesse claps then winks before returning to his office whistling to himself. I feel bad because he’ll have to change his glove a few more times now. Sage waves the other guys off and strolls through the waist level glass door. She sits on the edge of my desk, all chill and happy.

“The client I had this morning just canceled on me and I had them down for a few hours. Plus, I gave myself some wiggle room for lunch. That means my schedule is wide open now.” The grin that spreads across her beautiful face reminds me of her twin. “Want me to give you some fresh ink?” She looks as excited as I feel.

“Really? Yes! A hundred times, yes. Sage this is so dope because I know exactly what I want.” I’m so excited about this tattoo idea. It’s meant to be since Sage is a black and gray specialist and that’s exactly what I’m looking for.

Sage brightens like myself and she flashes me a megawatt smile. “I’m glad you’re back, babe.” Her hazel eyes blink back tears and I do the same.

“Me too, S word!” We both start laughing because she knows what I mean. She doesn’t like it when I call her sister because she always cries. I really missed her too so I give her a big hug and she hugs me back. The Lopez twins have a hard time expressing emotions but I helped Gage and now I’ll help Sage. “Let’s go then.” I pick up the cordless phone and we walk to her office.

The front door opens and the bell chimes alerting us to the new arrivals. Zeke and Derek walk in carrying pizzas and beer. Everyone exchanges greetings and gets loud around me. Wes and Jesse scoot the tables together so the food can be laid out for us. Sarah leaves then comes back with napkins and plates. Our kitchen is always stocked because of me and my supply lists. The guys never forget how to use my snack request sheets.

Zeke approaches us grinning, rockin' the Top Gun look. I started teasing him by calling him Maverick but he said he's more like Iceman. He tips his head to me and I do the same. Sage lifts her head up to kiss Zeke hello. She bends back down, returning her focus to my new tattoo a second later. The guys jump into a conversation about sports and I tune that out trying not to move.

Sage hits a sensitive spot on my knuckle and I jump out of reflex but recover quickly and make myself stay motionless. It fucking hurts so I bite my other hand, hoping she's almost done. She backs away and smiles, wiping at the new ink.

"Dude, I need to go to the restroom. I'm basically done but I can't hold it anymore." Sage stands doing the pee pee dance and begging me with her eyes.

I laugh and wave her off, "Go, you should've said something sooner."

"I know," and she's gone in a blink.

I bring my hand up to my face and inspect the design Sage drew. She really listened to what I wanted and the attention to detail is mind blowing. I'm thrilled with how the tat turned out and it totally matches. This tattoo is absolutely perfect. At first, I was reluctant, just because I was unsure of the location but I got over that fast knowing how much this will mean to him. As far as the art goes I knew I had nothing to worry about because Sage's black and gray work is like none other.

Anthony's going to freak out when he sees this and I want them to record his reaction. Sage and Sarah said it wasn't cheesy, but actually really romantic. He just keeps talking about wanting matching tattoos, but that's not his thing like the other guys. I feel bad and I don't want him to feel left out. So now we have them and he will love it. I decided to match one of the tattoos I like that he already has. It's the one on his left hand so it was a no-brainer for me to get it on my left hand too.

"Dang, everyone's getting new ink lately. I'm going to need to hit Gage up. What's up, Lexy?" Zeke sits next to me on the couch.

"Not much. What would you get?" I ask him trying not to focus on the pain in my hand.

"I don't know." He looks lost for a moment and I'm about to ask him if he's alright.

However, Jesse comes over to kiss my head and that distracts me. He hands me a water bottle and begins making small talk with Zeke. I watch them for a second and they seem friendly. The jury's still out on whether Jesse likes him. I know Jesse and Bry are close, so I can see where the animosity comes from. Bry is like a brother to me now too, but he seems happier these days.

I take a drink of water and replace the cap. My phone goes off and I grab Jesse's ass when I accidentally try to get my phone. He shoots me a devilish grin then winks at me. I check my messages but that only makes me laugh out loud.

Oh brother, it looks like someone got a hold of my phone again. That tag is too long.

The man with the hands: Hey we're on our way. I'm with Seth, Tina and Cash

Me: K. Zeke and Derek got pizza. See you soon

The man with the hands: We know

Me: uh OK just letting you know. Guess you don't deserve your surprise NM

The man with the hands: I'm sorry there's just a lot on my mind. I love your surprises Sexy Mistress

Me: That's better, drive safe

I wonder what's worrying him? My notification goes off again and I check my messages.

Seth: Your mission if you choose to accept it...is to save the cheese pizza for me please.

Me: Busy I'm off until later

Seth: Burn - pic

I click the picture and it's of him turning into Torch. I laugh at the nerd that can make that image so quickly and do his bidding because I like the middle Kelly.

"Seth's being a Kevin." I tell everyone and get a lot of confused looks.

"Dude, what's that mean?" Kevin pouts, "I said I was just playing."

I laugh and make the cry baby universal signal by rubbing my eyes with my fists. Stone roars with laughter and I think he heard about Kevin flirting with Sarah. Kevin glances at him and the big guy flexes his huge muscles.

I try to defuse everything by finishing my joke. "He doesn't want everyone eating all the cheese pizza, ya filthy animals." Most people get it and laugh at my Home Alone mashup. Kevin sticks out his tongue at me and Lake growls at him. I can't wait until Christmas. I really hope this is all over by then.

Sage strolls back in the room on the phone wearing a bright smile on her face. She hangs up before she gets to us. Sarah hands her coffee and Sage kisses her head. They became fast friends and that makes me stoked. She sits in her seat sipping coffee and stretching her back.

"Sarah's a total saint. Can we keep her?" Sage takes another gulp of coffee then sets the mug on the table next to her. She replaces her gloves and gets her station back in order.

“Yeah right, she needs to get back to the resort. I can’t wait to be part of the author lineup. It’s going to be a one of a kind experience for both authors and readers.” I know she can hear the excitement in my voice.

“Alright woman, only a little more then we’re done.” Sage picks up her gun and does her thing.

The room erupts in laughter and I glance over to find Lake staring at me. He was floored when I told him about the tattoo. It seemed like he wanted to say more, but unfortunately, we were interrupted by Wes so we didn’t finish the discussion.

Let’s see how he reacts to this.

I blow him a kiss using my right palm and all. His eyes go wide but he recovers fast from the astonishment. He bites the air, snapping his jaw before showing me his teeth like a dragon. *Did he just eat my kiss?* That makes me laugh so hard that Sage stops working and throws me an annoyed glance for moving. I apologize, giving her a shrug and she goes back to my tattoo. I give Lake a death glare but the Basshole just blows me a kiss and grins mischievously. He picks up his gun again and keeps working on Stone’s tattoo.

They’re only sitting a few feet away from us. Once the clients left, we decided to move the party to the open floor of the lobby. Jesse said this way we could all talk and that made sense to everyone. The tables and rolling cabinets were brought out here easily enough. Wes changed the TV and now they’re watching Jaws. I tried to explain that it’s technically not a Halloween type movie. Horror maybe, but Halloweenie no way.

I still need to figure out my costume.

“You play chess?” Zeke leans in and checks out my new tat. “That’s the Queen piece, right?”

“Yes! Isn’t it fucking cool? It matches Anthony’s black King on his hand.” I beam at him because I can’t wait to show Anthony and he’ll be here soon.

“Very cute, like the cutest thing ever.” Zeke teases in a sing-song voice then I smack him laughing too.

“My matching tattoo is next,” Jesse says, kissing my head. Lake growls and Jesse looks over at him but Lake’s just staring at his work.

“Shit Lex, you’re going to be covered in tattoos soon.” Zeke says, looking at my tat again.

“That’s true but they look so badass on her.” I wink at Sarah for the compliment and she begins passing out drinks.

The door chimes, everyone stops talking and turns to see who’s here. My Lion Heart stops just inside the door. His green eyes roam the scene in front of him then they find me, locking on to my face. His smile is quick, sexy and all for me.

“Lover, did you miss me?” Everyone groans at his question but Gage doesn’t care. He walks to me and sits right on my lap like he’s as light as a feather.

“Get off her, Gag. I’m almost done.” Sage scolds her twin, shaking her finger at him. They told me Gag is a nickname she gave him when they were kids.

Gage kisses me pouting as he reluctantly gets up. He bends over and stares at my hand. He frowns and leans closer. “What is that?” He busts out laughing holding his side when he figures it out.

“A little something extra that Anthony’s going to love.” Sage shines the black light on the tattoo and I see the glow in the dark ink.

The alarm chimes again and this time Anthony and the gang are the ones coming through the front door. Sage hides the black light because she knows I want to keep that a secret for another day. She wipes my new tattoo one more time and Sarah starts recording when I call Anthony over.



Chapter 10 - Halloween Treats And Tricks

Flapper Lexy

I pull on the long black silk gloves and look down to check my reflection in the mirror one last time. I stare at my fancy hair and smile. I'm grateful that Mrs. Crocker caught me struggling with ideas for my long hair the other day. As agreed, she came to my room earlier to help me style it exquisitely for the time period. The hair accessory she brought is gorgeous and high quality. It's hard to describe but basically there's a black satin patch attached to an elastic headband. On the patch is a design made out of rhinestones and crystals. The short black and white feathers make it elegant and fashionable. The hair piece matches my black and white fringe dress perfectly and makes this outfit ten times cuter.

Anthony wants me to be surprised so I'm only allowed to show up an hour early to the party. He's really excited about me seeing his place all creepy and decorated for Halloween. He also decided to host the party before Halloween so my family and other kids could enjoy it on the holiday. He's even hired buses for the kids who don't have transportation. It was a great honor to help him pick the organizations that won the

contest. We talked about renting out a major theme park for kids and teens next year.

“Wow, you look amazing Mist.” I turn and do a sassy little shake for Victory so all the tassels on my outfit sway.

“Look who’s talking, Babe. You look like a movie star.” She rolls her eyes like it’s not true. Vic has a stunning hourglass figure in that red satin and gemstone gown. Her delicate headpiece is made out of jewels. The one in the center is a larger ruby that hangs to her eyebrows. One silver feather sticks up by her left ear. The fur at Vic’s shoulders completes her lavish costume.

“Has Blake seen you in that yet? Oh, don’t look at me like that. You’re a party pooper, Vic. Are you going to come clean soon? The guys aren’t allowed to lie to me anymore and neither are you.” She avoids eye contact by staring in the mirror deep in thought. I walk to her, kicking myself for bringing that sadness in her eyes. I give my dear friend’s back a giant hug for support and tell her honestly. “I’m always here for you Victory.” I’ve missed her but my BFF is going to be a real movie star now and she’s extremely busy doing actress stuff. She finally gives me a small smile and hugs me back.

“Yes, soon, Mist. It’s just all messy and pear shaped right now. Plus, you have your own shit to deal with.” I nod, accepting the answer knowing she needs more time. She’s stressed, but if she doesn’t tell me soon, I’m going to ask Blake myself.

“Holy Mother!” We turn to see Jesse standing at the door staring at me. His eyes shine deep blue with love and lust and that feels fucking fantastic.

“Aren’t you just The Cat’s Pajamas.” Jesse laughs at the compliment and Vic rolls her eyes dramatically.

“She’s going to do this all night, Jesse. She’s been sending me 1920’s slang words all week.” Vic tries to warn Jesse of my pending behavior. He just grins and winks at me flirtatiously. “Wait for me, I’m using the potty real quick.” Vic tells us then heads for the bathroom. I wanted the guys to get

the full effect of my costume so we got ready separately tonight.

Unexpectedly, Jesse's phone notification goes off. He pulls it out shaking his head after he sees the screen. I take this time to ogle him because he looks hot as fuck. He's wearing a long sleeve white shirt that fits his toned physique nicely. His vest and bow tie are deep blue velvet. The long pocket watch makes the outfit look dashing. I'm getting a whole Great Gatsby vibe from him and even his gloves are blue. His beard is cut shorter and his long blond hair is slicked back and seems almost wet still. He glances up then slowly runs his eyes over my body like a caress of his gloved hand.

"We need to head out soon because Tony's already texting me. He's anxious for you to get there to see his extravaganza." Jesse holds up his phone letting me know who he was talking to.

Vic sails out of the restroom and walks by Jesse, putting her phone away. Jesse pulls me into his arms for a kiss when I get to the door. His skilled tongue makes me his bitch and I'm panting for more like a horny teenager. I push into his body, rubbing myself against him, purring like a kitten. We break apart because Vic begins teasing us with loud kissing sounds.

"Bank's closed, now get movin'." That makes me laugh in Jesse's face and he backs up frowning at us. "That means no kissing, egg," she says and I crack up.

Jesse shakes his head, guiding us to the elevators. We take it down stairs to meet everyone, hopefully waiting for us. Jesse takes my hand as we exit and my heels click on the tile floors.

Gage walks in the front door from outside as we enter the foyer. He's wearing a long black zoot suit with thick white stripes. The fedora turns the suit into the old mob style he's going for. There's a long chain hanging from his pocket and the wing tipped shoes are killer. He stares at me and dramatically puts a hand on his heart.

Jesse gives me a peck then pushes me to Gage. I smile at Jesse briefly over my shoulder and give him a saucy wink. It makes my heart soar that they all share so well. I walk to Gage with open arms for a proper greeting. The sneaky devil takes my hand and spins me around staring at me in appreciation. Jesse whistles and starts clapping to make me more embarrassed. I know I'm bright red right now.

"Mi Sirenita, mi corazón no sobrevivirá a tu belleza." He says, My Little Mermaid, my heart will not survive your beauty. Of course, I get shy and duck my head. Gage pulls me close then lifts my chin to kiss me deeply. Our tongues fight for power, rolling over each other in pleasure.

We both pull back smiling and I tell him. *"Tu corazón siempre está a salvo conmigo. te amo corazón de leon."* His eyes flash dark green and his grip tightens on me. I told him, your heart is always safe with me. I love you, Lion Heart.

"Mist, are you ready?" I glance at Vic but she isn't looking at me. Instead, she's staring at the staircase uneasy and my eyes follow hers.

Lake actually dressed up like us! He wouldn't commit when I kept asking him what costume he was wearing. Even with his shaved head this man would've ran the roaring 20s easily. Power pumps through every vein in his glorious body. Lake has major swag as he descends the last of the stairs. His ensemble is top notch and doesn't disappoint. My eyes roam his stacked body greedily. He's wearing dark gray pants with black stripes. The black long sleeve shirt tucked into his pants can't hide all his massive muscles. His necktie and suspenders are white which makes the costume a solid ten. Lake steps closer to me and Gage steps back, blowing me a kiss.

"Let's go," Lake says, leaning into me to smell my hair. He doesn't kiss me like I expect or want.

So I push his buttons to egg him on by licking his lips. He growls deep, snapping at my neck. I giggle loudly and hurry off after Gage. I glance back and Lake has a Tommy gun in his hands.

Man, I want one.

“Yeah, quit lollygagging,” I say. Everyone groans at me and my smile widens.

We walk outside and see more of our friends waiting. One of the security guys becomes a photographer for us real quick. Lake and Zeke start complaining so we cut the photoshoot short. Zeke may have been upset because I started using Top Gun phrases. It’s not my fault he came dressed as Iceman. That’s kinda like asking for it and the flight suit is cute. Everyone picks vehicles then we all take off. The drive over to Anthony’s isn’t long, and everyone’s acting wild so it’s even shorter.

I go through the pictures and send a few good ones to the guys. We’ll need to take more at Anthony’s house with the rest of our group. We all decided to go as flappers and gangsters tonight. Everyone wanted to coordinate our costumes, I told Lake it wasn’t just me. However, the ideas the guys suggested were absolutely ridiculous. For example they wanted us to dress up as the following: characters from Dodgeball, Minions, Toy Story, classic horror movies and Disney villains. I liked the Snow White and the Seven Dwarves idea because I wanted to see Lake as Grumpy. To fuck with all of them, I threw My Little Pony in the ring for discussion. They all freaked out and began telling stories about high school.

“Sheba?” My head snaps to Lake, I didn’t realize the car had stopped. I take the hand waiting for me and he helps me out of the car. “This wingding should be swell,” he says grinning at me. I laugh because he’s playing along. My giggle turns into a gasp when he slyly grabs my ass firmly in his hand.

Damien and Anthony come out to meet us like gracious hosts. They’re super OG though and get dropped off by a spooky decorated golf cart. Greetings are exchanged as more of our friends join the group. Anthony strolls to me like he’s ten feet tall and I beam at him. He’s so handsome in that red velvet suit with black accents. His red newsboy cap has black stripes too. He takes me in his arms and bends down to

kiss me hello. I moan in his mouth when his spiked tongue piercing scrapes my tongue.

“How’s my *Mistress* doing? I’ve missed you.” Anthony leans in to give me a peck pouting.

“I’m great and excited to get scared. I always miss you.” I angle my body to block our view from the others. I slip my hand into his jacket and pinch his nipple, “later my pet.” He can’t call me *Mistress* around other people because it makes me want to punish him.

His body vibrates under my touch and his bell rings for me. He nods in obedience then kisses my head. “Are you ready for some fun, Sexy Lexy?” Anthony grins on cloud nine and kisses me again. He’s back to his normal bubbly outgoing self without all the alcohol in his system.

“Tony, where are the mazes you keep bragging about? Hate to break it to ya, but nothing will top our party last year.” Seth gloats and some of the others agree laughing.

“Alright Lexy, pick a direction because it’s like Halloween horror nights here tonight.” Anthony holds my hand, lacing our fingers before addressing all of us. “Tonight will be the best damn party any of you have ever gone to.” Everyone cheers and The Kelly Brothers snicker. “There are haunted houses, mazes and scare zones. Same rules apply: don’t touch the actors and they won’t touch you.” The group gets geeked and begins asking random questions. He shakes his head, “I’m not going to ruin the fun. You’ll have to wait and see.”

“It’s not really scary though, right?” Shawna asks, sounding worried but she laughs when Damien grabs her shoulders from behind, trying to scare her.

“It’ll be fun, but if you ever need a break just head to one of the spook free zones. All you have to do is follow the signs up all over the property. If it’s a dark area the arrows or signs will glow for you.” Anthony looks discouraged so I bump him and rub my finger over his. He flashes that bright white huge grin and takes a deep breath.

Tina walks up with Cash pushing a dolly stacked with boxes. They're adorable dressed up as Bonnie and Clyde tonight. She hugs me and everyone says hello. She looks at Anthony shaking her head. "Here are the maps in case they get lost, which they probably will. Ant made a sizable dent in his fortune with this party." Anthony starts to protest but she stops him holding up a hand. "Okay, he didn't but I died twice writing some of the checks for the vendors. He hired two real life movie directors to help with this juice joint. Just wait." I giggle and she winks at me.

Everyone cheers again and Anthony relaxes once more. Six creepy clowns drive up in a mini car. They try to scare some of us as they hand out maps to everyone in our group. We watch as they load up the boxes in the small ass car.

A woman walks up to Derek and Kevin breathing hard, confused and hysterical. We all glance over in shock and move closer to her trying to figure out what's going on. I'm about to pull my weapons when the clowns start walking to the woman dancing around her. She sees them and screams freaking out then backs right into the big one. He grabs her while three clowns circle her. We all jump and I scream when the horn and creepy music goes off behind us. The other two clowns walk through our group holding funny looking instruments. I gasp because when we turn around the woman is a big ball of pink cotton candy. The clowns laugh and roll her to the car staring at us. Our group starts clapping for the characters and they just drive off.

"That really scared me for a second there." I admit to Anthony and he smiles.

"Let's go to Killer Klowns from Outer Space first!" Jace says pointing to the maze on the map. I guess that little scene wasn't enough for him.

"No, let's do the Sleepy Hollow Hayride by the barns." Victory suggests and Blake seconds the idea grinning at her. Blake's rockin' the old Hollywood vibe just like her. They look like the perfect couple.

“Stranger Things? Man, I’ve never seen that show,” Gage says, disappointed. Some people seemed shocked by that confession but I agree with him. I’ve never watched an episode so I have no idea what it’s about. Maybe I will after the maze though. All their suggestions are far away per the map.

“Lex Luthor gets to pick. It’s my best friend’s party,” Bry says, looking shyly at me. I’m not mad at him anymore since I kicked his ass the first time I saw him. Plus, I know Bry would do anything to protect me. Vic mad dogs him for calling me that and he blows a raspberry at her. I’m really glad they’re both here.

“Yeah, you pick Sis.” Sage and I have agreed to try it out. So far there’s been no water works. Her gold flapper dress makes her hazel eyes pop and it shimmers in the light. Gold is her color hands down with that black hair and bronze skin. She gives me a thumbs up because she didn’t cry.

I laugh at her silliness and look around. Everyone’s waiting on me to decide impatiently. No pressure at all. I glance down at the map again and ignore the chattering around me. OK, let’s go old school.

“Freddy Krueger or Chucky?” I say the same time.

Lake says, “Chucky or Freddy.”

Everyone laughs and Lake growls at them but winks at me. Alright, I see you Mister Masters. He’s really making an effort to show me small gestures of affection. I really appreciate it too, so I stick out my tongue even though he didn’t touch my nose. Lake’s deep teal eyes show his desire.

“We need to pick fast before we all go up in flames. The sexual tension is smokin hot around here.” Ethan says joking then he stares at my cousin going quiet.

“The Freddy maze is closer. Let’s go there first then we’ll get the golf carts. Who remembers the song?” Anthony questions pulling me along ahead of the group.

I look over my shoulder laughing, stoked about the night. Of course, I start singing the twisted nursery rhyme and

some people join in.

“Shit, that’s creepy.” Wes shivers when I glance over. “Never liked Krueger. He fucked with dreams, and you gotta sleep sometime.”

We all agreed and approach the big tent with a massive Freddy on the side. You have to walk through his gloved hand and the claws look sharp but they don’t hurt. *Oh crap, I’m getting freaked out.* I’ll make sure I stay close to the group. I hold Anthony back and let some people go before us. I’m not going first or last. It’s safest in the middle. Honestly, I love being scared and hate it at the same time. Normally, if I get too nervous I stare at the ground with my head down.

The first room we come to is the waterbed scene. An actor tosses and turns on the bed in sleep. I’m trying to get out of the room since I know what’s going to happen. My bright idea backfires because the people in front of us want to see the action and they’re blocking the door. Suddenly, Freddy comes through the bed and pulls the kid inside. Water lightly sprays around us and people yell. A door opens behind me and Freddy jumps out of the wall. I scream running away from him and over to Lake. He growls when Freddy comes close and wraps me in his arms.

The path out of the room is clear so I take off following after Sage. I stop dead when I see bodies hanging from the ceiling. My cousin screams ahead of me and I hear one of the guys curse. *Shit.* A strobe light makes it hard to see around me. Jace and Lake get in front of me and I feel better already. Gage and Anthony come up on either side. I look over my shoulder to see Jesse and Wes behind me. These guys are awesome.

“I need to check in with the party planner. I’ll be right back. Sorry but I don’t want to bug Tina.” I nod agreeing with him because she deserves a day off too. Anthony kisses me and then bounces.

Everybody splits up to do different stuff and the group vanishes before my eyes. Gage kisses me and promises to get

drinks with Sage and Bry. Jace, Jesse and Zeke head to the bathroom. Before they go I tease them about going to the ladies room together.

When we got out of the third maze we found the party packed. We did a few more activities so this is the first time I can actually sit down. My feet are killing me from these heels. I spot an open table with a VIP sign on it. Anthony and Tina thought of everything to make this party epic. I snap a picture of the barcode to claim the table per the instructions on the sign. I'm surprised to see Lake still behind me when I turn around.

"I'm staying with you." Lake's voice is deep and dares me to argue but I'm happy he's here. I pull him over to a chair and sit down next to him.

"Are you having fun?" I lean into him and purr the question. I want to kiss him but I only have enough nerve to flirt. "You look very powerful in that costume."

One eyebrow lifts and he takes my chin in his big hand. "Only in this outfit? I guess I better step up my game." He kisses me briefly but not with tongue and I'm disappointed. His deep laugh vibrates his chest and me. "Don't be sad, Sex. I'm working on some stuff."

"No, I get it." I try not to sound pathetic and emotional. I'm not this clingy normally, right? "There's a lot of media here tonight."

I look around and see a few people with professional cameras. Anthony said the publicity for this event had gotten out of hand. People were calling looking for invitations to the Halloween party of the season. Oh, and I'm not talking about regular people, nope, this place is packed with celebrities.

Lake's hand lands on my thigh under the table. My head whips to him and a thrill races up my spine.

"It's taking everything in me not to bend you over this table right here in front of everyone." His hand travels higher up my dress. "Is that what you want? I was trying to be

respectful of you.” He shifts even closer and his finger moves along my covered pussy. “Open,” Lake commands roughly.

My legs fall open and he goes in...

“Fucking hell.” I laugh at him and his eyes turn bright teal. They’re like the water in a beach photo of a location you never knew existed. He rips a hole in my pantyhose using little effort. Just like it’s wet tissue paper and nothing can stop those big strong fingers.

I gasp and moan when one of his thick fingers enters me.

“Kiss me and show them you’re mine.” His words a growled demand.

Pretty sure I just came a little. Not from the magical fingers working my clit either but from his possessive comment.

I take his face in my hands and control the kiss. It’s dark, deep and delicious. My tongue moves over his like his fingers move in me. Lake’s piercing is different than Anthony’s but equally stimulating. We’re in the shadows here in this corner. It may be dark and hard to see us but we’re still visible and that’s exciting. The guys already claimed me on TV. However, this is like I’m marking Lake as mine. His fingers move faster and I moan in his mouth. Then he massages my clit with great care and rolls it between his fingers like an expert. It’s sweet torture until finally ultimate bliss as I come in his hand.

Lake releases my mouth, “Let’s go.”

We start to stand still entangled in each other’s embrace and ready for more. Thankfully, I see Sarah and Stone coming towards us just in time to pull Lake back down in the chairs. Unfortunately, his finger is still inside me. I open my legs wide wholeheartedly expecting him to remove it but he doesn’t. He grins wickedly at me and blows me a fucking kiss.

Shit!

“This party is great! I’m so glad you told me to stay a couple more days.” Sarah and Stone sit on the other side of the table. They are talking and honestly I can’t focus on them.

I’m super sensitive after that orgasm and just a little pressure makes me want to scream. Lake picks this time to play, flick me and I almost fall out of my chair.

He catches me before I hit the ground and laughs like it isn’t his fault. “Easy there, I know you’re falling for me but dang woman.” He jokes earning a chuckle from Stone and a glare from Sarah.

I roll my eyes then decide I like playing with fire and being burned. “Oh Fake, I already tumbled down that mountain.” I bat my eyelashes, sending him kissy faces.

His unoccupied hand turns white from holding the edge of the table hard. He stares at me astonished by my confession. His mouth opens then closes just as quickly.

Should I keep teasing or tell the truth? I’m still unsure of his long term plans so I shield my heart again. “Then I found a boat in the lake below that mountain and sailed away.”

Everyone laughs at my joke, even Lake. He pulls out of me and I sigh deeply. I’m amazed when he picks me up and sets me on his lap. I wiggle because I can feel his erection and I’m still horny. Thankfully, Stone starts talking to Lake so I have some time to settle down.

That felt so good.

I try to keep my mind preoccupied with mindless stuff until my lady boner disappears. Our companions look super cute in their costumes. Though I’m not sure if Stone’s outfit is really considered a costume. All he did was take off his leather jacket and call himself a greaser. Tina told him greasers love leather jackets and that made his day. I suggested he tell people he’s a character from Grease. He looked at me like I offended his honor. Stone aggressively said no fucking way, I’m an outsider all day and I had to agree.

Sarah picked a rainbow fairy costume tonight that brightly matches her hair. She looks adorable and Stone has

tripped over his tongue multiple times this evening. I did see him sneak a picture of her too when she wasn't looking. Sarah whistles, getting my attention and tilts her head. I'm confused so she slyly points across the room.

Both Stone and Lake growl at us and that only makes us giggle. She wanted me to see the famous actor drinking at the bar. I point out the two comedians grinding on the dance floor and she laughs. I would point out some mega star athletes but she isn't into sports. Though recently she's been talking a lot about a snowboarder named Maxson.

"Hey guys, sorry we're late," Tommy says grinning at us. He has Misha and Windy with him, of course, because they're all married. I stand and hug everyone in greeting. It's been a long time and they were all really supportive about what happened.

"These costumes are literally the best. Dude you guys have to win the couples contest." They're dressed like the characters from Death Becomes Her. "Misha is Meryl Streep and Windy is Goldie Hawn. Tommy is Bruce Willis and also the Dodgers best pitcher. This is Sarah, my PA and Stone, her man."

"What?" They say in unison floored by my introduction.

We all laugh but they just stare at each other. Oops, did I do that?

"Well it's nice to meet you guys." Misha says and Windy agrees nodding.

Tommy sits next to Lake and they start talking. Anthony and the gang walk up with chairs and more tables. Our VIP section gets bigger and louder which makes more people stare at us. We are rolling deep now and I just smile looking around enjoying all these people. I appreciate them more since I ran away. The guys pass me around like I'm playing musical chairs with their laps. I'm more comfortable showing my affection in public so I love the attention.

Lights on the stage to the right of us go on and the large crowd goes wild cheering loudly. That's when I glance around and see all the people. Wow, where did they all come from? I'm grateful for all the extra security, but maybe we should find another table.

"It's getting packed," I nod at Jesse and he winks at me.

Anthony stands out of nowhere and walks over to me holding out a hand. Gage kisses my head whispering his love in Spanish before pushing me off his lap. I'm completely confused but I take Anthony's hand and smile at him warmly. He unexpectedly picks me up and the smile he's sporting is radiant before asking. "What do you think about the party?"

I giggle holding on to his neck grinning like a mad woman. "It's fantastic." Then I lean in to kiss him deeply.

He returns my kiss while trying to hold down my dress because we can hear Lake nagging about people seeing my ass. I bite Anthony's tongue and he pulls away groaning. He kisses me once more then grinning says, "I have another present for you. Let's go, guys." Everyone gets up and I look at our group baffled. Anthony sets me down then takes my hand pulling me to the stage. Wes and Kevin open a gated off section that gets us closer to center stage. A huge row of security guards follow us and stand at our backs. I frown when I spot a few of my friends recording me.

Then my heart fucking stops when the real life Post Malone strolls on stage holding a beer in his hand. He begins singing, "Sad and Rich" and I cry like a baby.

This is the song we listened to the first night we met. Anthony holds me knowing I'm not sad because these are most definitely happy tears. He sings for me using his rich beautiful singing voice, which makes me join in.

All my friends keep sending me knowing glances. This is beyond special and all their secretive behavior about the party makes sense now. Post starts another song and of course, I know it and sing every last word.

We get lost in the music, drinks and dancing. Time flies by and before we know it, Post Malone says goodbye to me personally and exits the stage. I'm on cloud nine, a little buzzed and I can't believe that just happened. The crowd moves on and the craziness slows down. I kiss the guys one by one then walk straight to Anthony.

I grab his hand and pull him towards the house. It's time for his present.

I catch sight of myself in a mirror and sigh deeply. My hair's still wet and it doesn't look cute anymore for my costume. Unfortunately, that couldn't be prevented so I'm just going to roll with it and be glad I'm not buzzing anymore. After all that dancing and the severe case of blue ovaries Anthony just gave me, I had to take a speedy cold shower. Honestly, I'm pretty fucking proud of myself for not getting pissed or jealous. We were only seconds away from getting it on when he got a text. He freaked out and took off to handle an "emergency" according to him.

The guys always say, "They're not jealous, but possessive and there's a massive difference. Jealousy would mean you don't have it and want it. Possessive just means you're territorial and protecting what's already yours." I'm feeling that hardcore right now.

Anthony's really lucky Lake gave me that orgasm earlier or he would be in the dog house. I run a hand through my hair again, still frustrated and make my way to the kitchen. I pass by some busy wait staff and wave quickly getting out of their way.

The cool night breeze hits my face when I step out the back door. *Well shoot.* I walked right into a scare zone. Dang it, I keep forgetting to look for the signs. It's really foggy out here and there's spooky music playing. A chainsaw goes off to the right of me so I head to the left. I finally spot the glow in the dark arrows and start to follow them. I walk through arches of bloody body parts, looking around for the next scare.

Suddenly, a fine mist sprays me in my face and I automatically pull out a knife.

Where is everyone?

The fog becomes more dense the further I go into the maze. I don't panic when I look down and see my phone says no signal because I have my blades. *Why did I drink tonight?* I know better than to let my guard down. The scream that leaves my lips is deafening even to me. I jump back and get into a crouching position prepared to defend myself. My hands are ready to strike in the blink of an eye. I'm confident my aim will be sure and true.

Shit, I'm on edge.

The employee that just slid in front of me breaks character dumbfounded at my reaction. "Wow, wait a minute. I'm not going to hurt you." He holds up his hands in surrender then he points to the exit sign. "This is just a scare zone. Are those knives?" Now he's on a phone getting ready to have me kicked out I'm sure. The werewolf is definitely scared of the psycho bitch.

Me, I'm that bitch.

"Sorry dude," I quickly put away my blades. "I know I'm a little paranoid because I smoked and drank too much tonight." I giggle like a dumbass hoping he'll buy it. I'm trying to reassure him with a smile that I'm OK. Hopefully, he won't call the police or alert security. I don't want the guys thinking I'm scared and trying to attack people.

To make matters worse, I hear laughing behind me and a big group of people walk past us staring. They start whispering so I feel like an ass. The werewolf just backs away shaking his head like I'm too crazy to deal with. I totally panicked and lost the cool balance I pretend to have on my nerves.

I follow the group of people from my melt down and try to act casual. They all laugh and scream when another werewolf jumps out at them. You can tell they are actually having fun and not being big babies like me. I'm going to

make myself have fun too. “We have security and I’m safe here,” I whisper to myself. I walk through some fake spiderwebs and remember how epic this party’s been so far. My smile spreads when I go through the final grow in the dark arch and this garden opens to a pool. It looks like it’s filled with blood, and there are vampires everywhere.

I pull out my phone and snap a picture of the decor. I’m going to ask Anthony if this is the True Blood area. A scene from the show flashes through my mind and I feel heat in my cheeks. I wonder if fangs would be fun for Anthony?

“Ms. Mistory, I’m supposed to deliver this to you.” I look up and smile automatically. The messenger is wearing a long black hooded cape. He’s holding out a piece of paper to me, gracefully bowing his head.

I don’t feel like having another incident so I’m going to trust the weird man. Plus, there are people everywhere and I’m no damsel. As if to prove my point, I see Wes standing against a tree near me. He tips his head at the man but I shake my head no. I want to see what he wants and Wes nods reading my head motions.

“I’m not going to bite you pretty lady.” The vampire glances over flashing his sharp fangs. He shakes the piece of paper and I take it. I laugh when he brings his cape up to cover the bottom part of his face. He says, “Enjoy the show,” then he walks away briskly.

“Wait, what does that mean?” I run up and grab the guy’s shoulder.

He spins around, shocked that I would touch him and just stares at me. The vampire looks at his costume then brushes off his arm like I got him dirty. “I don’t know. I was just paid to give you that.” The man’s eyes go wide and he panics when he sees Wes walk up next to me. He holds up his hands. “They just said to give you the note and to say enjoy the show. I work for a telegram company.”

I exchange a look with Wes to see if he believes him. “They still have those?” I shrug at his question because I have no idea. “Who hired you and how did you get on the

property?” He mad dogs the other man in full guard dog mode. The vamp rolls his eyes, obviously sick of our questions.

“Yes, they still have this line of work, obviously because I’m standing here. My paperwork is in the car if you want to see it? It was enough for the guards out front and I have a picture of her.” He points at me getting pissed off now. “Look, I have more stops tonight so can I just show you and go?”

Wes looks at me for confirmation and I stare at the vampire again. Then I nod and he holds his arm out showing the man where to go. “I’ll be right back. I have two people watching you.” I smile at the man who is my bodyguard turned brother.

“No worries,” I tell him and he takes off growling at the other man.

I open the note and read it a few times, confused because it’s not what I thought. Wait, maybe I should call Wes back here. This must be a misunderstanding but I know Wes will want to check his papers no matter what I say. I read the note again.

Meet me out front in 10 minutes. I have a present for you.

Jesse

Jesse did say he had a new painting for me but why would he bring it here?

“What’s that?” I jump out of my skin when Lake speaks from behind me.

“It’s a note from Jesse. Have you seen him?” I turn around to look up at Lake. I frown when I see his pinched brows. He takes the note from me and inspects it, turning it over.

“I saw him walk in the house a few minutes ago with Bryson.” Lake pulls out his phone dialing but he doesn’t reach anyone. He looks at the note again then holds out his arm for me. “Alright, let’s check it out together. If it’s a real surprise, I’ll just kick rocks.” That sounds like a great plan.

“Thanks,” I take his arm and we head to the front of the house. I see a side door and pull Lake that way. We don’t need to hit another scare zone. I don’t want to look like a jackass again. “Let’s go through the house just in case Jesse’s still inside.”

Lake nods then takes the lead weaving between people. Once at the door, he opens it for me. I scream bloody murder when a mechanical zombie jumps out at us snapping its jaw. *Holy shit*. That’s like movie quality and scary as hell. The zombie retracts into the corner waiting for another party goer to open the door.

“I’m going to be happy when this is over. I’m done with Halloween.” He grumbles, sending dirt looks at the decorations.

“I still get to go trick or treating with my sisters. Plus, Anthony’s big event.” I tell him grinning happily at my future plans.

“I mean, I’m going to that Halloween stuff too, I’m just over all the costumes.” He admits shyly and avoids eye contact. My parents invited him, but he never gave an answer.

“I’m glad and you don’t have to dress up. I’ll even wear a hoodie and jeans with you, if you want?” I nod at him when he stares at me surprised. We grab each other’s hand at the same time and smile.

There aren’t a lot of people inside so we make it to the front door without interruption. Plus, my companion would probably just growl or grunt at them until they move. Maybe, even punch them for no good reason. We don’t see Jesse or Bry either. Lake reaches for the handle before me and unlocks the door before opening it. That’s when we come face to face with the last person I expect.

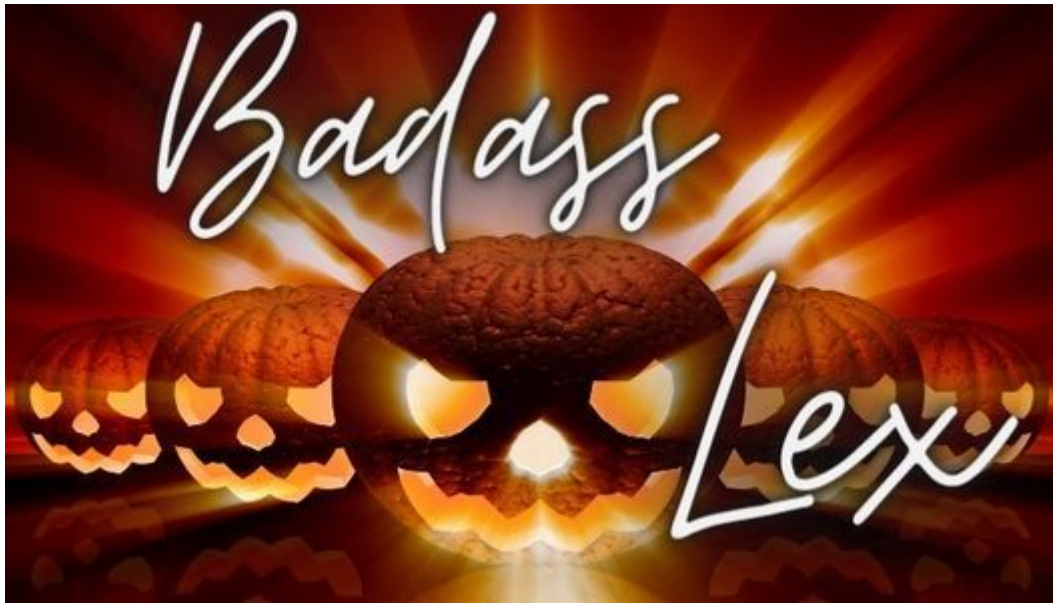
“You’ve got to be kidding me. Why are you here and how did you get on this property?” I’m trying to keep calm but what the fuck is Jennifer doing here? The red haze threatens to take over, so I push it down.

“I need to talk to Jesse.” Jennifer looks around us trying to see inside the house. She seems perturbed and on edge.

I watch her with narrow eyes and start shaking my hand in her face.

Lake’s hand covers mine trying to relax me. “You need to leave.” He looks at Jennifer, his voice laced with authority.

“Not until I see him. Please, it’s very important.” Jennifer glances at her phone distressed when it begins ringing. She looks at both of us then grabs the note out of my hand and runs off.



Chapter - 11 - Puzzles Without Pieces

Badass Lex

“Hey!” I yell at her. “What the hell?” Lake and I look at each other shocked. We recover quickly and chase after her seconds later.

“Where did she go?” Lake asks, looking around when we stop running. There aren’t any people around because the entrance to the party is on the other side of the property.

A bright flash of light goes off far away to the left of us. I take off my shoes getting ready to run because I don’t want to break an ankle. I didn’t hear an explosion so we know that wasn’t a bomb. We head in that direction running swiftly. The avocado grove is this way. Long story short, basically Anthony made me my own avocado market. He said we couldn’t wait for the trees to grow so he bought full sized ones. Anthony likes to tease the guys saying it’s my reason for coming over here.

Our pace slows and Lake pulls out his phone. “Out front. Track us.” He hangs up then stares at me. I know he wants me to leave but doesn’t say anything and we keep walking.

The gunshot is loud and very close.

Lake sprints forward and I speed up to match his pace.

“Stay back,” Lake orders sternly at me.

I just ignore him, drop my shoes and pull out my blades. I spare him a glance to see if he’s mad, and Lake has a real gun in his hand. We run around the garden shed and see it.

The fire is massive but a controlled burn. I walk closer holding up my arm to block the heat trying to get a better look at the blaze. I can see something sitting on the stack of logs burning brightly.

What is that?

Lake pulls me back from the flames cursing and scanning the area. We hear the moan at the same time because our heads whip to the row of trees closest to us. I narrow my eyes then see a white lump on the ground in the shadows. Another yelp of pain reaches my ears. I glance at Lake and he nods hearing it too.

Wasn't Jennifer wearing white?

Lake and I sprint over to her but we have to change directions before we get there. A bullet just hit the tree next to her. Then seconds later one hits the ground between us.

“Get down,” Lake yells, trying to push me down to cover my body with his.

“No,” I smack his arms away and just start flipping. Like literally flipping because my gymnastics skills are badass now. I run behind the storage shed just as Lake does.

“That’s Jennifer on the ground over there. She isn’t the one shooting.” I tell him in a high pitched panicked voice. I’m still trying to process everything so I take a deep breath and call to the other part of myself. I hear a scream. Oh shit, is she shot?

“I know that. Do you think she set us up?” Lake asks scooting along the shed wall to check the other side.

I watch him and my eyes widen when he comes back. “Shit, I didn’t think of that.” I shrug to answer because I have no idea.

Lake picks up a big rock and throws it to the left by a row of trees. A bullet hits the tree next to us, splintering the bark. He does the same to the right, but this time there’s no bullet. “They can’t see us on this side of the shed with their angle.” He uses his phone to call someone. “They’re in watch tower A,” he hisses on the line then hangs up and looks at me.

“What watch tower?” I’m confused and he doesn’t explain any further.

That’s when we hear rapid gun fire but it’s not in our direction.

“Fuck,” Lake leans over to peek around the right corner of the shed. When he pulls back his glaze meets mine and I see the hesitation on his face.

“Don’t even fucking think about it, Lake. I’m not staying here.” I step around him and throw a knife blind. I replace it quickly and we don’t hear anything. “Catch up, Master,” I say, kissing his lips. Then I do something I never would’ve done before and run straight towards Jennifer again.

“You will pay for this,” Lake yells after me, furious.

I hear him not far behind me and I keep going with a one-track mind. Jennifer hasn’t moved a muscle and she isn’t making any more noise. The fire on the other hand is still angry and burning bright. It hasn’t spread yet but it will. We hear a huge explosion in the distance and I stop behind a tree to scan the area again.

“Give me your gun and I’ll cover you,” I tell Lake, replacing my knives. I don’t have any CPR training and I know he does.

Lake hands over the 9mm and I check the safety. He kisses me hard once on the lips then runs to Jennifer. When he bends down to check her, I move closer to them watching our surroundings.

He turns her over and I see red. “She’s breathing, just unconscious. I can’t tell where she’s shot, but there’s a lot of blood here.” He searches her body and keeps sending me glances.

If looks could kill and all that. He’s pissed at me for taking off so I might as well push it, right?

I jump into action and run back to the shed to grab the hose I saw earlier. I turn on the facet and sprint back to the fire. Luckily, everything is organized so the hose stretches without any problems. I use the water to attack the flames and I’m relieved when the blaze goes out rather quickly. The white smoke makes me cough a few times so I try to wave it away. Unfortunately, the pain in my feet can’t be ignored any longer so I spray them next.

The blaring horns approaching alert us to the golf carts and jeeps speeding our way. The cavalry has finally arrived. I can already hear them yelling out the windows. They’re headlights surround us as they park to light up the area. The chaos of clean up and investigation ensues around me with a blur of activity. Gage reaches me first and he picks me up before I can fall over. I’m grateful for the support because my feet are killing me now. The adrenaline dump makes me light-headed and weak-kneed. Gage just holds me speechless at the whole scene. All the guys are going to have guilt over this.

All of them except him.

I glance over to where I left Lake and Jennifer. He’s leaning against a tree in a blood soaked tie and suspenders. His stare is even more furious than before and I know he’s upset from the hand at his neck. I do feel bad for scaring him, but I’m not weak anymore and running from this nightmare. I don’t give a shit if Gage is holding me right now because I’m still a badass.

Wes brought Windy and he’s helping her attend to Jennifer while they wait for back up. An ambulance drives up seconds later and parks next to them. Wes meets my eyes wiping his hands and he tilts his head at her being pushed

away. I nod once giving him the permission he thinks he needs to leave. They all load Jennifer up quickly and drive away.

Seth and Jace talk to Derek and X briefly then they head off with a group of security to take care of the local cops. I'm sure Donaldson will be here soon too. The two Kelly brothers come this way shaking their heads.

"What the fuck does this mean?" Jace kicks the charred mess and stares at me. This will only add to the protective guilt he has towards me. I'm going to have to reassure him this isn't his fault and I'm not his responsibility.

"What is it?" Anthony asks then takes me from Gage. He holds me close, inspecting my face and kisses my neck.

"It's a message," Bry spits the words disgusted. The youngest Kelly squats down with gloves on, staring at what's left of the burnt object. Suddenly, he takes off towards the shed and comes back holding a shovel.

We all gasp when Bry flips over the pile of ash.

"It's a fucking crib," Jesse whispers to the group.

The baby's crib was staged perfectly so it burned last. There's nothing left of the wood underneath but they wanted us to see this message.

But what does it mean?

I look around to see if it makes sense to anyone else because I'm lost. Bry and Jace are on their phones next to us. No one seems to know what's going on. Gage calls Sage to give her a status update. He's pacing around with his stress levels high. There are security personnel, law enforcement and emergency medical staff all over the area.

Jesse has a lost expression on his face and he's staring at me when I glance at him.

What the fuck now?

I belt the last notes of "Titanium" by David Guetta ft. Sia. Then I shut off the water and get out of the burning hot

shower. A loud sigh leaves me when my feet land on the cold tile. I always forget to turn on the tile heater, but the cold feels good this time. The next song starts up and I grab my phone to stop it. We decided to come back to the beach house after law enforcement dismissed us with the help of Gage's uncle. Anthony didn't care about his house or the party. Since the damage was done right outside his property and the event was loud already, not many people knew what was going on. He said the party will close down at the normal time, and he doesn't need to be there. The guys were cool about giving me space once we got here. I was smart enough to get clothes before I jumped in so I dry off. Then get dressed in black leggings and a TNT hoodie. My mind is mush right now and I need some aspirin. I limp to the door and open it letting steam out with me. I'm not even shocked when I see her standing near the dresser.

"Hey Doctor Fruit, how has life been treating you lately? Windy's going to get offended that they called you." I tease her while walking slowly into the room.

"Yeah right, didn't you miss me? This place is gorgeous and right on the beach too. I'm glad to see you and the guys worked out your problems. Not super stoked Ant didn't invite me to your party though." Dr. Maraschino laughs at my remorseful expression. "I'm just kidding, we planned on coming over on Halloween." She smiles warmly at me then she glances at the feet. "They said you were running around barefoot. Let's take a look and wrap your feet so you can get down stairs. Donaldson's here already fighting with Lake and we don't need them killing each other." She rolls her eyes which makes me chuckle.

I sit on the bed as she gets her supplies organized. The good doctor works fast and my feet already feel better by the time she's done. She shows me the syringe, asking for permission. I'm grateful I don't have any PTSD from that object. I nod to the drugs because hopefully, it'll take the edge off.

"Alright, they actually weren't as bad as Lake said. Do you want to talk about anything? How are you feeling? Sage

said you've been dizzy lately." She begins cleaning up, packing her bag watching me.

I stand moving to the dresser and start brushing my hair then put on my weapons. "Wow, everyone's talking about me huh? I'm good, Doc, no worries. Let's go see what other secrets my family is hiding from me." The bitterness is clear in my tone.

She sighs deeply but follows me when I limp walk out of the room.

"Why are you walking?" Jace scolds me and turns around giving me his back. "Get on stubborn ass." Man, this guy is smart. He knows I won't let anyone carry me right now but a piggyback ride is different and fun. I jump on and wrap my arms around his neck. He runs to the elevator making race car noises.

That makes me giggle and pretend to talk to my pit crew. "I need two new front tires because I'm limping out here." He laughs at me and pushes the button.

I laugh when Dr. Maraschino says, "Hey, not fair. Wait up." She makes sounds like she's a Harley and comes running towards us.

We all laugh and the elevator dings then a second later the doors open. I look at the guy waiting inside as Jace strolls in. The Doc hits the button for the right floor and we start the descent.

"Hi," Wes says, staring at my feet all sad and I groan.

"Not you too. Come on Wes, you were verifying the delivery guy. You didn't do anything wrong." I pat his shoulder and he shrugs looking in my eyes, still upset.

"I know, but I let you down." He lowers his eyes and holds the door open for us.

"No you didn't. If you must beat yourself up about it then at least let me do it later. We can spar after this little meeting and I can kick your ass so you have something to really pout about." Jace and Doctor Fruit laugh at my comments and Wes sends me a small twitch of his lips.

“You should probably take a day for your feet to heal,” Jace reminds me and I growl at him like Lake does. We’re close to the conference room so Jace helps me off his back knowing I don’t want to walk in there looking weak. He holds my arm making sure I can use my feet again. The door is closed and we can’t hear all the people inside until we open it.

Agent Donaldson gets up to walk over to us and she shocks the shit out of me by giving me a hug. It’s quick but it tells me she actually cares. Somehow that makes me feel better and gives me a confidence boost I need. She strolls back to the white board ready to give a status update.

I’m far from prepared for the welcome I get when I scan the room. All the guys in here avoid eye contact and no one calls me over. I find a seat next to Jace and he high fives me after I sit down. Let’s get this over with. I need sleep, maybe a run or some fighting. My feet don’t even hurt anymore.

Agent Donaldson clears her throat, getting the attention of everyone in the room. “Remember, nothing we say leaves this room.” She means business, staring at all of us until people agree like she’s our teacher. Even at this late hour, she’s rockin’ the badass FBI look. “I can’t interview Jennifer yet because she’s still in surgery. Her left lung collapsed from the bullet she took to the chest. Bryson has the reports and all you can access them through our chat. Of course, her private information has been removed, blah blah.” She raises her brows at Bry for confirmation.

“Yes, the attachments have been linked,” he informs us and the phones in the room sound with notifications. I swear this guy can hack anything.

“Since we’re just theorizing Jennifer’s involvement, let’s talk about what we know.” Everyone nods in agreement, but doesn’t say anything. “Now start from the beginning and tell me everything.” Donaldson demands writing a few notes on the board.

“Tell *US* everything,” Liam corrects her. She rolls her eyes ignoring him and he just chuckles then stops abruptly like

he didn't mean to. Then he scowls at her, crossing his arms in defense.

“A man dressed like a vampire approached Lex and handed her a piece of paper. After investigating, I learned in fact he was a paid messenger and even had a picture of her. We are researching the sender but that company does anonymous business all the time as long as you have cash.” Wes glances at me and he's still acting ridiculous. “I left Lex to verify his documents but I should have sent someone else.” Wes lowers his head, ashamed by his actions.

“Feeling sorry for yourself helps no one in this case.” She tells him without an ounce of pity and I agree.

“Yes, ma'am,” he replies almost out of habit and my eyebrows raise. Liam throws him a dirty look from across the room.

“I found Mistory by the vampire pool and she showed me the note he's talking about,” Lake gestures to Wes then looks at me briefly. He's still really mad at me and hasn't said a word since I left him. “We followed the instructions in the message and in the process ran into Jennifer at the front door. She was acting crazy asking for Jesse then stole the note out of Mistory's hand and took off. You know the rest because I already told you everything. This is a waste of time.” He growls at her in classic Lake fashion.

“Yeah, yeah, okay, we've all heard your threats before. I can't let you go around offing blokes Mr. Masters.” She puts sarcasm on the mister part like she's only saying it because she's trying to be professional. “So where were you? You were with her before the vampire action, right?” Donaldson points at Anthony questioning.

Oh my goodness, I read way too much smut because that makes me laugh out loud. Everyone turns to me and I shrug.

Gage smiles knowingly at me when I glance over. He's been reading on my KU account lately.

Anthony shakes his head then gives me a reluctant look. *Great, this should be good.* “Well, I got a text from Damien letting me know I needed to handle something.”

“And? Keep going, don’t be shy, lad.” Liam encourages him using a sharp tone.

Anthony looks at me again then back to Donaldson. “Damien said Gage really needed my help and since I’m the owner of the house I should go. The multiple calls I got from security guards proved that it was an emergency.”

“Spill,” I hiss the one word because I’m getting tired. The drugs are working and I may just take a nap.

“Kara showed up to cause a scene. I was handling it but then she sucker punched Seth, of all people. Well, she tried to hit Sage but Seth stepped in the way to block her. I think she broke her hand on his face. We had to deal with the local cops after that.” Gage doesn’t look my way when he shares that information.

“What did Kara say?” Donaldson asks Gage and taps her chin like she’s thinking.

Gage curses aggressively then stands abruptly and begins pacing like a lion.

“He didn’t want Lex Luthor there because Kara was lying about being pregnant. She was making a scene trying to get reporters to listen.” Bry pats Gage’s back as he storms past him.

“Can we talk real quick?” Gage’s green eyes plead with me to say, yes.

“Yes,” I say calmly and get up to head for the door. “We’ll be right back, Donald Duck,” I tell her over my shoulder. Liam howls loudly laughing at the nickname. My feet don’t hurt as much when I walk now because the pain meds are working.

“Not that one,” Donaldson growls at me. I can’t hear everything they say as I walk into the hall, but Dr. Maraschino made a comment about fruit.

Gage shuts the door and leans against the thick wood like it's the only thing holding him upright. "I haven't been with anyone else since I fucking met you, and I want to make that clear. We are barely back together and she's already starting shit. This is all new again." He points between us frustrated. He looks so sexy right now in that black tank with all his tatted muscles showing. "I didn't want you to have any doubts in your mind about my loyalty. That's the only reason I didn't call you about her crashing the party. Plus, I knew you were with Anthony. He had just gifted you a whole concert and shit. I didn't want to cock block him. This was a big deal for him and we all knew it. I didn't know Damien was going to call him." He looks devastated and defeated, just staring at me like he thinks I'll leave. "Now it seems like I was hiding something but I'm not, I swear. I was broken when you were gone. Nothing made me happy. My dick definitely wasn't top priority."

"I believe you," and I do.

He engulfs me in his big solid arms and pulls me to his body. My Lion Heart releases a deep breath then kisses my head. The rapid beating of his heart next to my ear shows his level of fear.

"I love you, Lion Heart." I tell him and kiss over his heart.

"*Mi Sirenita, te amo por siempre y para siempre.*" I translate that quickly as My Little Mermaid, I love you forever and always. He picks me up and kisses me breathless. His magical tongue does a number on my senses. Gage pulls back looking at my face, "We need to finish this and sleep." I nod yawning and he gives me a peck. "Well, maybe sex but definitely sleep." I laugh and he kisses my nose then opens the door.

Gage carries me back in the room and I don't protest because technically my feet are messed up. I lick his neck and he almost trips. He returns to my vacant seat and sits down arranging me on his lap. My Lion Heart just holds me, burying his head in my chest.

“OK, glad to see you back.” Donaldson says then curses when her phone rings. “Donaldson,” she barks into the line and walks out the room.

I’m trying to see the board better which is making me wiggle on Gage’s lap to get a better view. He straightens when he gets the hint and spins me around so I’m facing it. Donaldson was busy and there’s a bunch of new bullet points up there now. Gage kisses my head and I take a second to review them.

*Jennifer - set up?

* Get note tested

* Alibi ALL R.O.S

* Kara - distraction?

* Messenger- role? Check cameras

The last word is circled and underlined.

* Crib ?

“So, you guys were off helping with the disturbance?” I ask Jesse and Bry, who are talking in low tones with their heads close. They look over and nod. That’s why Lake saw them head into the house. “After we were shot at...” I pause because the room gets agitated fast from my statement.

“Go on, Babe,” Liam encourages me, sending the guys dirty looks.

“I mean after we found cover, we heard gunshots and multiple explosions. What happened?” No one has told me and honestly, I didn’t ask or care before now. I just wanted to take a shower, change my clothes and be home.

“I was talking to my uncle because the local cops were trying to arrest Seth and Z for the whole Kara shit. Bry told us about the call and we took off.” Gage says from behind me, tightening his grip as if remembering what happened.

“After Lake’s call we all headed in your direction. We had no idea you guys were in danger until then. Jace and Kevin heard the shots by the tower and notified security. They

called me once they had the tower surrounded, but didn't know you guys were in the grove," Jesse says with bitterness in his voice.

Bullets flying all over the property is a really scary reality check with all those guests. Plus, friendly fire is a real thing. I glance at Lake and he nods like he knows what I'm thinking.

"This Mother Fucker keeps avoiding our traps. I going to fucking kill him." Everyone around him grumbles. Unfortunately, Jace is going to have to get in line behind me.

"We had a massive shootout at the Avocado Tower and I thought we had the perimeter secure but we didn't know about the bombs. The distraction worked in his favor." Bry shakes his head in frustration, feeling the pressure of finding this asshole.

"There were two explosive devices found tonight. One on Tower FG and one on a car outside Tony's front gate." Wes fills in the missing information.

"Then it looks like none of you have anything to feel guilty for, huh? You had your hands full." I meet all their eyes one by one. Then I find the unique teal ones across the room. "I had Lake with me so I was safe." He tilts his head and his eyes narrow. See, I can kiss ass when I need to. "What's up with these towers?" I frown, confused by that part.

"You didn't see them? I had new watch towers installed all over the property." Anthony shakes his head at me when I gasp. That has to be an eyesore and Anthony is very proud of his land and his personally designed layout. "It helps security with the party and crowds of people. Plus, your safety is the most important thing to me." His voice is lined with authority, letting me know I'm not his Mistress regarding this topic.

"The Deadman killed two of my guys tonight and injured two others." Seth takes a deep drink from the bottle in front of him. His face is red and swollen from Kara's assault.

I had no fucking idea and that news brings tears to my eyes. I'm not ready to ask their names yet or know more information. I've already seen the guards I'm closest to but it still breaks my heart. Gage and I tighten our hold on each other at the same time. Seth's news sobers up the whole room and the energy feels heavy on our heads.

Agent Donaldson returns and we all turn her way. "Jennifer made it through surgery. Windy operated on her and said I can interview her tomorrow. Let's get some sleep."

Everyone starts packing up ready to leave.

"Wait, what about the cameras?" I make a few of them groan with my question but they all stop on the way to the door. "I mean, Anthony, you have them right?" I know it's not a good sign when Bry sighs heavily.

"Yep, and they had to have inside information because they knew about them and wore a mask. Most people don't have cameras in avocado groves. It's probably the same mask you've seen before too." I must have flinched at his comment because Bry walks back to me uneasy. "Fuck, that was insensitive. Sorry, Lex Luthor." He touches my shoulder and I make myself give him a bright smile. "The footage didn't reveal anything we can use. I wanted to wait to share this information until after Donaldson spoke to Jennifer. My theory based on the video is that Jennifer caught the pyro setting the fire and he shot her. He only missed killing her by a few inches based on the hospital record."

Shit, that makes me feel bad for her.

"What about the crib? That doesn't make sense at all." I look around the room, but I'm only met with more confused faces.

"I have no idea," Jace shrugs his shoulders, baffled.

"It seems weird and out of place," Lake narrows his eyes watching everyone.

"No one has any tikes here," Liam nods but it seems like he knows something.

Dr. Maraschino addresses us from the back of the room where she's propped up on a wall. "I have my own theory about this but you all need rest. I will talk to Bryson in the morning and we'll go from there. We got your back, Lex." She smiles at me and I nod.

They need a break to reset and I get it. We just don't have any answers.

"Thanks, you guys. Sleep well and we'll see you soon." I rest my head on Gage's shoulder. He finally stands to carry me to the door. Everyone says goodbye and splits up.

"Her room," Lake growls and all my guys follow Gage to my suite. Lake got me a new bed while I was gone. It's massive and I've never seen anything like it. Even Gage's bed looks small compared to it.



Chapter 12 - Sex Is Always A Crue For Guilt

Anthony Restored

Early this morning when we finally went to sleep, it still hadn't registered that I almost lost her again. I can't explain what it was like to hear all the walkies saying shots fired. My heart literally froze in my chest. We were still on the other side of the property, as far away as possible when Jace called us. There's no way that wasn't a planned calculation. We were meant to be spread out so they could send a message. I've never felt so hopeless in my life. Unlike my friends, I didn't train or improve myself when Lexy was gone. I'm embarrassed to admit that I was drunk most of the time and don't remember a lot of it.

This morning I woke up in a cold sweat and it scared the shit out of me. The dream was fuzzy around the edges but I remembered enough to wreck my already weak soul. I won't make myself think about that now. There's no point rehashing the dream, and it isn't true because I left her sleeping peacefully on the bed. I've always thought of myself as a badass. I'd run into any battle head on if someone messed with me. I'm a big guy, very tough with loads of confidence.

So why did I run away now?

I look over my shoulder and see a big one forming. Waiting, waiting, then laying flat on my board. I feel the strong suction of the wave behind me. My arms paddle fast with full hard strokes. I push my body to do the practiced move and pop up on my board. It's difficult to bend my bad knee but I make my body comply. My muscles and hips move together in harmony like a dance I've perfected. I can surf blindfolded, I'm that good. The wave breaks and I jump into the funnel. I grab my board when I pop up and get on. I'm tired but I don't know where to go.

I've been surfing since I was a kid. We traveled with our parents all over the world as children. Most rich places have a beach and the ocean has always called to me. It's relaxing and freeing to ride a wave. Normally, the water makes me forget about everything else I have going on. It's my happy place, but it's not working today.

Well, the ocean has changed for me since Lexy came into my life capturing my heart.

I think I hear screaming and my head whips around. There's only a few people out here right now. I needed some space but I wouldn't leave her completely. Their house is cool with a private beach and I don't have to worry about fans or paparazzi. I didn't even invite Lake to come with me, so he'll be pissed when I go in. He loves the ocean as much as me.

The water laps against my legs and I just sit as my mind races. Why won't it shut off? I'm still healing from the trauma of the last ten months. Everytime I think I'm sitting pretty and my life is better than ever, bad shit happens. I processed the emotions I had with losing my career and starting over better than I am now. I've been working hard to walk the line and I don't even think about drinking anymore. The dark depression doesn't take over when you're drinking, but I can't use that as a coping mechanism. I'm constantly worried about her safety. What if I back slide because I can't handle the pressure? The anxiety is overwhelming at times which stresses me out.

I'm afraid I can lose her forever.

I swear I hear more noise and glance to the shoreline. What the hell is she doing? Lexy's knee high in the water banging a big pan over her head. Man, this woman makes me laugh even when I'm down. Fuck, she's a keeper. I start paddling in, and she waves her arms frantically like I haven't seen her yet.

How long has she been out here trying to get my attention?

My muscles are killing me from the intense workout so it takes actual effort for me to pick up my board when I walk out of the water. I can tell she has her guard up as I approach because her body is stiff and her blue eyes watch me closely. She has her arms wrapped around her middle in defense in case I object to her being here.

"Hey," I keep my tone light to gauge her reaction. I'm using the surfboard in my hands as a shield for myself. I want to pick her up and steal her away until all this is over. Her pot is on the ground now and I glance at it chuckling. "Have you been panning for me long?"

Lexy laughs rolling her eyes at my lame joke. Then she remembers why she's here and stares at me frowning, hugging herself tighter. Her teeth are grinding which tells me she's fighting her need to blow up on me for leaving.

"I woke up and you were gone without a note. Are you mad at me?" Her voice holds heaps of uncertainty. She shivers, reminding me she's wet and probably cold.

"No, I'm not mad. Come on, Sexy. You're going to get sick. Don't forget your new paging system." I switch my board to my other arm while she gets the pan and spoon. As soon as her warm hand touches mine, I want to moan from the contact alone.

I guide her over to where I left all my stuff. My surfboard hits the sand hard and it sticks in the ground. Thankfully, I always bring two towels so I open my backpack to get one for her. She sighs deeply, grateful for the warmth as I wrap it around her. I don't resist the temptation I always have around her. I lean forward to move her hair off her neck and

kiss the bare skin there. We had big plans last night but never got to do anything.

“Turn around now,” I raise my eyebrows, confused by her demand. She just spins her finger around in a circle.

Damn it!

Even that order turns me on. I turn around and my *Mistress* smacks then grabs my ass playfully. I moan this time because any pain is good pain. I’m going to get horny, and I just got out of the freezing cold water. My dick and balls should be recovering. They’ve informed me they’re seeking warmth and I can’t blame them

“Do you want to talk about it?” She asks and begins unzipping my wetsuit for me. Her lips, tongue and, oh yeah, teeth trail down my spine. “I’m scared too, but we need to stick together right now.” Lexy steps in front of me and aggressively pulls the wetsuit from my damp skin. She’s punishing me and I like it. My *Mistress* doesn’t release my arms, instead, she locks them in front of me.

”*Mistress*,” I whisper the word. My cock is rock hard.

“I would normally make you kneel in front of me but I saw you limping up here.” Her fingers run over my chest slowly. She turns her hand so I can see the tattoo there for me and only me. It was the best surprise ever. I love staring at our hands next to each other. “Why did you push it out there? Now we can’t play today because I’ll feel bad.” She clicks her tongue and the disappointment is evident in her voice.

I do the only thing any smart man would do. My knees hit the sand hard. There’s no pain, only the thrill of fantasies running through my mind.

She releases a sharp breath and she licks her lips seductively.

“Play with me, *Mistress*.” I beg her because maybe this is what I need. I want her to claim and own me. To reassure my heart that she’ll never leave me. “Please, *Mistress*,” I coo the two words, rubbing against the hand she has on my chest.

“I love it when you beg me.” She bends and licks along my lips. I try to kiss her back and she moans as I invade her mouth. *Yes*. The sharp pain from her warning bite makes me grunt in pleasure. “I didn’t give you permission, did I?” Her finger tugs gently at my nipple piercing. “I’ve been thinking we need a new name for you.” She twists my nipple harder and I almost nut.

“Fuuuuck, yes whatever you want, *Mistress*.” I can barely form words because I’m panting so hard.

Her phone goes off and she curses. I don’t move because the torture of waiting and kneeling before her makes my impressive erection happy. The glorious pain of it all is exquisite. I’m always denying my animalistic instincts around her. I would serve her sexually for hours if that’s what she ordered.

“Get up, My Love.” She helps me stand, finally freeing my arms. The wetsuit falls to my waist exposing my well built chest. She nods appreciating the view so I flex my pecs and make them jump like Terry Crews does. Her small cold hand rubs over me once as she giggles. Then she shakes her head looking up at me pouting. “Sarah has to leave. Want to go with me to say goodbye?” She leans in to kiss over my heart.

“Of course, I’ll go with you anywhere.” I pull her close to me. What was I thinking this morning?

Lexy kisses my chest again and I kiss her head. I rub her shoulders with the towel as she types a message on her phone. Unexpectedly, her head shoots up. Oh no, there’s a wicked smile on her face. “I’ve got a great idea but it’s naughty.” She puts away her phone, bends over to retrieve the other towel and hands it to me.

We gather our stuff fast, laughing when we look at each other. She grabs my hand pulling me to the stairs quickly. The sand’s making it difficult to walk but we’re both giddy with excitement. I nod to the three guards at the top of the glass stairs. Privacy is a privilege we don’t have. She makes a beeline for the pool house. I leave my board outside and

follow her inside. We drop off our other stuff then head to the bathroom. She holds the door open for me.

As soon as I turn around she attacks me. I pick up Sexy to rub her against my cock and her legs open wide for me. Her mouth and tongue consumes mine in an amazing kiss. I need to strip her with eager hands that want to feel skin. The wet towels plop on the floor. She stops me before I can get her clothes off though.

“Wait, you wash off all that salt and I’ll be right back.” She caresses my cock then books it out of the room.

“Fuck,” I touch myself, he’s ready now. I turn on the water and begin taking off the wetsuit. They have extra soap in here so I get some. The water is warm when I check it so I get in and wash my body. I’m trying not to think about my woman as my soapy hands travel my skin. My cock is begging for attention but it would upset her if I started without her.

“Are you thinking about me?” I jump at her voice and spin around.

“Yes, *Mistress*,” the words are groaned because she’s standing there naked watching me.

“Stroke it slow for me because I want to watch.” She licks her lips, staring at my cock closely.

My hand travels down my firm abs and I do as she commands. I keep eye contact the whole time and my heart is pounding in my chest with each pump of my fist. When she pinches her nipples my cock jerks in my hand.

“Close your eyes and head back,” she snaps the order.

I close my eyes tight in anticipation, focusing on my other senses. My head hits the tile hard but I don’t care. I hear her open the shower door as I take a deep breath. Blood is pumping in my veins and cock. My feet are firmly planted, waiting for her next move. The warm water massaging my back adds to the whole experience.

My eyes pop open when her mouth covers my cock tightly. Her head bobbing up and down on me is a marvelous sight. She licks and sucks like I’m her personal popsicle. Her

bright blue eyes stare up at me making me even harder. My hands itch to find their way in her hair, but I know better. Instead, I hold them behind my back, lacing my fingers together. *Mistress* likes that position.

She backs up gagging on my size.

“I technically didn’t say you could open your eyes, did I?” She asks, tilting her head to look up at me.

“No *Mistress*. I’m sorry my Queen.” Her tongue moves down my cock to my balls and she licks them playing with the piercing there. The sting from her teeth on my sensitive jewels makes me moan loud. I know someone heard me and I don’t care.

“That was because you apologized quickly. Don’t do it again or no more bites.” She snaps her teeth and I lean closer on instinct. Her teeth find my inner thigh and sink into the tender flesh.

“Please forgive me, *Mistress*.” I have no shame begging and she likes it.

“Why should I?” She’s acting bored and gently starts touching my piercings.

“I’ll fuck you however you want and make you come, *Mistress*.” I want all the cum she’ll give me.

“Oh, and you can’t come until I say?” Her eyes get big showing her excitement.

I love this game too.

“Please, *Mistress*? I’ll lick you to prepare your tight little pussy for me.” I’m big and it’s always a tight fit.

“That’s a fabulous idea. Turn off the water.” She gets the wet towel and folds it up. “Lay down, head here.” She gestures to the towel pillow she made. “Your knees need a break and I need exercise.” My eyes go wide because that means one thing.

I lay down and she stands above me looking down with lust in her eyes. To my surprise she turns around showing me her ass. She bends over so naturally, I try to lick her. I feel her

putting something around my cock and balls. It gets really tight and heavy but feels divine. Then out of nowhere the new toy starts vibrating. I can see the remote in her hand, but not for long though because she slowly sits down on my face. I use my hands to open her legs wider so I can take more of her in my mouth. I'm not a selfish man and I find great pleasure in making my woman come. My lips lock around her clit and I suck hard. She moans my name then almost loses her balance from the pleasure. My hips pump up automatically and Lexy rubs her pussy against my face. I keep using my tongue ring to please her in all the ways I've learned she likes. We talk about everything after sex and it makes it ten times better the next time. Everytime I scrape her clit using the sharp edge of my piercing, she screams my name.

"I'm going to come, my pet." She pants bending over me to torture my belly button ring. My cock jumps at her praise and wicked touch. "Fuck Anthony, your tongue is fucking perfect. Oh yes, right there. Please...I mean right now, harder. Give me more. I own this mouth and it belongs to me." She grinds down hard and I can barely breath.

I love that! Could she choke me?

I lose myself because the vibrating gets so intense I want to grab my cock. Suddenly, Lexy stands then turns around to face me. She positions herself over my cock and pushes herself down slowly. I can feel every inch of myself enter her little by little. Her wetness soaks my cock all the way down to my balls.

"You're so tight, Sexy," my tone's a deep sexual growl.

She moans, touching her big tits for me. A naughty smile crosses her face then she sits back hard. I bottom out as much as the new accessory will allow her to sink. When she begins moving, I make myself put my hands behind my head. I look up at her beautiful dazzling face feeling lucky to be alive.

Her head is thrown back in bliss as she rides my cock. I jerk up and her eyes snap open to level on mine. "Your cock is so big, My Love. I can't even take all of it."

That's it!

My arms wrap around her as I sit up and my instincts take over for a second. I grab ahold of both her shoulders and fuck her hard making her take all of me. I'm moaning as loud as her now. I can feel her stretching for me but it's still tight enough that the friction pinches a little. It feels freaking amazing. The silicone rings wrapped around me are tight and even without the added pulsing, it would cause this prickling feeling. I'm a big man, everywhere. She rides me keeping a steady rhythm, proving her squatting skills are on point. I help her out by supporting her thighs in my palms.

"The vibrating makes my clit tingle. I love your giant cock, Anthony. I can feel your crossbars moving in and out of me." We've been teaching her how to talk naughty and I fucking like it. She sits down hard again and I grunt. "Fill this pussy up with all your cum."

Nope, not yet.

I want more and if I'm bad maybe, I'll get another round later. This will turn her on too. She likes to be reminded that I'm tough and I let her dominate me. Time to push my luck.

"Get up." She stops moving as soon as she hears my tone. Her eyes narrow, then she does what I say. I've got bad knees but I'm still fucking strong.

I lift her roughly in my arms and she gasps. Her back hits the wall right before I enter her again. She says my name moaning while holding on tight. My thrusts are steady and smooth. Lexy takes my face, kissing me roughly and nipping my tongue. I don't stop fucking her. Instead, I raise her legs giving myself a deep angle.

"Touch me now," she orders, hissing in my face.

My hand moves between us and I find her clit. She moans climbing me like a pole when I work it with my fingers. Her teeth dig into my neck and it almost makes me come. I decide to be very, very bad because I know she's close. I remove my fingers and she actually growls at me getting upset. My hips are still pumping into her but much slower now.

“Don’t stop, faster. I’m so close.” She grabs my hand pushing it down frustrated.

“I know, *Mistress*.” I nod and she sighs thinking she’s won. I step out of the shower to set her on the counter for the next part. She gasps again when the cold surface touches her skin. I meet her eyes and lean into her face. “I’m going to fuck you how I want this time.” I take her hand then wrap it around my neck squeezing.

Her eyes go wide before her wicked grin spreads knowing what I want. She applies pressure and that makes my knees go to jelly. *Fuck yes*. My cock finds her dripping opening and dives in. I rub her clit in the same circular motion I move my hips. Lexy squeezes my neck but it isn’t hard enough. She’s panting hard and ready to finish. Our bodies slap together with each of my thrusts. My fingers press down on her clit and she screams, soaking them even more. A lone finger slides down to enter her back hole and she loses it. Suddenly, both her hands wrap around my neck and the pressure is so hard I almost can’t breathe. Every part of me works harder, faster to get her to come. This is heaven. She moves again, making all of me slide deeper into her. The buzzing, slapping, gagging noises make this so sexual and very erotic.

“I’m going to come now,” she yells, letting go of my neck. I pull out and bend over to take her clit into my mouth. She comes in my face when I suck on it hard. Her hand pulls my hair as she thrashes on the counter, almost breaking the mirror. Once I know she’s done, I pull away.

My cock hurts and begs me for salvation. It feels fantastic. “I love you, *Mistress*.” I kiss her stomach, moving slowly over all her soft skin. She shakes and quivers from the aftershocks of her orgasm.

She tries to sit up but can’t so I have to help her. “What about you? You were such a bad boy for taking over like that. Are you wanting to be punished so you can come too?”

I bow my head shyly when she stares at my erection. “I’m good. I live to give you pleasure,” I say dead serious because it’s true.

I take a step back then freeze when she grabs my cock in her hand. Lexy tilts her head at me staring at my face in anticipation. Of what? I’m not sure. Her long hair flows down her body like a dark waterfall at midnight. This woman is a Goddess. I kiss her lips and she bites mine causing me to moan happily.

“Well, so do I, My Love.” Her flirtatious smile confuses me then it happens. She removes one ring and I know why she’s acting like that.

My palms hit the counter top hard and I grip the edge with both hands trying to catch myself. I’m breathing heavily preparing myself for what’s sure to come. She pulls me closer so that I’m over her stomach and she can watch better. Lexy stares down at my cock, inspecting the remaining rings and I do the same.

“In the reviews, a few guys complained that with bigger cocks this can hurt when you take it off.” She looks deep in my eyes and tugs, taking off another ring.

”*Mistress*, hurts...good.” I whisper, panting, trying to tell her how much I like this new toy.

“I shouldn’t do this because you were bad,” she says in her scolding tone. Another ring gets pulled, it’s twisted and stretched too tight for the material. I fall to my knees when the ring snaps back on my sensitive erection. “Oh my God, I’m so sorry.” She tries to jump off the sink but I stand quickly and hold her there.

“You’re sorry for giving me pleasure? Are you sorry for making my fantasies come true? I hope you’re not sorry for fulfilling our kinks together.” She shakes her head and smiles wickedly. “Don’t be sorry, Sexy. You’re perfect in every way.” I kiss her perfect nose.

“I love you, Tony.” She bites my neck with the words.

See fucking perfect. I take her mouth, my love for her overwhelming. The kiss is hot, dirty and painful. She backs away to bite my neck again harder this time. “Watch,” it’s an order from my boss.

I look down to watch her slide the last ring down my throbbing aching erection. This one isn’t like the others though. It takes more effort to get it loose because the ring’s already digging into the smooth skin of my impressive cock. I scream her name when the blood begins rushing back to my huge muscle.

Lexy’s so fast, I don’t even register the move. She untangles the ring from my balls and the vibrating stops. The pain however increases and it’s spectacular. No one should wear this contraption my size unless you dig pain like me. I look deep in her eyes, holding onto her thighs now. Her small hands grip my neck hard and squeeze tightly.

“Milk that cock for me, My Love. Come all over my stomach.” My hand moves to my cock to follow instructions. I’m gentle at first because it still stings and the pain makes my toes curl. “That’s it, stroke up and down that giant monster.” She pulls me closer, bites my lip and tightens her hold, cutting off my air supply.

I can hear my muffled choked moans as my mind gets fuzzy around the edges. My anxiety shoots up because I can’t breathe...but then she releases her hold.

“Faster,” she whispers, nipping my earlobe and I hear the ache in her voice. She wants more too.

Oh, I have a bright idea...My hand that isn’t busy finds her pussy and I insert two fingers deep. She cries out choking me harder from the shock. Her hands loosen then she does it all over again. We keep exchanging frenzied passion until she comes again. This time her hands get too tight. I can’t breathe, my airflow is completely gone. My vision is blurry then I hear her say my name and all I feel is ecstasy. I come all over her stomach and pussy, smacking her with my still hard cock.

Now she’s all dirty so I pick her up and head back into the shower. This time we actually wash up quickly because she

needs to go. We still stare at each other thinking about starting all over but I shut off the water and follow her out.

Lexy's phone chimes from the floor and she picks it up checking the notifications. Of course, I help her out like a good boyfriend and begin drying her off. I'm really proud of myself for not trying to get freaky again. She was totally eye fucking me in the shower. Her body always does that to me too, naked like she is now.

"Well, dang it. Change of plans, Sarah's already at the front gate. Stone's freaking out about last night and wants to take her back to Colorado." Her head is down typing a message so I grab my boxers and jeans out of the bag. "Nope, I got you those." She doesn't look up, just points to the chair. I laugh when I see the joggers sitting there. Naughty women and their obsession with dicks in gray sweatpants. Lexy's dad says only perverts wear sweatpants around women because they want to rub their junk on people "accidentally." Real men get the women to do the rubbing no matter what they're wearing. That was a very entertaining conversation to say the least.

I put on my clothes and she does the same with hers. After cleaning the bathroom up some because there's no need to upset Mrs. Crocker. I get my stuff and head for the door to open it for Lexy..

"Not yet," she says sternly. Lexy walks over to me and drops to her knees. She pulls down my pants in one swift move. "You were bad right now, don't think I'll forget." She sighs looking up at me. "But you were good last night so this is your reward." My eyes bug out of my head when I see what's in her hand. She wraps the leather strap around my cock and snaps the button shut securing it in place. It's tight enough to stay on but doesn't hurt at all. I'm growing harder by the second just looking at it. She helps me with my pants and picks up the leash attached to the strap around my cock. My *Mistress* pulls me forward. Yes! "Do you like it?" Her eyes shine mischievously with the question.

"It's perfect," I purr, enjoying this game. She begins walking to the door and that's when I panic. "Wait a second. Aren't we going to see Sarah and Stone right now?" She just

raises an eyebrow like she doesn't care. "Well, the guys won't blink but what about the guards?"

My woman just stands there waiting for me to decide.

Will she really do this in front of all of them? My submissive mind loves this idea so I nod.

She spins then looks over her shoulder grinning madly, and gently tugs on the leash. "If you're embarrassed, I guess you should've thought about that before you were a bad boy."

My growl turns into a laugh as I lift her up in my arms. "I love you," I say, dazed by her.

"I love you more," she tells me back.

We kiss, then she pulls me to the exit of the guest house.



Chapter 13 - Goodbye With A Side Of Knowledge

Mistory ~ Lex

“Thanks so much for coming out here to check on me.” I give Sarah another big hug and she holds me tight. “I feel horrible about what happened at the party.” I glance at her companion, and his stone cold demeanor today lets me know just how he feels. I meet her eyes again feeling guilty. “At least, you got a cool new tattoo out of this visit.” I say trying to see the brighter side to this mess.

“Don’t you dare apologize for some pyro maniac setting fires. I’m going to be worried sick about you and I expect updates.” She beams at me then looks down at her arm. “I’m extremely grateful for the new tat though.” It’s a bookish tattoo of an open book with multiple hands gripping the pages like bed sheets. I want one just like it but I don’t want to be a biter.

“It’s freakin’ bitchin’, isn’t it? I can’t believe I have a Masters’ tattoo.” She’s excited and that makes me happy.

I nod, checking out the details, he did an amazing job. It’s a simple straight to the point design but the fine lines and

edges are perfect. Smut is her bag and it fits. “You deserve it and I’m happy you guys got along.”

“Oh, he’ll do anything to make you happy.” She stops me when I try to protest. “I had a blast here and I can’t wait to come back. The renovations were starting to really stress me out. So technically you did me a favor because I really needed a break.” She stares off for a second then shakes her sunset multi-colored hair. The bright orange, yellow, blue, purple and pink shine in the mid morning light. Those colors are adorable on her and fit her personality.

“What’s up with that? I thought everything was on track and the authors were lining up to join?” I touch her arm so she’ll meet my glaze. “Hey Lady, you can talk to me about anything.”

Her rosy smile returns and her eyes clear. “I’m fine. Everything’s fine. As far as the crazy action movie that happened in real life over at Anthony’s, I saw nada. That big mountain carried me off so quickly that we were gone in sixty seconds flat. He made me feel like the President or something.” Sarah points at Stone and the massive man covered in scars and tats blushes. “I had no idea what was going on and next thing I know we are sitting in the hotel room safe. I felt bad for not checking on you, but he stole me away and took my phone just in case I tried to leave.”

“Like a treas-” a phone begins ringing and interrupts Stone’s very promising flirty comment. “Stone,” he says roughly. The call automatically goes to the speaker phone option because it’s still connected to his bike.

“Where the fuck are you? How could you bail like that? I know she’s a lot of work, but damn it, I need help here. You need to stop whatever you’re doing and get back here now. I can’t find her anywhere.” The caller releases a deep growl that reminds me of Lake. “Linc and Mad Max are driving me crazy with worry and blaming everything on me.” Stone frowns at the news and clenches his jaw.

I don’t know anything about what they’re talking about but I definitely want to.

“Dramatic much,” Sarah says, laughing at the man on the phone. “Who is he talking about?” She seems bewildered, questioning Stone with a pinched brow.

“You,” Stone’s voice is gruff. His face is closed off and blank of any expression. There’s no emotion insight.

“What the fuck? She’s with you? Where are you?” The man on the phone sounds uber pissed and I raise my eyebrows at Sarah.

“Chill out, big guy. You sound like you’re going to blow a gasket. Stone found me at the airport and offered to take me to California-” Sarah looks at Stone irritated because he tries to cover her mouth.

“California? You’ve got to be fucking kidding me. Oh, let me guess you were at Anthony Riggs’ house last night too? Where there was a shooting and bombs.” He’s laughing, acting like he’s joking but the warning is clear in his unlined tone. Don’t fuck with this powerful man. Yep, total Lake vibes.

I glance at Sarah, she looks turned on and angry at the same time. She steps closer to the bike and bends over the tank. I don’t think she knows where the mic is but wants to tell him off loud and clear.

“And what? You’re not the boss of me.” She sneers and her hands move to her hips. She even does a cute little stomp that has Stone fighting a smirk. “I’m getting real sick of your attitude and ego, buddy.”

“Buddy? I’ll give you a friend to play with.” His joke just upsets her further and she huffs. “You made an agreement Sarah. I think you broke the deal so you know what that means.” He spits the words furiously. The sound of wood and glass breaking is apparent over the line.

“What’s up, Creed? How’s life treating you, Prez?” Anthony asks, trying to lighten the mood. I think it has the opposite effect though. Stone flinches, shifting uncomfortably and waits for his President to speak. “You, OK? I heard about your old man. I’m sorry.” The tenderness in Ant’s voice makes me go to him.

Stone curses, sending Anthony a what the hell look. He picks up his helmet shaking his head and even Sarah throws up her hands at his comments.

“I didn’t realize you weren’t alone.” Creed clears his throat composing himself. “Hello Tony. He never liked me anyway, right? We should hang out soon. If you ever think about coming back to the hotel, let me know. We have plenty of vacant rooms and no events planned in the near future.” He snarls into the phone.

Stone steps closer to Sarah because she’s visibly upset and wants to help. “Now wait a minute, Creed. It’s not what you think. Sarah-”

“Enough! I’m done talking. You will not embarrass me anymore and don’t bother coming back.” Sarah gasps but Stone shakes his head. “Either of you,” Creed growls, then the line goes dead.

I look up at Anthony and he wraps me in his arms. We are all uncomfortable about the fight we just witnessed. Stone whispers to Sarah because she’s crying. She turns to me clearly heart broken and gives me one last hug. I squeeze her tight.

“Well, there goes that dream.” She sighs when Stone tries to protest. “It wasn’t meant to be,” she says shrugging. Defeat and devastation is written all over her face though. “I’ll call you once I get my stuff and go home. I would just leave it there, but I should probably say goodbye to Maxson and Lincoln. Take care of yourself, Lex. You’re my author forever now.” I blow her a kiss and she returns it.

“Always, but we’ll find another place no worries.” I try to reassure her. She nods, hanging her head still sad.

Sarah walks over to Stone wiping her eyes. He kisses her head, puts a helmet on her and then he adds his own. The motorcycle roars to life and Stone nods at us. They both take off speeding down the driveway.

“They’ll work it out.” Anthony hugs me tight, trying to comfort me.

My phone's ringing and I try to ignore it but Gage starts bitching. A sigh escapes me when I roll over to snuggle into the broad chest under my cheek. The lights go on and the room erupts in groans. A few pillows go flying across the room, but Jace dodges them.

"Shorty, you need to get up. Here, answer this." Jace tries to hand me the phone but I just cover my head with the blanket.

Lake laughs when I groan and call Jace a Basshole under my breath. I look up smiling at the gorgeous man holding me. "Thanks for letting me nap on you." I kiss his chest and he growls at me.

"*Mi Sirenita*, why are you not getting the phone?" Gage hates being woke up.

"Will you go on a date with me Wednesday night?" Lake whispers and I'm stunned speechless. I nod then he kisses my lips.

But before anything good can happen, we are bumped and Bry says, "Lex Luthor, it's Donaldson."

Lake rips the covers off of us, just as Anthony picks up the line. "D, Sexy's sleeping. It's only five a.m."

I jump off the couch, run for the phone and trip over their massive bean bag pillow fort. The guys laugh at me so I flip them all the classic middle finger. Gage rolls over intending to spoon me, but I push his heavy dead weight off and get up again. We fell asleep watching movies last night in the formal living room. Anthony is staring at me amused by the scene and listening to Donaldson probably talk shit on the phone.

"Give me that," I grab the phone and hit him with a pillow then find an empty seat. Anthony follows me, pulling my legs to his lap and begins rubbing my feet. Oh, he knows how to get on my good side. "Hello, sorry about that. What's up, Double D?"

Some of the guys start howling with laughter while leaving the room. It wasn't that funny. The tension is thick and they're trying to make me feel better, or themselves. We've been trying not to think about the investigation. All of us agreed not to leave the house until we know more.

"For people who are complaining about the time, you blokes seem really chipper at my expense." Donaldson sighs, sounding tired. Maybe, even overworked too.

Once again, I'm glad she's on our side. We appreciate all her hard work. "Thanks for keeping us updated, Donaldson," I say seriously this time.

"No problem. I've got some news though. I think we need to meet again. Bryson should be getting all the files now." I look at the other couch and see Bry has his laptop open. He glances up like he knows and nods at me.

"He's got it," I say and Bry gives me a thumbs up with a goofy grin. He's really happy I'm not mad anymore.

Lake walks in and hands me a mug of coffee. "Thank you." Unfortunately, I can't hide the surprise in my tone.

Mr. Masters bows at me, flashing a grin that reflects in his eyes. He sits next to me and I watch him carefully. He's acting like a saint but I know he's a sinner so I stick out my tongue for him. He laughs then throws two pillows like bullets at Gage and Jace. There's a lot of bitchin' from the two and more pillows go flying. I giggle remembering Lake was the QB in his glory days. He flexes when he sees me staring and I get shy, returning my attention to D.

"Are you listening? You are just as bad as them. I'm at the hospital and I think you need to come down here." Donaldson covers the phone speaking to someone.

"Are you OK?" I sit forward on the edge of the couch scared for her. Everyone around me goes on high alert and freezes. Jesse and Seth stroll in looking around at the mess.

"Yes, I'm fine and that's very sweet of you to care, but this is about Jennifer. She wants to see Jesse. Now before you

protest, she's agreed for you to come as well." Why is she saying that like it's a good thing?

"Wow, that was nice of her." I roll my eyes not feeling very friendly towards the woman.

"I wouldn't tell you to come down here if I didn't think this could help. I'll explain everything when you get here. Liam, bloody hell, zip it. I will tell her." Donaldson scolds Liam and I laugh at the bickering old married couple.

"Stop, pickin' on each other." I don't say the couple part because they'll get pissed. "We'll be there soon." The line goes dead and I regret agreeing to go already. Maybe Jesse can just go?

The phone chimes in my hand.

Donald Duck: Don't even think about it. U 2

Dang it, she's good.

"Where are we going?" Gage and Jace ask at the same time then throw pillows at Lake together.

My eyes meet Jesse's ocean ones across the room. He's covered in paint and sporting a lost look on his face. I'm not jealous or mad if he feels bad for Jennifer. I just wish he would talk to me about what's bothering him. I'll let the mood swing pass, but I need answers soon.

"I'm taking a quick shower, alone." Gage and Anthony pout, whining about saving water. Lake and Jace make fun of them using a high voice. Jesse is watching me closely when I turn to him. "We're meeting Donaldson to get an update on the other suspects." I get up stretching my arms over my head. "Oh, and we're going to see Jennifer."

I'm starting to think I may need to show these guys I'm not the same person they once knew. They keep treating me like I'm weak and can't handle the truth. My stress levels have increased considerably recently. Am I worried about car accidents, bombs, The Deadman or bullets? Nope! Is a chick who likes my man rattling me? Yep!

Well, that and Jesse's distance since the party hasn't helped. Something is wrong with him. My mind won't stop nagging that I'm missing something big. I want to read his expression when we walk in the room, but he's walking in front of me. Is he avoiding being close to me around her or is this a coincidence because this is how we got out of the elevator? I hate being insecure like this.

Gage squeezes my hand, "I love you." A big yawn escapes him then he smiles down at me. "*Mi Sirenita, ¿podemos tomar una siesta más tarde?*" Poor guy, he said, My Little Mermaid, can we take a nap later? Gage is adorable when he's tired.

I smile playfully, clearing my throat so I don't crack up. I kiss his hand hiding my smile then say, "*Si, lo haremos. Te amo siempre dormilón.*" Which means, yes we will. I love you always, sleepyhead. He laughs before kissing the back of my hand.

"You're gettin' good, Lex." Alex is impressed with my Spanish skills. He showed up late last night because he couldn't make it to the party.

We all walk down the hospital hallway like a mob looking for trouble. Of course, some fans, nurses, doctors and staff recognized my celebrity entourage as soon as we walked in. Lake knows where we're going so we keep following him. He's still grumpy about the autographs he had to sign in the lobby.

Donaldson comes out the door as we make it to Jennifer's room. "Let's have a chat with her then move this back to your place. We can't trust anyone." She opens the door and waves us in.

I bend down to pretend I'm tying my shoe, but I check my blades instead. When I pop up, Donaldson pats me on the shoulder like she knows what I was doing. I show her a sweet sugary smile and she nods, returning it.

No one says anything as our group strolls inside the small room. We file in one by one to stand around Jennifer, and thankfully she has a private room. It's clear everyone's

feeling uncomfortable being here when I glance at the faces around me. Hospital stays are intimate and personal for the patients. People are usually vulnerable when they are sick and only want to see visitors they care about. I don't think any of us are really close enough to Jennifer to warrant us being here.

It could be just me feeling this way though.

I'm not going to lie. As I look at Jennifer attached to machines with tubes in her chest, the reality of the situation smacks me in the face. He was sending us a message and she could have died.

Lake could have too. I steal a glance and he's staring at me with those unique teal eyes. He's still upset about my shenanigans at the Halloween party, but we have a date planned. I blow him a kiss and the Basshole almost falls over trying to lean against the wall.

I cover my giggle with a cough.

Somehow, Jesse's the last person to enter the room even though he was in front. We all turn to watch him like he's the star of the show. Jennifer's reaction is all I care about so I stare at her waiting. She doesn't make it easy for me to want to play nice.

This chick lights up like a Christmas tree when she spots him across the room. "Jesse! Finally, are you OK?" Jennifer seems more concerned about his well-being than her own. She's the one who got shot and is currently at this very moment sitting in a hospital bed, but she's asking about him.

"I'm fine, Jennifer. How are you doing?" You can tell by his posture and voice this is the last place he wants to be. He messes with his golden blond hair before putting it in a quick top knot. Jesse's gaze meets mine then he sighs uncrossing his arms. He pushes off the wall next to Lake and shuffles closer to Jennifer's bed. "Donaldson said you wanted to speak to me?"

"Yes, I was trying to tell them but they didn't listen." Jennifer sneers at me and Lake, pointing aggressively at us to emphasize her accusation.

I use all my willpower not to flip her off. Sorry, it's a forced habit that's hard to break.

"Everything sucks right now," Jennifer whines and she has tears in her eyes. It's awkward for me to see her crying like this. I've always known her to be a stone cold bitch.

"Jennifer, you said you would talk once they got here so tell us what happened at the party." Donaldson's holding a pad, tapping her pen on the edge waiting for Jennifer impatiently.

She wipes her eyes and slides into her professional tone with practiced ease. "I'm aware of that, Agent Donaldson."

A nurse comes in to check her vitals, and scolds Donaldson for the number of people in the room. Jennifer steps in to defuse the conflict effortlessly between the two women who think they're in charge. That's one thing about Jennifer, she's a fantastic negotiator and was born to be an entertainment agent. It takes special skills and a lot of talent to handle celebrities well. Too bad she's a bitch to my best friend. The whole crush on my man thing isn't cool either.

Once the nurse leaves Jennifer continues, huffing at us. "I only visited the gallery, where that woman assaulted me FYI, and crashed the party because I wanted to ask Jesse a question." She turns to him with more tears swimming and a pleading expression on her face. "I wanted to know if you had any job leads for me."

What the? Pretty sure the whole room is baffled by that information dump. I verified that by looking around, yeah, the guys are lost too. She's still staring, waiting for an answer.

"Bullshit," I finally speak up because if it doesn't make sense, you're probably lying.

"It's true. I don't have a job." Jennifer's face turns red and her heart monitor freaks out. "That asshole Marty fired me." She sounds so upset and deflated that I feel bad again.

Just a little bit.

I laugh and so does Gage. The dirty glare Jennifer sends our way makes us quiet down. We were both thinking about Marty's nickname and our first meeting. I don't correct her assumption because our inside joke is none of her business.

"Weren't you working for Mrs. Jackson on the side? Couldn't she just hire you?" Jesse asks her frowning, crossing his arms over his chest again.

"No, she fired me too. I'm desperate because my grandmother's monthly bills are due, and I can't cover them without a paycheck. That bitch Susan is withholding my pay because Jesse sent her check back." Jennifer rolls her eyes and glances back to Jesse hopeful. "You know how it feels to not have money and run in these circles."

"Let's say we believe you, Jennifer." She scoffs at Bryson, insulted by his comment. "Who shot you and why? You weren't even invited to the party. How did you get in?" KISS doesn't take kindly to people interfering with their security operation.

Her eyes narrow at him for questioning her statement as anything other than the truth. "I thought you guys were the smart ones. Don't you think if I knew who shot me, I would have already told her." She points in Donaldson's direction. "I already told her, I have nothing to hide. For some dumb reason I thought you were holding an invitation so I snatched the paper and ran away. I couldn't gain access to the actual party, just the property. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of going with a former client who thought they could take advantage of me. Once I said no, he told me I was no longer his date."

I step forward, "Are you OK?" This is a sensitive subject for all women, or people who feel physically weaker. The guys shift uncomfortably about this topic and me, but I was a lucky one.

"I'm fine. I kicked him in the balls and made a call to the manager of the team he played for. I used to babysit his kids so he took my call no problem." Her eyes bug out and she clears her throat. "Sorry these meds make me talkative. Where

was I? Oh yeah, a guard told me I could go around the tree grove. He said I would run into the back entrance eventually, but I still needed an invite.” Jennifer’s breathing becomes labored and she starts coughing. I quickly fix her a glass of water and wait for her to slow her breathing. She frowns but takes a sip from the straw I’m holding out to her. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. What did you see that night by the trees?” I see red thinking about the Deadman being that close to me.

“Nothing at first because it was dark and I knew you guys would chase me. I ran until I got to the grove, even messed up the angel costume I made,” she says pouting.

That explains the white, it’s also creepy she got shot in that costume.

“I was upset when I figured out the piece of paper wasn’t an invitation and it couldn’t get me into the party. I’m still desperate so I try formulating another plan. The man in all black came out of nowhere and he lit a huge bonfire. I almost didn’t say anything and I wish I didn’t.” She gestures to her chest and the oxygen tube in her nose.

“What did you say?” Double D asks clearly, wanting Jennifer to speed up the story.

“Obviously, I knew he was up to no good, so I yelled at him like a dumbass. I realized my mistake too late because he just pulled out a gun and shot me.” She sighs, breathing a little easier and I give her another drink.

“Did he say anything or talk to you?” Jesse asks curiously, glancing at me.

“No, I was in a lot of pain and I think I passed out.” Jennifer shakes her head then her eyes widen. “I think he was talking to someone, but his voice sounded funny.”

“Like a horror movie,” I whisper and want to grab a knife.

She nods, “Yeah, like that Ghostface movie.”

My blood runs cold and I can feel the guys take a collective step towards me. They enclose me in a protective cocoon.

“Okay, thanks for all your help, Jennifer. I do have one more question though.” Donaldson pins her with a glare.

“Sure,” Jennifer shrugs and I believe her story. She isn’t an actress.

“Did you come to the party with Kara?” Donaldson’s brows lift with the question.

“Kara? Who’s that?” Jennifer shakes her head. “I just need money to help my grandma. I’m her only family and she’s always been there for me.” She begins crying and I have major guilt.

The door swings open and Wes stops when he sees us. My head tilts at him, fancy seeing him here. I glance at Bryson and he nods. Maybe, we need to look closer at Wes. I haven’t seen him much since our meeting after the party.

“Wes!” We all turn Jennifer’s direction at the outburst. What the hell? She brightens considerably and she has total heart eyes.

He ducks his head walking to her bedside shyly. The flowers he brought go on the table next to others. Wes nods to me but doesn’t hold my gaze. He looks back to her then frowns.

”Why are you crying?” Wes glares at Donaldson. His voice turns gentle, “Are you in pain, Jenny?”

Say what?

“No, I’m OK,” she blushes and I feel like I’m in the twilight zone. “I was just talking about my Nana.” Jennifer breaks down and Wes comforts her.

My group shifts uncomfortably, they don’t do women and tears well.

“We will go. I will have you moved into a different room then a safe flat for a while just in case. If you remember

anything, ring me.” Donaldson nods towards the door and we follow.

I glance back one more time. Wes and Jennifer are talking in whispered tones with their heads close together. Wes disappeared earlier and I figured Jace gave him time off.

“We learned absolutely nothing from that conversation.” Lake snarls at no one and everyone.

“I will dive deeper into Wes’ background but I believe Jennifer.” Bryson says before typing on his phone.

“Me too,” I say.

We walk out more confused than when we walked in.



Chapter 14 - More Confessions

Jesse - Ocean Eyes

I went straight to my studio as soon as we got to the house. I've been pouring my soul into my work since I'm scared to confront my demons. Lex didn't even stop me or ask where I was going. I bet she's already sick of my moody behavior lately. I'm pushing her away again and she's letting go. It isn't her responsibility to soothe me all the time. I know that. I'm just in need of guidance for the next task at hand. I didn't even realize I had a secret until I saw the fire.

But if she knows I'm the one in danger, she'll want to protect me and I can't let that happen.

My mind's consumed with horrible thoughts for the final game. This is a game to them after all. They're just playing with our emotions trying to cause the most pain possible. I think they're getting upset that we aren't paying attention. What if they get desperate to make themselves known?

I'll play because I'm an athlete and I like to win. My survival instincts are deeply embedded in my genetic makeup. My asshole father helped with that. Even if it was at the cost of my childhood. I often look back wondering how I lived in

that nightmare so long. The Crew saved me back then and I'm terrified to let Lex do the same now.

We all knew I was the one responsible for messing up our lives. This has been about me the whole time. I'm the one they're after. They'll try to hurt her to get to me and I won't let that go down without a fight.

My foot connects with the stool in front of me. It loudly tumbles over, sliding along the surface of the floor. I swiftly twist the end of my paint brush and throw it across the room. It penetrates the wall effortlessly like it was designed. Seth made these new brushes and they all have hidden weapons. It's kinda like throwing darts, but the steel is thicker and longer. The concept is the same as far as using them though. If wielded correctly, my brushes will kill. As luck would have it, I happen to love playing darts and I'm good.

I stroll to the wall to retrieve the brush. My mind won't stop racing so I decide to release some rage another way. The targets are still lined up when I remove the drop cloth hiding them. I toss the old masks and replace them with new ones. My anger grows every time I see these targets. I'm vibrating from the need to destroy something and the masks will have to do for now. I grab the large wooden box where I keep the spare weapons.

The first one goes flying through the air at record speed and hits the mask right in the nose. I close my eyes to test my skills before letting the second brush go. I hear the thump then open my eyes to see the weapon in the next mask's right eye. The tip is long enough to pierce his brain and that makes me smile.

I hear the whizz of air as multiple blades sail by me. The third mask is demolished seconds later. I turn around and my heart speeds up just from looking at her.

"This is what you do in here now?" Lex tilts her head watching my every move. She's spinning a blade in her hand like a boss lady.

Fuck a duck, she makes me want to beg.

“Sometimes,” I shrug, picking up two more brushes. She approaches me frowning and reaches for one. I hand it over then show her how to use it. Her blue eyes light up, ready to do evil things.

“Those Kelly Brothers are brilliant and deadly, huh?” Lex tries to check the sharpness, but I stop her shaking my head.

“In high school I played darts in tournaments for money. I had to lie about my age and got kicked out of quite a few bars.” I throw the next brush and it hits the fourth mask in the mouth. “Worth it,” I smirk at her.

Lex holds the brush looking for the right grip and I lean over trying to show her. She pulls away, sending me a dirty glance and curled lip growl. Then...

Holy Mother!

I’m pretty sure I should be scared of her but I’m only turned on more. This woman just did a flip while sending the brush flying towards the target. My eyes narrow when I actually look at the condition of the mask. *No way!* There are four weapons sticking out of the fourth mask now. That means she threw three at once, two of hers in the eyes and the brush in the nose. My woman’s a badass, ladies and gentlemen. The level of skill in which it took for her to release those at the perfect time during her full rotation is remarkable. Plus, the balance in the blades vs brush would be different and make it a difficult calculation. Bryson said she had mastered the impalement arts but he wasn’t kidding about training her.

“Blue Eyes, be still my heart. My cock’s rock fucking hard and I’ve got chills.” My eyes roam her fine ass body and I touch myself to show her what she does to me. I love how she makes me feel comfortable in my skin and I can be goofy without feeling self-conscious.

Did she get the reference? The guys keep telling me my comedy needs work.

She dusts off her hands looking at the ground before she speaks. “I’m feeling bitchy and insecure right now, Jesse.

What's going on? You're pulling away from me." Lex meets my eyes reluctantly. Hers are shiny and that is a true kick in the balls. "Is this about Jennifer?"

"Fuck, no!" I drop everything, walk to her and take her in my arms. She buries her face in my chest, breathing deeply. My lips land on her head and I do the same.

"You smell good." We say in unison and then laugh together.

"What's wrong?" She asks, hugging me closer, her arms tightening around me.

Just tell her.

"They're after me, Lex." She nods and I feel the confused expression that I know is on my face. "You don't understand. Not just you, but you because of me. They want to hurt me."

"Yeah, I know that. He told me remember? I also received texts with a song that has your name in it on a regular basis. They always came from those fake numbers you can get online so we couldn't trace it." Lex sounds so nonchalant talking about it.

I already knew all this information, but I can't think straight when it comes to her safety.

"I'm going to tell you something that I really didn't know I was technically hiding until recently. OK?" I drop my arms and pray she understands.

She wraps her arms around herself and backs away.

I guess that's fair. My glove automatically goes to my face but I make myself drop it. I'm nervous and a bit relieved to finally tell someone.

"I know why they're after me. I'm still missing the who though." My shoulders and arms are killing me. It's like I'm about to set down the massive weight I've been pumping and my body knows it can relax again. I begin cleaning up because my mind functions better when my OCD is occupied. I hear the rhythmic beating and sneak a peek over my

shoulder. “You know I broke up with Brittany the night she died, right?” Wood hitting wood is the only sound in the room for a minute as I put away the weapon case. The thumping increases and I chuckle. I turn to find her glaring daggers at me.

“Yes,” she nods, giving me the I’m not stupid expression.

“What if I’m wrong?” I feel bad for even saying this but who else could it be. Mr. Jackson and I have a great relationship. The Jackson’s even wished me well on my new future as my own man. Could they really be harboring this hate against me?

Lex’s patiently waiting for me to continue by aggressively tapping her foot again. Gage said it’s her new thing when she gets pissed. He also warned me it’s adorable and not to laugh because that just makes it worse. Basically his theory is looking promising seeing her like this now. Instead of punching us like she wants, she kicks the ground a couple hundred times. Probably pretending it’s our faces too.

I see the new blade spinning in her hand. She’s using it like therapy balls or something. The knife stops spinning suddenly and she catches it effortlessly. Her blue eyes go wide from the realization my mind has already processed and she asks. “The Jackson’s?”

“I don’t know. It doesn’t make sense. They shouldn’t know about our break up because I never told them.” She irresponsibly taps the sharp edge on her chin while thinking so I try to grab the blade from her. Lex dodges me dancing off and shaking her ass.

“Maybe, she had a diary and they found it.” She shakes her head, strolling back to me once she thinks it’s safe. “Nevermind, that’s like something out of a book or movie. So what if they found out. Why would they do this though and after all this time?”

This is the hard part of my confession. She’s going to be mad that I didn’t tell her sooner. “Well, I haven’t exactly told you everything about Brittany.” I try to make my tone stay

even but it lowers in shame. Now I'm kinda shuffling my feet, nervous about her reaction.

Lex's eyes narrow watching me closely and her knife spins at record speed. "Oh, this I gotta hear. I just love secrets." She's trying to play it off like she's royally pissed, but I saw the flash of hurt in her eyes too.

I take a deep breath, prepared to spill it all and deal with the consequences. "I never told a soul this information. I've wanted to tell you so many times though. I'm sorry I didn't have the courage to do it until now. I'll try harder next time, I promise." My voice sounds like the pitiful weak man I am right now. I want to hold her, but she deserves the choice after she knows the truth.

"You're not making any sense, Ocean Eyes." Lex's smooth tone erases all my doubts.

I take a deep breath and unburden my soul. "After the accident at the hospital, the doctor told me and her parents that Brittany was pregnant."

Lex actually gasps, covers her mouth and unknowingly steps back shaking her head. "A baby?"

"Yes, he thought we already knew but none of us had a clue. Brittany never told me anything. It made her death ten times harder on the Jackson's." I try to recall that time, but it feels like a lifetime ago. I don't even know that person anymore. My life has changed so much since Lex took a piece of my heart.

I don't try to reach out for her yet even though I want to. She doesn't get what I'm trying to say, which is understandable so I will explain further. "It wasn't mine. We hadn't...uh...been uh...you know? In a long time. We were fighting constantly in our relationship by then." I watch her whole body visibly relax and release her anxiety over the possibility. "I probably should have started with...I am not the father."

"You think?" She laughs but seconds later she becomes furious when the news sinks in. Her beautiful face turns red as

her eyebrows pull together. “Wait a second,” Lex’s head shakes slowly in disbelief. “You’re saying she cheated on you and got pregnant with someone else’s baby?” I nod at her and she begins pacing like Gage.

“Yes, I one hundred percent couldn’t be the father. Unfortunately, when the doctor told us, her parents automatically assumed I was the dad.” I sigh remembering my dumb young ass because I wasted so much time with all my guilt. “I never explained the truth to them because I didn’t want to ruin her memory for anyone. You know?”

“Yeah, I get that.” She nods agreeing with me, trying to make me feel better. Her eyes are still huge and excited though. “Holy shit, Jesse. Don’t get offended or anything but this shit could totally be in a book.” Lex shakes her finger at me. “Just because I think this is bat shit crazy doesn’t mean I forgive you for not telling me.” She wants to be stern but walks into my arms when I open them to her.

My lips meet her head and she hits me in the stomach. “Ouch. You’re all spunky now, aren’t you?” She tries to tickle me, not successfully. I attack my special spot on her neck, making her laugh. “I know I should have told you sooner. Honestly, it doesn’t bother me that she cheated. We were going through some major shit. That’s why I wanted to move on. Brittany obviously did. I don’t know why she even cared about me when she was sleeping with someone else.”

“I can’t believe she cheated on you. You’re a pretty great guy when you aren’t withholding information.” She laughs as my facial hair tickles her neck again.

“Some of my guilt came from not calling Sage to comfort Brittany after I left. Then again, they were roommates so I thought Sage would be home that night.” Where was she that night? I’m going to ask her.

“Fast forward to now. So what, her parents found out you weren’t the father and blame you for her death? Did the cops ever interrogate you about that night?” Her confusion is clear but that doesn’t prevent the sting of her accusation.

“What the hell?” I let go of her upset. “Yes, they did and I was with Gage and Lake. I think even Blake came over but I was wasted by that point. Totally gone, puking in the shower and completely drunk. I didn’t do shit to her.” I walk to the targets and begin removing the blades and brushes.

She wraps her arms around my stomach and hugs me tight, resting her head on my back. “I wasn’t accusing you. I’m just trying to figure out why they would be after you.” The regret and remorse are clear in her tone.

“Sorry, I’m so frustrated by all of this, it makes me defensive. We need Donaldson to follow up with the Jackson’s, to see what they know without outright blaming them.” I turn around and hand over her knives.

She takes them from me leaning in to kiss my lips. “You have every right to your feelings, I should have thought about my words. I was just thinking out loud trying to be a detective, which clearly I suck at.”

“I’ll gladly be Watson to your Homes any day, Blue Eyes.” I kiss her this time and she rolls her eyes.

“What about the real dad? Could this be him?” Lex’s blades disappear to wherever she hides those things.

“I have no idea. Whoever it was had big balls to sleep with my girlfriend. I haven’t always been the nice tame man you see in front of you now.” My grin spreads wide and I wink at her.

She giggles, smacking my chest. “Give me a break, tame? You don’t have a tame bone in your body.”

“Yes I do, but I’m still a moody bastard. This bone definitely isn’t tame.” I bump her with my growing erection. Shit, I’m bad at flirting and apparently jokes aren’t my jam.

“You’re a goofball. We need to talk to Donaldson. Does Bry know any of this?” She stares up at me questioning.

“No, what time is everyone coming over?” I kiss her head and rest my chin on it.

Lex pulls out her phone to check, “In about three hours. Donaldson said she got tied up.”

“I’ll bet,” I laugh because knowing Liam, she probably literally did.

Lex frowns, “Why, what’s the plan?”

I wiggle my eyebrows. She’s acting all shy, ducking her head and batting her eyelashes.

I grab her face, taking her mouth with mine. She opens for me and my tongue moves over hers. I’ve missed her so much. I’m never going to punish myself like that again. She palms my cock, stroking it through my clothes. I thrust up into her hand, enjoying the touch. I pull away wanting more of her. She tugs me back to her mouth standing on her tiptoes.

“Want to go up stairs? I don’t have any gloves down here.” It’s hard to get the questions out because my lips don’t want to leave hers.

“No time,” she says and attacks my mouth again.

I almost come when she rips the shirt off my body. That’s so fucking hot. It doesn’t matter that it’s one of my favorites or super thin from all the washes over the years. Her hands dig into my hair and she tries to control the kiss but I need the driver’s seat more this time.

She growls then pouts when I pull away. That doesn’t last long because I pick her up and she gasps surprised as I carry her to my art table. I try to do the whole arm sweep across the table to clear the surface like I’ve seen in movies. For your information, it’s not so cool in real life. All my paint doesn’t really help either. I lay her down on the mess because I’ll buy her new clothes.

Lex’s musical laughter fills the room and I just stand there staring at her. Then a light bulb goes off in my head when I see all the colors around her silhouette.

“I know we need to get ready, but I want to show you my new masterpiece first.” My tone is deep and seductive.

She nods with bright excited eyes, “Show me.”

“I need to get supplies. Can you undress for me and lay back down?” I back away grinning because I’m thrilled about this idea.

I clear my throat watching her when she stands staring at me. My heart races as she does what I ask without question.

“Wait, don’t lay down yet.” I grab the blank material and place it over the table. She’s confused so I pat the table again. “I should have locked the door because there’s a Masterpiece in progress.” I whisper in her ear, kissing her once before hurrying off.



Chapter 15 - Masterpiece Or Sexpiece?

Master Of Art Jesse

She's a vision of pure perfection laying on the table before me. It took me a few minutes but I found the non-toxic paint in one of my supply cabinets. Of course, I had new brushes in there too. I picked the softest ones I could find and a couple of them have thicker handles.

"You're going to paint me?" She looks disappointed, flipping her lip out pouting for my cock. "I thought you wanted to make up for the distance you've put between my pussy and your dick?" She almost falls off the table laughing at her own joke, then she snorts and laughs harder.

This gorgeous naked woman is all mine and I chuckle staring at her like a man in love. "Holy crap. We're both bad at this." I step forward pinning her with my gaze. I'm glad my hands are full because my cock is begging for attention.

She gets self-conscious under my stare and tries to cover up her body. I set the supplies down then knock her hands away which makes her eyes light up with desire. Her hair's already covering too much skin for my liking so I brush

it off each shoulder one side at a time. She shivers at my touch and my cock pulses with need.

“You miss this cock, Pretty Girl?” I lean over her, purring the words before backing away quickly.

“Yes, so much! She’s really sad.” Lex grabs my arms pulling me towards her again.

“I’m not talking to you. Mind your business, I’m talking to her.” I push her flat against the table and bend over to spread her legs wide because I want to look at her pretty pink pussy when I say this. “Did you miss my tongue too, Pretty Girl?”

I slide my gloves under her ass and lift her waist closer to my face. My tongue runs over her ever so slowly. She moans trying to push herself closer to my mouth and that only makes me go slower and deeper. The flat part of my thick tongue moves over her again and again. I gently scrape my teeth over her clit once and she bucks off the table wildly. So of course, I do that shit again. I’m all about repeating what works best for her. I want to tease her by prolonging the pleasure but my need to fulfill her cries for release wins over. My mouth attacks her wet pussy using all my skills to claim that first orgasm. She pants digging her hands into my hair and holds my head tight. Her clit’s already swollen and begging for attention. I latch onto the sensitive orgasm bringer and play with it more aggressively. Lex shouts my name and I hum my happiness into her dripping center.

“She loves your glorious mouth too! Yes, it feeeeels so good.” Her breathless words make me try harder to get her to come in my face.

It doesn’t take much effort before her thighs start squeezing my head and her legs begin twitching. She makes loud animalistic sounds that drive my ego nuts. With one more hard flick of my tongue right on her clit a rush of cum gushes out of her. Like a kitten drinking milk for the first time I eagerly lick all of her up. The growly noise she just made makes me grin at her quite satisfied with myself.

Lex uses her hands to push me away from her sensitive pussy. “No more, we want cock.”

I back up laughing and shake my head, “Not yet.”

She pouts at first then her head tilts when I pick up a paint brush. I show it to her and she raises an eyebrow at me. I’m nervous about trying this but I want to show her I can be romantic so I stick to the plan. I open all the paint tubes and add a small amount of each color to the pallet. I dip the tip to cover the brush with the first color.

The soft bristles meet her nipple and she gasps from the cold paint. Lex sighs watching me paint her perfect peak yellow. I move to the other nipple and she moans a little. “Yellow is for the sun because you brighten up my life.”

She opens her mouth to respond but closes it when I shake my head. I finish her nipple then dip the brush again. “Green is because my need for you makes me consumed by jealousy.” I paint the image of a world on her stomach and the feel of the strokes makes her giggle. I clean the brush to get more paint again. “Blue completes the earth just like you’re my world.” I color in all the water to finish the design. “Blue also represents our eyes which anyone can see we’re meant to be.” I make two bright blue eyes above her pelvic line.

She laughs, “Now she can see you too.”

I shake my head, bite her hip then laugh against her skin because that was funny.

“You’re going to ruin this.” That was supposed to sound stern. She gives me an apologetic look and uses her fingers to mimic zipping her lips. I clean the brush and dip it again. “Red is for the fire that lives in my soul for you.” She mouths the words I love you as I paint the flames on her arm. “Now you look like Gage.”

She lifts the right one inspecting my work, while I do the left arm and add some yellow. “*Ojos de océano, hazme el amor ya.*” That’s sexy as hell, but I have no idea what she said. Lex giggles at my confused expression then translates for me. “Ocean Eyes, make love to me already.”

My erection screams, “yes!”

I push down my need because I’m not finished yet. She rolls her eyes when I show her the new thicker brush. The paint brush travels over her smooth beautiful skin and she shakes with need. I continue to run it down her thigh closer to her entrance. Her eyes widen from amazement and awe at the feeling of the soft bristles. She chokes on a loud moan when I unexpectedly push the handle inside her and she sits up. I move the stiff wood in and out of her only using shallow strokes. Lex pants while trying to watch the brush with me.

“She’s greedy like me,” I purr and lick her clit. I watch as her bottom lips close around the brush trying to take more. I pull it out and dip it in red. “Red is also for my heart because I’ve given you mine.” Tears fill her eyes when I paint a heart over hers.

“I love you, Jesse.” She pulls me to her and takes my mouth in a deep kiss that’s dripping in love.

We start grinding each other and finally break apart breathless. “I love you too.”

“Oops,” she says looking down at all the paint on my chest and pants.

We laugh as she helps me take off my jeans and boxers. My cock practically jumps out, happy to be free. “I can’t wait to fuck you, Blue Eyes.” I growl the words into her neck and lick her collarbone. My beard tickles, making her rub her nipples against me harder.

Her hand reaches out and moves over my bare cock playing with the piercing there. I always wear this thick ring now because it’s her favorite. We’ve tested them all and this one hits the magic spot inside every time. She stares at me like I walk on water and I almost get shy.

I open her legs wide and wrap them around my waist. This table makes her the perfect height for me so I pull her to the edge. She helps out by guiding my cock to her opening with a small silky hand. I slide in grunting because her walls grip me tightly as I go deeper inside. She’s silent when I pull

out, catching her breath. It's her deep throat groaning with every thrust that makes me lose control. My body slams into hers wanting more. I pull out then repeat the movement twisting my hips at the last second. She grabs my shoulders trying to sit up to get closer. I speed up my pace, pumping into her faster. Her nails dig into my back causing me to hiss in pain, but my hips don't stop.

My gloved hands grab her ass hard and pull her to my cock aggressively. I'm fucking her deep with all my glory. Her wetness leaks down my leg and I relish the sensation. The knowledge that I can do this to her makes the sex more intense. She isn't close enough and I want the piece to be perfect.

I pull out and quickly flip her boneless body over the table. Lex bends against the surface like a gift just for me. She shakes from the anticipation of my cock and the ecstasy she's already experienced. The paint from her body smears on the canvas. I pick up her legs and enter her from behind. Her hands grip the edge of the table as we rock it hard with our movements. My thrusts are fierce, sure and solid. Lex's chanting my name trying to push back against me. I lean forward to kiss her back. My tongue trails over her spine but my hips don't stop driving deep. I kiss her back like it's her mouth and she moans for me. Our bodies slapping together causes the table to rattle under the strain of the combined force.

"Please fill me with your cum. I want to feel you deep inside me. Please Jesse, give it to me." Her begging almost pushes me over and I can feel cum traveling up my shaft. I drop her legs to the ground to smack her ass. She moans loudly, trying to lift her chest off the table.

Instead, I push her down a little to deepen my angle inside her. "She's such a good girl for taking all this cock." I run my gloves down her back to grab her hips hard.

"I'm going to come all over your cock, Jesse. The Prince is rubbing...oh, my-" I feel her tight grip within and there are no words now. Then she gushes all over me as promised. Once she catches her breath, she leans up on her

arms. “Are you...enjoying yourself?” She pants, her voice chokes on the question. I speed up my pace and she groans my name louder.

“Yes.” My head whips to the door and I see Lake watching us. “Jesse, pull her hair and show me her tits.”

My cock gets harder with his command and I don't question it. I gather all her hair in both my hands and pull her back, lifting her upper body for his view. Lex moans so I tug a little harder.

The material under her body is so colorful but love is always pretty.

I slow my thrusts and change it up to long deep ones. This time I take the whole tube of black paint. I show Lake, and I can see when it dawns on him why she's covered in paint. He's going to want this piece but I'll never sell it. I give her one more hard thrust then I pull out. It takes seconds for me to flip her on her back again and enter her swiftly.

Lake's at the table now so I hand him the paint. He knows what to do and splatters it all over her. She reaches for his cock in the joggers he's wearing. His growl turns into a grunt as she touches him.

I keep fucking her and play with her nipples. It's disappointing that in these gloves I can't touch her clit.

As if reading my mind, Lake's hand slides down her body and over her clit. He begins rubbing it, not caring about me at all. I look up to see him thrusting his dick in her hand and whispering in her ear.

I grab a thin paint brush and dip the tip. I clear my throat and she looks at me. “Black is for our minds, body and soul, for our heart would be lost without you.” I sign my name on her body and then fuck her faster at the sight of it. I want my name on her permanently.

Lake takes the brush and does the same. His deep growl fills the room. “Black shows the dark and dangerous level we will sink to, in order to keep you forever. You will

always be ours. We will keep you safe.” He finished his word by pinching her clit. She screams and tightens around me.

I lose myself, coming deep inside her. My head rests on her stomach for a brief moment. I make myself sit up and I take a deep breath.

Lake bends over speaking to her in harsh tones. I hear something about Wednesday but my mind is on overload. He straightens, nods at me and strolls out of the room.

“How long was he there?” I ask curiously but don’t mind. I’m not ready to leave her body yet so I help her sit up but I stay inside.

She wraps her arms around my neck and kisses me deeply. “I’m not sure. Are you mad?” She looks worried so I move my hips. Lex moans, staring at me shocked. “Are you getting hard again already?”

“Maybe, you look beautiful. I want to paint you and paint on you.” I lift her in my arms and she sinks deeper on my shaft. My legs jerk up when she kisses me. I pull away to look in those bright blue eyes. “Look at what we made.”

I turn her so she can see the canvas. It’s a true masterpiece. The colors are smeared like an enchanting rainbow. Tears fall from her eyes as she stares at it.

“Even the blackest days won’t dim our golden treasure,” she says all poetic. Her frown is cute when I laugh at her. “You know like the end of the rainbow?”

“Yeah, I get it, Blue Eyes. Love you, Baby.” I lift her up then drop her right back on my cock. Her arms automatically squeeze me trying to hold on.

“Oh, are you talking to me or her?” She pants the silly question trying to ride me as I walk across the room but it’s difficult.

I’m just sinking deeper inside her with every jerk of her body. My legs are going to give out on me if I don’t hurry.

“ALL of you!” I yell and start running.

She doesn't know it yet, but I'm going to make love to her nice and slow on the couch. Yes, paint will be everywhere, but I'll just buy a new one. Fuck furniture!



Chapter 16 - Meetings And Just Friends?

Mistory ~ Lex

I'm feeling all sore and delicious. Maybe, I'm even walking a little funny too. My hair's still wet from the shower I just took and I run my fingers through the long strands. Thankfully, it's already detangled from the brush I used. Sometimes long hair blows, but it can be really sexy too.

Anthony holds my hand, swinging ours together all cute and shit. He blows me a kiss, winking at me. I just stare at my tall gorgeous man smiling like a clown. He "accidentally" crashed "the water party," (his words) Jesse and I were having earlier. Anthony was more than happy to help Jesse find and remove all the paint from my body.

I will never look at art the same after that experience in his studio. He's going to hang our new painting in my special room among the wall of gloves. It's really sexy knowing how we made it.

Well, Lake helped some too. My heart races thinking about our date Wednesday. Lake keeps telling me he has a massive surprise for me. He's been using dragon princess puns and I'm trying to figure out what it means. Today he said,

“The Dragon will punish the little princess until she begs for eternity.” I’m not sure why that turns me on so much.

My heart nearly stops when I’m lifted in the air out of the blue from behind. Big muscled arms covered in flames cocoon me in a tight embrace. He has me in a fireman’s carry and wrap my arms around his head.

“*Mi Sirenita, Te extrañé mucho. ¿Pensaste en mí?*” Gage said, I missed you so much. Did you think about me?

“*Siempre te echo de menos. Venía al estudio. Lástima que no pudiste mirar.*” He groans when he translates my statement as...I always miss you. I was coming in the studio. Too bad you couldn’t watch.

“Can I watch the video? Or, better yet, will you watch it with me later, My Love?” He whispers in my ear, biting my neck when I nod.

I kiss his mouth and he almost trips when my hand connects with his cock. His tongue wrestles with mine and the kiss is fantastic. I hear groans so we pull apart.

“Lake said we are going to the conference room again.” Jesse’s leaning against the wall fixing his hair but I see the tent in his pants. He winks at me and I blow him a kiss. “You guys should see the painting we made in my studio earlier. Lake was there too.”

My eyes widen wondering why he shared that. His evil grin spreads and I want to know what he’s thinking. They’ll demand to see it now, maybe even try to bet on it. These guys love a good competition so they’ll happily bet your favorite item just to rub it in your face when they win.

“That’s why you were covered in paint? Not fair, you didn’t say that.” Anthony pouts, blinking his long lashes at me. He’s acting like we didn’t just shower together.

“This sounds interesting. Did you fuck in the paint?” Gage licks my neck squeezing me close and rubs my ass on his erection. He’s so strong and built. It’s like I’m weightless.

“Yes, after I painted her body,” Jesse supplies bragging to the others. I’m not sure why until he says, “Let’s make a

wall mural for the living room, all five of us.” His dark blue eyes spark mischievously as he licks his lips.

“Definitely, after Thursday she’ll be ready,” Lake says from behind us. We all turn to him and he tips his head at me when our eyes meet. He shows me a W with twisted fingers then smiles wickedly. That’s my Wednesday reminder. What does he plan on doing that I would need a full day to recover?

The silence makes me look around the hall at the men I have claimed as mine. They’re all beautiful just standing here staring at me with hungry eyes, like I’m their last meal and I’ll taste damn good too. My thong is ruined when pictures of us flash through my mind. I’m a visual learner after all. The beating of my heart is so loud I’m afraid they’ll hear it. We have never all been together before. They move closer as one and Gage’s arms tighten. My vagina protests my thoughts because she needs time to prepare after the activities earlier. So I wiggle out of Gage’s arms and run off before I decide to test my pain tolerance.

Their deep laughter follows me down the long hall.

I stop running and sigh, grateful my feet are a hundred percent better now. I’m a barefoot junkie normally and my feet aren’t really sensitive after years of soccer. I check my messages and then run my hands through my hair again. I almost jump out of my skin when I hear his deep growl closer than I expected.

“Wait for us,” Lake barks but it’s not a command.

“Don’t be mad,” comes from Anthony.

“*Mi Sirenita*, We aren’t laughing at you,” Gage says with a purr.

“Yeah, we’re laughing with you.” They all groan and hit Jesse then start laughing again.

I shake my head at the goofballs finding it hard to stay mad. I turn around and walk backwards so I can flip them off.

They’re still chuckling and throwing punches then suddenly they all stop and look at each other. The next thing I know they start racing right towards me. Lake tries to hold

Anthony and Gage back to help Jesse pass them. They all zoom by me seconds later and tag my body using it as the finish line. Jesse celebrates with his arms in the air and high fives Lake. I'm so glad the guys are acting like brothers again, even if it's a little crazy. Acting like children is better than drinking or stressing themselves to death.

I literally laugh out loud when they look at me. Their apologetic faces make it hard for me to stay mad so we walk together the rest of the way.

Jace is standing outside the door when we arrive and that makes me smile until I see his posture. He seems distraught and uptight about something. His handsome face has that deep forehead worry line I tease him about.

"What's wrong, O.K.?" I call him by the old nickname and go to bump his shoulder like I always do, just playing around, but he steps aside straight faced. My eyebrows shoot up in confusion and I back away. He's mad at me?

"Bry is a fucking moron and your-" His mouth snaps closed, and he shakes his head aggressively. "Nevermind." I try to grab his arm to ask him more but he yanks it from my grip. Jace acknowledges everyone then goes inside without explaining shit.

"What the hell?" I throw my arms up turning to the guys. They all shrug like nothing's wrong or they have no idea. My eyes narrow when I see a look pass between all of them.

I push Anthony when he tries to get the door for me. The guys laugh but he huffs, pouting because I didn't let him do it. I'm pissy now too so I ignore him pulling the door open myself and walk in. Once again Donaldson and Liam are already here. They step away from each other when they see us.

We all find seats around the room and greetings are exchanged then we get right down to business.

"What do we know?" Lake starts off the conversation.

“Everyone I’ve interviewed has an alibi for the night of the party. However, some of the people on the list would never get their own hands dirty.” Donaldson says glancing at the screen with the list from our last meeting.

“Rodney, has been in Florida since the Riggs’ party.” Seth states from the corner of the room. Where did he come from? All the suspects are being tracked by KISS. The Kelly Brothers only hire the best so that information is reliable.

“Yep, he stopped bugging the bureau after that night too.” Donaldson nods, then she looks my way remorseful. “Unfortunately, Kara’s MIA too. She’s completely off the grid as of this morning at six a.m. Her car was found at the airport but Bryson said she never entered any buildings. Hackers.” She shrugs, but this is new information to all of us. The group shifts uncomfortably in wake of the news.

Gage pulls my chair closer to his because he’s upset. He has so much regret in that department. I lean over taking pity on him and rub his leg. He’s grateful and kisses my head whispering his love.

“I have teams going through surveillance footage from the party to see if they can find anything with her in it. We already used facial recognition software and came up empty handed.” Bry continues working on his laptop sprouting more random information regarding the case.

We all stare at the list of names in front us. The hopelessness is daunting when we’ve been here before and we still know nothing.

Jesse opens his mouth and I lean forward but he closes it when he’s interrupted. Not that anyone else would know he was going to speak.

“What about Slick Rick? He has beef with my family and motive.” Lake offers once again, rubbing his neck. I’ve been meaning to talk to him about that. He looks my way and touches my foot under the table with his.

Oh, footsie is fun and sexy. I take off my shoe then run my foot over his shin. His teal eyes spark to life and he grins at

me.

“Rick’s still in New York. Though I have to tell you, I received a call an hour ago. He’s recently requested clearance to travel to California.” Donaldson’s phone goes off. She zones out responding to her notification.

“The restraining orders are helping us keep tabs on all the suspects legally. Cash really out did himself on the verbiage and the judge didn’t bat an eye.” Jace informs us but doesn’t look at me.

“Where are the Jackson’s?” Jesse asks from the couch where he’s farthest away from us. I know he feels bad for not telling his friends the whole truth. This has been his secret burden for a long time.

“They’re in Europe. Mr. Jackson is opening a new firm there.” Seth shows us his phone which has a flashing dot on a map.

I glance at Jesse wondering if he’s going to come clean. He seems unsure again looking at the list for anyone else. I know he doesn’t want to make false allegations.

“What about Wes?” Lake frowns, pointing at the list. “Maybe, he should be up there.”

“Yeah, I mean the stuff with Jennifer was weird.” Anthony nods his head at Lake’s suggestion.

“No, Wes is fine. I’ve cleared him personally,” Liam says. He dismisses the idea before it can take root. Lake shoots him a death glare but Liam doesn’t acknowledge it.

“Wes could have fallen for Jennifer. He rode to the hospital with her and shit like that brings people together. Plus, love at first sight does exist.” Gage kisses my hand after his sweet words.

Jesse and Anthony nod staring at me. Even Lake’s foot finds mine under the table again. I blush, feeling my cheeks getting hot from their attention.

Bry clears his throat. “Dr. Maraschino had an idea and I agree with her based on the evidence so far.” He’s looking

around the room but won't meet my eyes and I wonder what they talked about.

“And are you going to share?” Liam snaps at him.

Bry opens his mouth to speak but all hell breaks loose. Jace flips his chair, slamming his fists on the table with a fury I've never seen from him before. He looks at his brother and I swear I see hate in his eyes. “This is out of the fucking question. You promised you wouldn't say anything until I had time to try another way.” He's screaming by the end of his statement. Seth gets up casually and Jace looks his way but his eyes quickly move back to Bry. “You're fucking lucky I don't beat your ass, Bryson.” The bite on that name tells me it's serious. Jace heads in his direction and Bry stands not one to back down either.

I jump up and get between the two brothers with a sugar sweet smile. I've had to break them up before, fights can happen during sparring. I address Jace first, “Whooa, what's going on?” Let's hear his plan. What's the big deal?”

“No,” Jace steps into my space. “I won't let you,” he snarls in my face this time almost bumping me with his broad chest.

I can feel the guys at my back, their protective instincts taking over. They're worried about me but I'm not afraid of Jace. My hand reaches for his shoulder to show them.

“Man, fuck this.” To my utter fucking confusion, Jace walks around me and right out of the room without another word.

I look at Bry for answers to explain Jace's outburst, but he's talking to Seth. Shame and regret are written all over his face though. Bry straightens his spine when he sees me staring.

What's going on?

“He'll only come back if you go get him.” Lake tells me while strolling over to Liam. He gives the other man a once over and I can tell he's pissed. “We'll take a small break,” he informs the group in a natural tone. Lake's teal eyes

turn hard suddenly, and he dips his head at Liam. “May I have a word?”

Great. What’s that about?

Everyone agrees with Lake’s suggestion and they start talking about food, of course. Gage blows me a kiss and I return it. Jesse sends me a wink and Anthony gives me a thumbs up when I glance at them. I sigh to myself then take off to find Jace.

I’ve searched all over the house and my frustration is mounting at this point. It’s been close to a half an hour already so my temper is off the charts right now. This is a waste of time and I’m about to throw in the towel because I’ve got better things to do. I walk by my writing room but don’t dare open the door. I haven’t been able to write since I was kidnapped. My writing isn’t important. I need to focus on staying safe and protecting what’s mine. It has to be put on the back burner while the Deadman is after me. I’ll get back to it when my life is normal again.

I walk down the long hallway checking rooms as I go and continue to find nothing. Maybe I’ll go have Seth track him, but Jace is good at hiding when he wants to. Inspiration strikes me out of the blue so I head for the front door instead. When I step outside my earrings give off a brief ringing sound. I’ve gotten used to it pretty quickly. The first couple of times it scared the daylights out of me hearing the loud chime next to my ear. They serve as a great back up plan if anything were to happen and I’m happy to take the help.

My running shoes are in the wooden crate Mrs. Crocker made us disguised as more flowers. She didn’t like it when we started leaving our dirty shoes on the front porch for everyone to see. Since I didn’t feel comfortable messing up her floors, this is our compromise. It works well for both of us.

I put on my shoes, silently thanking Mrs. Crocker for always putting fresh socks in there. I stretch then make my way to my favorite path. A run is a great idea and it will help clear my mind because I can’t stop thinking about why the

brothers are fighting. My pace is faster than normal when I start since Jace is pissing me off. I need to burn off steam and the rage building inside before I blow up on someone else. I've got a decent speed going as my feet hit the ground causing the rhythmic sound only runners enjoy. A butterfly flies by my face a few times and the flowers around me smell divine. My mood starts to brighten too soon because I'm interrupted by footfalls a minute later.

Jace is hot on my heels and catching up fast. The show off. "You can't just take off like that. You have to check in. That's part of the agreement you made with KISS to protect you."

I keep running and flip him off on the go. Who gives a flying leap that it's not very mature of me. If you can't talk to me like an adult, you get the bratty child. He has big balls because he rolls his eyes and that just ticks me off more.

Oh, you should care how I feel bucko. Two can play this game.

"I can do whatever the fuck I want Jace, so shut up." Holy crap! This was a bad idea, there's been too much sex today for this amount of running. My legs are aching from the speed I'm pushing. Of course, he keeps up with me just fine without even working up a sweat. "Besides, you're not being a good friend, so why would I listen to you?"

He stops running suddenly and I do the same when I see his deep frown.

"Is that what I am to you?" There's an emotion in his tone that I can't place. I walk back to him more confused than before.

"We will always be friends. Why are you so mad?" I try to touch him but he pulls away staring at me like I smacked him. My hand falls in embarrassment and my cheeks heat from the rejection.

He tries to walk past me and that just doesn't fly with me. I'm over this whole attitude of his and I'm sick of him acting bitchy about my life. So I trip him by sweeping his legs

out from under him in a practiced move I'm quite proud of. He shouts stunned at first but he recovers to grab a hold of me, taking me down with him.

Dang it!

We're both stunned as he lands over me, the macho man holds himself up so his body isn't heavy. Then we start cracking up laughing. Jace's face is close to mine as he looks down at me. When he leans in and kisses me, I'm so bewildered I don't move.

I must have opened my mouth because his tongue involves it. Any romantic spark dies when I accidentally bite his tongue hard. Jace cries out and rolls off me in shock. He begins laughing, holding a hand over his mouth. There's genuine amusement in his eyes that I haven't seen in awhile. My eyes go wide in disbelief when I see him actually bleeding. Jace looks like a dork because he's holding his tongue out trying to look at the injury. My bark of laughter causes him to grumble and stick his tongue out at me.

"Well shit, that's not how I saw that going in my mind." Jace shakes his head and stands helping me up with him. He stares at me for a few seconds with narrowed eyes.

I don't understand, he planned to kiss me? I get embarrassed and begin wiping off my clothes. When I glance back I start to shift under the weight of his confused expression.

He clears his throat and stands taller meeting my eyes. "I was going to say that I'm in love with you." I gasp because I can't help it. He nods, squinting and then frowns again. "Maybe, I still am but that kiss didn't have all the sparks I thought it would." His eyes go wide and his arm reaches out trying to catch the words. "Sorry, I didn't mean it like that. I mean...uh...it was nice."

I almost fall over laughing and he seems embarrassed or stunned. I put him out of his misery and hug the poor guy. I'm not offended at all.

Wait a second.

“Did you have a crush on me, Jace?” He turns beet red and kicks the ground all shy. Okay that’s funny so I laugh a little more. “For future information Dude, don’t tell the real woman you’ll end up loving that her kiss is nice.” I shake my head, still finding this whole thing hilarious. “A crush on me? What would I do with another dick?” I run my hand over my whole body so he gets what I’m saying. Jace turns white as a sheet and rolls his eyes. “I’m getting worn out now and my pussy would totally protest.” I joke and Jace covers his face regretting that he started this conversation in the first place.

“Let’s run again,” he gestures with his head. I follow after him and he sends me a sidelong look. “Now you’re making me feel stupid for saying anything. You’re pretty cute, you know.” He bumps my shoulder when I open my mouth to apologize and make fun of him. “You’ve been slacking on your cardio. Catch up with me slow poke.” Jace takes off like some fucking Olympic track star.

Fucking hell!

My speed increases and I pump my arms trying to catch him. Jace and me? I laugh thinking about the very idea of more men in my bed. Don’t get me wrong. Jace is a God when it comes to everything you want in a man. He’s smokin’ freaking hot too, but I love him differently. He’s the only person I can talk to when I need a break from my guys. Jace is also a great sounding board from a guy’s perspective when I need help understanding them. It’s not easy being with multiple people with very unique personalities. I would never ruin our friendship.

Then an idea hits me as I feel the evil smile stretch my face. I know a shortcut because Gage and I got it on over here one time. The bushes I cut through brush across my body, but nothing cuts my skin. I run on the grass instead of the rocks so he can’t hear me. The big maple tree hides me perfectly from the view of the path. I can see him glancing over his shoulder looking for me.

My blade goes flying through the air, sailing right past him to stick in a tree. He hits the ground to roll into a row of manicured bushes out of sight.

“That’s not funny. You scared the shit out of me.” He yells but I can’t see him so I get lower.

“I like to keep you on your toes. Wouldn’t want you to be slacking slow poke.” I say teasing him until a rock lands a foot away from me. Then I take off...

Jace jumps out of the fucking tree next to me and lands like Wolverine or something. What the fuck? I dodge his fist and kick him in the ribs. He grunts and makes a sweep at my feet. I’m not quick enough to do a proper jump but I use my hopscotch skills and make it over his legs. I try to punch him in the face and instead of landing, he grabs my hand. I jump up to kick him with both feet at once. We land on the ground hard because I always forget the ground is different.

Shit, that hurt.

“Why is that your fucking go to move? You got too comfortable training on mats as a kid. In real life when you do that, you stun yourself and your attacker. It’s not a smart defensive move. Stop doing it.” He scolds me, popping up first to help me stand.

“You’re being a nag. You almost caught me slippin’ because I wasn’t fast enough to miss the legs.” I shake my head glad it doesn’t hurt and dust myself off. “I would rather be stunned then taken again.” I didn’t realize my voice was shaking until he steps closer trying to touch me with an expression of pity on his face. “Dang it, I’m fine. I’m not some trained killer either. I’m supposed to be an author and part time receptionist at a Tattoo shop. That’s it.” Okay, I’m totally being a whiny cry baby, but I’m still young and want to live a full life.

“I know, Shorty. You poor thing. Unfortunately, you got yourself mixed up with the wrong Crew of people. You’re stuck for life now.” He laughs when I roll my eyes at his dumb joke.

“You’re lame. We’re good, right?” I stop running and I know I sound scared because I am.

He stops and walks back to me shaking his head. “Yes. Honestly, I haven’t been getting any action with all the shit happening lately. I probably just confused that with the love I feel for you as family. That’s what Bry said it was.” Jace shrugs like everything is settled and I frown.

That makes me feel extremely guilty because I never meant to mess up his personal life just so he can protect me. I haven’t been holding off in the orgasm department either.

“Well, that’s why I told you to take off in Big Bear but you flipped out, remember?” I look around, shit, deja vu. “It was very similar to now if I recall correctly.”

“That was my fault too.” He takes a deep breath and waves me forward. “Let’s jog. It will be easier to talk about my emotions.”

“Okay, but this kinda sucks to hear. Am I a bitch and a bad friend?” I’m sick to my stomach at the thought. My feet feel even heavier as I run now.

“No, you’re my friend. We’re a family and we’ll always be in each other’s life.” He wishes he never said anything and cracks his knuckles uncomfortable.

“I don’t feel like I should have to tell you this, but I will just to make sure we’re clear. You’re drop dead gorgeous, Jace. I’m sure tons of women throw themselves at you often you just haven’t been around any lately. So don’t play all innocent with me.” I stop to tap my foot and he follows the movement laughing.

Shit, I need to stop doing that.

“Yeah, I get so much pussy and look, I only have this.” Jace shows me his abs then runs a hand down his body like I did earlier.

“Shut up, yeah, women hate bodies like that.” I smack him and we begin running again. “I’m going to picture you with a group of chicks now so thanks for that.” He laughs then groans when my eyes get big. “Oh, should I write you a why choose romance with three or four women?” It’s a great idea.

“I’m not sure I can deal with all that sex. I’m getting older. Plus, it seems like it would be murder to keep four women happy all the time. More like it would be impossible.” He wiggles his eyebrow, “Not in the bedroom. I’m talking about all that nagging.” He laughs when I try to punch him in the stomach. The deep breath he takes has nothing to do with our jog. “The reason I freaked out in Big Bear...is because I was jealous when the guys came back. I thought you wouldn’t need me anymore, and we would stop being friends. The guys will do anything to protect you. Anyone can see the love you guys share and I think I want something like that too.”

“And you will Jace. I know it.” We keep running around the fruit trees and wave at some guards as we pass. “I could help you find a lady friend.”

“No,” he shakes his head.

“Oh, this could be real fun,” I get excited at this idea. I could set up a dating profile and Sage could help me. I bet Bry has some good pictures I can use.

“Nope, don’t even think about it, Shorty. I can see the wheels turning in your mind. Not gonna happen.” When we run around the next corner we see Alex. Jace glances over at me. “This all sounds really silly now that I’m saying the words out loud. Let’s just forget this happened.” The guys do a fist bump when Alex approaches us.

“Hey guys, what’s up? Why didn’t you tell me you were running?” Alex gives me a hug and we all run back to the house. “Lake said they’re ready to start the meeting again.” He offered Alex a suite while he decides his next steps which is really nice.

“Great timing, we’re done anyway. Jace is done pouting because he finally found out my kiss is just nice.” I tease Jace, laughing when he groans and runs off ahead of us.

“You guys kissed?” Alex is curious about the information. “I wasn’t sure about his intentions either. You guys are always together.” He whispers but Jace hears him.

“That’s not going to change any time soon. You can ask me like a man, like all the others did.” That information doesn’t really surprise me. The guys had a right to ask. “Honestly, I didn’t know myself until we kissed a few minutes ago.” Jace waits for us to catch up at the stairs.

Jace bumps my shoulder and I jump on his back.

“Yep, you’re my MBFF.” Jace laughs and Alex is confused. “Wait, what’s Bry’s plan that you’re so upset about.” Jace’s smile fades fast and I feel bad.



Chapter 17 - Bry's Plan

Lex The Actress

We didn't end up continuing the meeting yesterday because Liam and Donaldson got into a huge fight and took off. I'm dying to know their back story but no one seems to know or they're too afraid of Liam to spill the beans. I took off early from work today because we weren't busy and I got restless sitting around there waiting for time to pass. Plus, the gang all had plans after that didn't include me. We planned to meet back here tonight to finish the pending meeting, but I'm bored now so I decided to take a walk around the house.

Before I know it, I'm standing outside my writing room. This is what I would normally be doing if I had free time on my hands. My heart longs to write again but my mind isn't ready. I would end up writing a sad story with a horrible ending if I tried now. One time during my stay in the cabin I tried to write. Poor Prudence's cancer came back and I killed her. I cried for hours after that and then trained for eighteen hours straight. I sigh to myself then lean heavily against the door.

Then I almost scream but cover my mouth when I see the man close to me. I didn't hear anything because I was so deep in thought.

“Hey you,” Bry’s leaning against the opposite wall watching me. He nods toward the door at my back. “I’ll go in there with you if you want?” His tone is bright, sunny and warm like his hair and handsome smile.

“Hi, no thanks,” I shake my head dismissing the offer. “Are you here for the meeting?” I check my phone to get the time, “It’s still pretty early. What should we do for dinner? Want to help me pick the place? Come on, let’s go check the stack of menus Sage has in the kitchen.” I push off the door, rambling because I don’t want to talk about writing.

“I thought you knew me better than that by now. I’m a Kelly, we never turn down free food.” Bry follows me down the hall laughing with me. Then he clears his throat looking around, walking slowly next to me. “I wanted to talk to you first before everyone else got here. Since what I’m going to tell you, can be triggering for you.” He’s uncomfortable talking about this but wants to do the right thing.

“Okay, I appreciate your concern. That’s very noble of you, LK.” I pat his arm and he smiles. I drop my hand, still nervous about what he’s going to say. I’m trying to be a badass but I’m also human.

“There’s no easy way to say this so I’m just going to say it. Dr. Maraschino and I agree on this fact though. We think we know the motivation behind your kidnapping.” Bry makes himself look right in my eyes like the man he is.

“Tell me,” I want to know. That’s all I’ve been thinking about.

“Based on everything you’ve said about your time with the Deadman, he wants to make the guys suffer.” I nod, he’s definitely using me against them. We all know this. “Dr. Maraschino said Tamera took out your birth control because they wanted you to get pregnant.” Bry frowns because it’s a shitty thing to do to someone.

“I’m not sure why they did it. How would that make the guys suffer though?” Do guys suffer after having kids? I’m confused, I wonder what my girls think about that. I shake my head. “I mean, we’re too young for kids but it’s not earth

shattering, right? Did the guys say something to you about having children with me?" I feel self-conscious about this and I don't know why.

I'm lifted up and carried like a baby a second later. Gage snuggles into my chest, making me giggle. "No, we didn't say anything. I can't wait for you to have *mi gemelo*." His twin would have amazing green eyes like him. "Stop doubting how amazing we are together, *Mi Sirenita*." I wrap my arm around his neck and kiss him. He shows me all his love in that one kiss.

We pull apart when Bry clears his throat again, but keeps talking, "No, your men love you, Mistory. So, if you got pregnant and were kidnapped again, they would go ballistic."

Gage growls deep and long, proving Bry's very point.

"Yeah, that would suck balls," I say lightly and Gage starts walking faster, upset. We hug each other tighter because this is horrible news. It's really terrifying to think someone would do something like this. "They were trying to get me pregnant to kidnap me again?" I want Gage to put me down but I know it's too soon after that information.

"My brother won't talk to me because I think we should be offensive instead of defensive. I want to try to catch him before he strikes again and we aren't prepared." Bry looks around when we make it to the main staircase.

Gage's green eyes flash with fire as he shakes his head. "*Mi Sirenita*, will not be bait. Bryson, you are smoking some good shit." His words are teasing but his tone isn't as he looks at Bry.

"We really don't have a choice," I say knowing Bry is right. Gage tries to argue but I kiss him. "It may be the only way," I whisper over his lips. Gage puts me down when I wiggle then I glance at Bry. "We need a solid plan though."

"I'm just worried if we don't make the first move they'll get desperate and try something else." Bry looks down then he meets my glaze. "They could be watching now and you haven't gotten pregnant yet. Before it was understandable,

but you've been home for some time now. They're going to want results." His voice shows the disgust he feels saying that.

Gage curses, pulling me close again to kiss my head while whispering loving words in Spanish.

I can't think because my mind is racing with ideas. My eyes meet Bry's as I turn around and nod telling him I'm ready to explore his option. Gage squeezes me from behind. The youngest Kelly looks uncomfortable rubbing the back of his neck.

"What?" I say and Gage curses again knowing he isn't going to like this.

"I'm pretty sure we have a mole among us so you need people to believe you're actually pregnant. The guys have to play along or believe it's really true, Lex Luthor." Bry glances at Gage over my shoulder.

"Who is the traitor?" I already know he doesn't know, but I have to ask.

"You can't hide it from them, *Mi Sirenita*. They'll never forgive us." Gage pleads for his friends.

When I nod in agreement, he sighs in relief. How do I even start this conversation with the guys? Hey let's pretend I'm having your baby to see if the Deadman wants to kidnap me. What if the very idea makes them run away from me? Guys get scared when words like baby get tossed around. Shoot, my fear is reaching record heights just thinking about it.

"You should talk to the guys about what we need from them. Meanwhile, I'll tell Donaldson and Liam so we can develop a plan of attack. Let's keep this between us, OK?" Bry nods once to us then walks off with his phone to his ear.

"This is out of the fucking question. We are not doing this," Lake growls ready to lose his mind. He's staring at me, rubbing his neck and tapping his fingers on the table. When he tilts his head, it cracks loudly, freaking me out.

I kiss Gage deeply using all my love to replace the fear.

“I love you, Mistory,” Gage says and kisses my head once.

“*Te amo corazon de leon,*” I tell him the same.

Lake’s eyes widen for only a second as I get on the table and crawl across the surface. He scoots back in his chair smiling and opens his arms for me. I sit in his lap and wrap my arms around his head to kiss him first. He moans in my mouth as his piercing rolls over my tongue.

The kiss turns x-rated fast so I pull away to whisper in his ear, “Don’t be scared. I’m really looking forward to Wednesday, Master.” I lick his earlobe and he grabs my thigh in warning with his big tattooed hand.

“After you’ve seen what I’ve done for you, will you let me lock you up, Little Warrior?” He bites then blows on my neck sending chills down my spine.

I’m too nervous to answer those beautiful teal eyes. I want to know what he’s talking about but now is not the time. I make myself focus on the other guys staring at me with lost expressions on their faces.

“I know this is dangerous to volunteer for but we really don’t have another option. I’ve been training hard for this. Plus, Donaldson, Liam and KISS will have a foolproof plan before I even consider doing it.” My voice sounds confident which makes me proud.

Lake holds me around my waist, cuddling me close. I’m glad I moved to his lap because his breathing is heavy from the topic at hand and I don’t want him stressed. I soothe his nerves by rubbing his thighs and he sighs in my hair.

“We are assuming they will just kidnap you. What if they just try to kill you? They already shot at you at my house and they had a gun on you at No. 2.” Anthony has been very upset since learning the news. He won’t sit down, and has been thinking about drinking. We’ve all agreed to help him over this rough patch.

“Want to sit by us?” I ask him but he just sends me that bright white smile of his and shakes his head. “Do you want to practice shooting tomorrow morning? I’m better with blades but we can call one of the experts Bry introduced me to. I’m down for whatever.” I think I know what’s bothering him so I offer to help.

Anthony stops walking, he just stares at me. I see relief fill his dark brown eyes. “Thanks, Sexy Lexy. I would freaking love that.” He pulls a chair over and sits by us more relaxed and my heart feels better. Lake doesn’t even mind when Anthony takes my hand.

“If it’s the Jackson’s they’ll want me to suffer. They’ll want to take Lex or the baby.” Jesse tells us stealing the positive attitude I had from helping Ant. I shift on Lake’s lap feeling uncomfortable. We’re talking about a baby that does exist. Everyone turns to Jesse confused by his comment. He sends me a remorseful glance before telling the guys about Brittany and her unborn baby.

“Who was she sleeping with?” Lake narrows his eyes, I assume he’s trying to remember their college years.

“Sage must know something like that. Maybe, she never said anything because she didn’t want to hurt your feelings.” Gage pulls out his phone but Jesse stops him from texting her.

“Not yet, let’s keep this between us for now. Bryson said there’s a mole. Don’t look at me like that, Gage. Our phones have been tapped before, I’m not talking shit on Sage.” Jesse’s right and Gage relaxes when he sees reason then sits back down.

Shit, that was close. All these alphas together when running on high emotions is dangerous.

Like everything The Crew usually does, we take a vote.

1 vs. 4

Surprisingly, Jesse was the one to vote no.

I give Lake a quick kiss then I bite Anthony's neck when I stand up. He moans and Lake smacks my ass. I walk over to my moody lover who often takes the weight of the world on his shoulders. Jesse's deep sapphire eyes light up as a sway my hips walking his way.

His gloved hands land on my hips but I take one and bring it to my face. He knows what I want and he runs it over my face gently. The sweet smell of leather makes me sigh and feel at peace. I use his hand and copy the same movement which makes him breathe deeply.

"We'll get through this, Ocean Eyes. I'm proud of you for sharing and I love you." I kiss his lips lightly. He doesn't like that and wraps me up in his big arms, deepening the kiss. His tongue controls my mouth, demanding more from me.

I hear clapping and cheering so I pull back shy.

"I love you, Blue Eyes." Jesse stares at me then kisses my nose. He glances at his friends and raises his voice for them to hear. "We will protect you until our last breath."

"We will destroy anyone who stands in our way," Lake grumbles deeply with dark teal eyes.

Anthony gets on his knees before me and all the guys call him a show off. He doesn't care and flips them off which makes me laugh. I kiss his forehead and he stares at me with those deep brown eyes. "No one will ever love you and cherish you like us." The guys agree by cheering.

"*Mi Sirenita*, we are yours until our dying days. *Nosotras te amaremos por siempre.*" Gage says they will love me forever and I blow him a kiss, he returns.

"And then to infinity and beyond," Jesse jokes, laughing at his own joke. All the guys groan at him covering their faces. He really is just as awkward as me.

I hug him close then address the guys. "We need to check in with D & L about the Jackson's." I turn to Jesse and give him a sympathetic look. I really do feel sorry for him. "You need to tell them about Brittany's secret too."

He nods, shifting uncomfortably about making another confession.

“We need to keep this on the DL for now too.” Anthony and I high five at his joke. It really works - DL, down low. Donaldson and Liam definitely have something going on too.

“Let’s go test our acting skills,” Lake tells us and then walks to the door. “Wednesday,” he growls at me then strolls out of the room.

“I’m going to check on dinner and the guards at the front gate.” Gage kisses my head and walks out next.

“I’ll be back too. I need to call Damien and I’ll check on Shawna for you.” Anthony sends a pity glance to Jesse, then kisses me and follows the others.

I snuggle into Jesse’s lap to love on him and show my support. He holds me close, sniffing my hair like I’m doing his chest. This man always smells so damn good. Jesse’s phone begins ringing and I pull away so he can retrieve it. When he stares at the caller ID, he becomes pale and looks ill.

“Who is it?” I frown trying to see the screen.

“Mr. Jackson, he’s been trying to reach me the last few days. He just found out about the shooting at Anthony’s and he wants to check on me. Frank even called my mom because he’s worried about me.” He shakes his head and explains further at my confused expression. “They were really close when Brittany was alive. My father always wanted to fit in with the rich crowd so they often went to parties there.” His voice holds skepticism and perplexed doubt.

“I’m sorry this has to be difficult on you.” Out of all of us he hates his past the most. We just sit there holding each other thinking about everything that’s happened and everything still to come.

“This is hard on everyone, not just me. I hate that you’re in danger because of me. It’s unfair that anyone in my family could be hurt because of something I didn’t even do.” He kisses my lips and rests his head on my forehead.

My finger runs over the scar in his eyebrow. Jesse the charmer places kisses on my palm trying to distract me. I've heard so many stories from the others about his father. It makes my skin crawl and my heart hurt for him. Jesse had a rough childhood. His phone indicates he has a new voicemail.

"I don't know what to say to him. Mrs. Jackson apparently isn't saying shit. Could it really be them, Lex? After everything I've done to help them heal from their loss. I would have given up my whole life if you hadn't come along. Doesn't that fucking count?" He buries his head in my chest and breathes deeply again.

We hold each other tight, lost in uncertainty. I don't know how to help him or what to do.

"Talk to Donaldson and Liam. They'll have suggestions, we already know they're good at this. Since we need to act like we have no idea what's going on, you should probably be friendly to them." Jesse nods but I know his emotions are all over the place.



Chapter 18 - Unexpected Guests

Lake Masters

“Let’s make this fast, I have shit to do,” I growl at the others. I don’t want them to see how anxious I am. They’re going to give me shit and razz me about acting like a female. I already know it. Tony winks, smiling at me. *Fucking shite*. I grab a water bottle from the refrigerator making a show of slamming stuff around. No one sees me slyly check the clock again.

It’s almost time!

“Yeah, I gotta go to an appointment with Sage to finish the paperwork for her new house. I haven’t had a break all day either.” Gage returns his focus to his phone staring at the screen, smiling like a goofball. He’s probably texting Mistory. “That tattoo was fucking badass though, huh?” He’s talking about the one he did earlier.

“I seem to remember a lot of moaning and pounding upstairs around lunch time today. Were you guys learning the two step then?” I’m trying to make a poor joke about his lack of time off. Unfortunately, just mentioning those events makes me shift against the wall. My fire’s getting hard just talking about her moans. Their little show was fucking hot. I almost fucked up the tattoo I was working on. “You owe me a new

machine too, asshole.” I broke my favorite one when Jesse started using his gloves. Mistory is very loud, and the guys always encourage her for my benefit. They think I don’t know, but I like knowing she wants me to hear too.

My heart beats faster because I will own her completely tonight.

“You didn’t hear a thing I just said, did you?” Gage green eyes meet mine laughing. I send him a dirty look, flipping him off. It’s really mature, I know, but I can’t concentrate right now. “Send me an invoice because it was worth every penny.” He brags and I want to punch him.

Both Tony and Jesse roar with laughter like idiots. I make a swipe at Tony’s chair because he’s leaning in it like a dumbass. He drops the other two legs and punches me on the way to the refrigerator.

Jesse tries to steal Gage’s phone, and they start wrestling on the table.

“Guys, quit pussy footing around. Do we know anything new?” I demand and they all start laughing. I shouldn’t have said the P word right now. They are acting like teens.

“He’s been sexting Lex this whole time.” Jesse pouts, pointing at Gage like a child. Gage sticks out his tongue and Jesse smacks him. *Bloody little shites*. Jesse flashes me a mischievous smile saying, “She’s getting ready for your date. That dress is fucking hot, Lake.” Tony races over to look at the pictures.

It takes all my control to keep my feet planted on the floor. I tell myself I’d rather see it in person for the first time. I growl at them and check the time on my phone. My anticipation soars so I growl again, telling them to hurry up.

Jesse throws up his hands then jumps on the island to sit. “Bryson said he checked all of the Jackson’s bank accounts. He did find a few offshore accounts with monthly transfers, but still no large transactions.” His face closes down, and he shakes his head. “I finally spoke to Frank Jackson

today. He was really nice and acted concerned about me. It threw me off that he didn't even bring up the restraining order."

That's interesting behavior for someone trying to kill him. I had no idea Brittany was pregnant back in the day. I'm not even upset he kept it from us. It did have me thinking about college though and who she could've been sleeping with.

"Jace said the texts have stopped since we spread the news that Mistory might be pregnant." Gage whispers the last word and starts pacing around the kitchen.

The room goes silent with that information. We decided to intercept Mistory's messages and reroute them to KISS. She didn't need to stress about the Deadman's empty threats now that she's back at home. A baby would be nuts.

"Jackson was probably reaching out to see if you'd slip about the cops or Donaldson." Tony's thinking and playing with the piercings in his chin.

"Could be," Jesse nods, but I see doubt on his face. "Technically, they're still innocent because we haven't found anything. Plus, Frank's in shape but no way is he the Deadman. Not from what Lex said." He rubs his hand over his face in frustration.

Fuck, and I make myself remove my hand from my neck.

"Basically, we know nothing but more shite," I snarl at no one in particular.

The guys all grunt in agreement.

I pound the rest of the water and toss it in the recycling. I wash my hands, making sure I go slow, even though I really want to race out of here. When I turn around I drop the dish towel.

"What?" All my brothers are staring at me sporting massive grins.

“Homie, you know what we want.” Gage wiggles his eyebrows at me.

“Yes, tell us everything.” Jesse’s gloved hands are gripping the counter tight and he leans forward excited. He would freak out at the amount of toys I have.

“What we really want to know is...when can we come over and play?” Tony says and all the guys agree nodding at me.

I can’t remember a time I’ve ever been this excited in my life. That includes all my childhood memories too. Since I was born into wealth and fortune, my life has been considerably better than most. So, that should explain just how weird this emotion is for me at this moment. I’ve heard the expression about butterflies but it feels more like a nest of angry hornets in my gut right now. I close my door and head to her suite.

I thought explaining my desires and intentions for Mistory to the guys was going to be uncomfortable for all of us. Instead, the meeting got very interesting, very fast. Jesse had questions about my new toys and we didn’t go into great detail but he’ll have the time of his life. Anthony wanted to schedule a visit and asked for my contractor’s information. I kinda checked out of that convo when he began explaining the type of pain he likes most. Gage begged me to record our time together tonight because he wants to watch it with her. He insisted Mistory would be fine doing it. “Just ask her,” he said, rather giddy with the idea.

If someone told me a few months ago that I would want a polyamory relationship I would laugh in their face or punch them for even suggesting it. I thought my parents ruined that for me but instead they may have opened my mind to happiness I thought was impossible. Now I want Mistory to be mine forever.

I need her.

My hand pauses above her door and I take a deep breath trying to calm my stress anxiety. I feel like my control is ready to snap. My mind keeps screaming, I've waited a lifetime for this. Sweat beads on my forehead because I'm paranoid something will ruin my plans tonight. I want this so bad that my body aches with the force of my need. My construction crew has been working overtime the last week to complete everything to my standards. Not only did they get it done on time, they also earned the bonuses I threw on the table to speed things up. I checked every detail this afternoon and the place is perfect for her.

The door opens unexpectedly, but I don't give off a reaction to getting caught. Her shocked gasp fucking turns me on and I want to devour her right here. My ego gets a nice stroke when Mistory's eyes roam my body. That bright blue goes shiny with lust and mutual desire. I spin around so she can see it all because I'm a greedy man and I like the attention. I'm not shy or ashamed of my appearance. It's the exact opposite. "What do you think? Is this appropriate for a first date?" I ask genuinely curious since I've never been on one.

She nods, blushing and smiling at me shyly. I grab her hand when she tries to go back inside. "Hey, aren't you going to show me your outfit too?" I ask the question near her ear and she freezes against the door with her hand on the knob.

"But you already know because you-" She goes silent when my big hand firmly finds her hip. I squeeze once but not hard just enough so she remembers who I am. "Yes, Master," she whispers breathlessly and seductively like I want.

She drives me mad in such a fantastic way. My blood pumps faster through my veins because she addresses me properly. I lean into her back and stop myself from groaning when she presses back against me too. I demand control of my hand so I don't pinch her skin. My body and beast are done waiting for what's ours.

"Are you ready for tonight, my Sex?" She shivers in anticipation when my voice creeps along her neck.

Mistory's wearing her hair up for me like I asked her to. My hand itches to wrap the long dark ponytail around it and pull her to my cock with each of my hard thrusts. I slowly slide my hand up her body over her ribcage. She gasps loudly, rocking into me like a good girl. My hand cups her large breast and effortlessly I find her nipple through the fabric of the dress. Her sweet moans are like magic to my soul. I can live off them forever. Who needs food and water, this is the only energy I need.

“Master, I'm soaking wet just thinking about it.” She purrs and I lose my shit.

I swiftly lock her arms behind her back and push her into the hard surface of the door. I bend my body to mold it with hers then lick her bare neck a few times. “You're so confident now that the men have had you. It makes you act like a tough warrior that speaks without permission.” I bite her neck and she moans. “What happened to the Princess you used to be?” I bump her with my fire because it wants to lick her too. I bite my tongue when Mistory grinds hard against my cock. My hand moves up to enclose her throat and I bring her closer to me aggressively. I squeeze once as I bite her ear. “I always thought I wanted a mink little pet.” I lick her face and she growls trying to bite my tongue. “However, the fight in you makes every nerve ending in my body stand on end. You will be on your knees begging tonight. Are you ready for that, Sex?”

I begin taking off my belt, still holding her around the neck and using the door to lock her there.

When the throat clears behind us, it's Mistory who freaks out from frustration and that makes me laugh.

“What the fuck? Move on. We get no damn privacy around here.” She whines, trying to bang her head on the door but I remove my hand to catch her forehead. She sighs knowing the mood has passed and I have control of my body again. I still grind my erection into her ass one more time. “I curse you with no orgasms,” she shouts.

We turn around to see no one behind us. “You guys actually think I was going to interrupt you in person?” Wes laughs at us like we’re stupid. “Yeah right, but seriously, you guys these halls are being monitored and that didn’t look innocent. So step inside, or take off.” He deepens his voice jokingly, “Feel free to give us a show. Let’s get it on.”

Both Lake and I flip off the camera in the corner of the hall.

Wes laughs at us, “Have a good night you two.” I still don’t regret punching him.

Mistory disappears inside for a second then comes back with her purse shutting the door again behind her. We grab each other’s hand at the same time and I hold her hand tight walking down the long hall. My eyes stare at our joined hands in wonder. I look up to see her staring at me and she laughs then smiles playfully when I try to pull away. Mistory hugs my arm to her body and won’t let me go. Damn, I like this shit even more.

She drags me to the sitting area by the foyer. “I need to tell Mrs. Crocker something,” Mistory runs off smiling over her shoulder.

I don’t mind the detour because my fire is digging into my pants. We could use a break to settle down, my cock and I. I’m glad Mistory seems excited about getting the night started also. We still have to go to dinner yet so I need to exercise some control. I’m taking her to a popular celebrity hang out. I’m really hoping she doesn’t get upset that I’m publicly claiming her like this. Cameras will definitely be ready and trying to get shots of any celebrities dining there this evening.

I look around feeling nervous again. Will she love our new place as much as I do? My goal is for her to experience pleasure from just the mere mention of the house. If I whisper the words Sex House, it will set off a chain reaction in her mind. Her body will automatically become wet for me knowing it’s time to prepare. You can train the mind to command the body’s emotions just like with pleasure or pain.

“Don’t you look handsome, Dear.” I turn and see Mrs. Crocker holding a phone.

“I thought maybe I could get a picture of us together.” Mistory gestures to the phone and she looks at the floor shyly, worried about my reaction. “There’s no pressure. I was just thinking since we were dressed in your favorite color and all.”

I make it to her quickly and sweep her into my arms. She smiles bright when I spin her around in a sexy little dance move that would make my mom proud. “That’s a great idea. I’ll put a print in the house.” I laugh as her face transforms into this cute little frown. Everything will be clear soon enough and I nod towards Mrs. Crocker to remind her. “Smile for the camera, Sex.” I whisper kissing her cheek then smile bigger as she grins.

“You two make an adorable couple.” Mrs. Crocker takes several pictures then hands the phone back to Mistory with a friendly smile. “Good night, be sure to drive safely.” She walks out of the room not waiting for us to respond.

Mistory is staring at her phone when I glance back at her. She looks up with amazement clear in her eyes. “They look so perfect and there’s even one of you laughing. You’re so fucking sexy, Lake.” That makes me laugh because she almost seems serious.

I take the phone to look at these pictures she’s raving about and my heart stops.

All I can think is...we are meant to be together.

“They call this color gray storm clouds.” I inform her and step closer to her body. She moans from my touch alone. So I keep running my hands over her dress and lush body.

I rain kisses all over her back and my ink there. Her little cries of enjoyment make me crazy. I can’t wait to fuck the screams from her throat. The trinkle in her eyes tells me she feels the same way. I stare at the permanent art I made on her skin, this dress exposes a lot of her back to me.

She pulls me to her wrapping her arms around me. My mouth covers hers and I sink deeper into the kiss, losing

myself in the spectacular feeling that is Mistory. I grunt as my tongue moves over hers again and again. This dress does nothing to stop my hands from roaming all her curves.

We only pull apart because the doorbell rings. Mistory smiles flushed but the interruption has me frowning. I turned off my property notifications for our date so I have no idea who's here. She takes my offered arm and we walk to the front door smiling at each other. I open the door and my mood flips like a lightswitch.



Chapter 19 - Canceled Date With A Surprise

Lex or Sex

“Good evening, Lake. I need to have a word with you.” The older man says to him with a smug expression on his face. His eyes zero in on me and they travel my body confidently.

I squirm under his stare of unwanted attention and step closer to Lake for comfort. I’m not sure of this man’s identity or I would probably smack him for his forward behavior. My temper is tightly in check and I’m not a tiny bit rude until Lake growls deeply at him. That’s all I need to know so I pretend to scratch my nose with my middle finger. The creeper’s eyes go wide when he sees the gesture and Lake grins happily at me.

“Why the fuck are you at my house? Who the fuck let you into my gates? You have a restraining order against you.” Lake steps in front of the man trying to push me behind him.

“You ungrateful little shit, I think you forgot who I am. I made you Lake and I can ruin you just as fast. I’ve been in the industry for over thirty years and I’m at the top of the ladder dumbshit. You’re just a spoiled little brat.” He’s running his mouth like a badass but the little bitch cries out when Lake kicks the flowerpot next to him.

I'm so proud of Lake for controlling his anger and not beating the shit of this man. I step closer to him for support. I want to hold his hand but I'm afraid that will make his temper worse. I'm flabbergasted when Lake grabs my hand on his own. I look up and see that his jaw is tight so I kiss his hand trying to give him calming energy. He breathes deep and I see his shoulders relax a little.

“Surprise, Rick! I guess you heard about my big news? Are you scared, Slick? I can't wait to watch you fall from the top of that ladder you're so proud of. The whole world will know the real you soon.” Lake smirks like he's holding all the cards.

“That's okay. I just thought you gave a shit about your brother, but guess not.” I see Lake flinch at Rick's comment. Rick sees it too and like most villains, that's all the gas he needs. He laughs with his eyebrows raised. “You think you know your brother's secrets, Lake? You don't know shit.” He spits the words feeling over confident then his evil eyes return to me.

Lake hugs me around the waist and gently pats my tummy. My eyes go wide but his face begs me to understand. It's an act for Rick and I get it so I cover his hand. “I don't have time for you, Rick. I have other priorities now.” Lake tells the other man watching his reaction closely.

The man glances at me again and now disgust is written all over his face. Rick laughs and looks at Lake with pity. “Don't try to hang with the men, Lake. Just go back to your tattoo guns and your parents' money.” He spits at my shoe and I almost kick him. “Only little boys fuck trash like that.” He nods at me with a slimeball smile.

I don't even have time to be offended or defend myself because Lake attacks the other man with his huge fists. I have to use all my strength to try and pull Lake off him. Someone lifts me up and out of the way of the fight and flying fists. It takes four men to remove Lake from Rick and he's still fighting until Seth talks to him. There's a large scene now with multiple security personnel and staff members watching. Lake wouldn't like that if he was of a sound mind. Rick's driver

comes over to help Rick to his feet and back in the car. He's a bloody mess now, but I don't feel bad for him. Wes has a brief word with the driver before he takes off.

Lake starts pacing around while using the phone. "It's me." He snaps then plays the recording of his conversation with Rick for the person on the other line. Once it's done Lake hisses in the phone. "What does he mean, Liam?" He pauses and I can see the steam coming out of his ears, he's so mad. "What do you mean it's not your place? You're already on my shit list." Lake nods, his eyes narrow. "Oh, I would care if I were you. Yeah, you do that." Lake hangs up, puts away his phone and takes off his jacket. Unexpectedly, he drops to the ground and begins doing push ups.

The crowd starts to disperse but Lake doesn't stop. I stroll to him and do the only thing I can think of. I find a spot on the grass near him and kick off my shoes. My hands and feet hit the ground to get into position. I'm in shape now so it shouldn't kill me to do a few push ups. I do wish I was wearing something else though. This dress is gorgeous and really expensive. The tags were still on it when it was delivered in a big white box this afternoon. I definitely planned on wearing it again or at the very least saving it as a keepsake to remember tonight.

"What the hell are you doing?" Lake snarls at me, not even winded at all.

"I'm...not...sure. I guess...trying to...beee...supportive." Dang, maybe I'm not in shape. My arms are burning already and I'm breathing so hard I can barely speak.

"You're a major brat. You know that, right?" He jumps up and walks to me to help me up too.

I adjust my dress panting a little. "I've been called worse." I try joking but that was the wrong thing to say because he curses staring at me. I grab my shoes waiting on him to put on his jacket.

"What do we do now? We're all sweaty and honestly, I'm not in the best mood for the dinner I had planned." His unique teal eyes flash with regret as he looks at our clothes.

“That’s okay.” I’m extremely disappointed, but I try not to show it. Guess, we’ll have to reschedule our time together. I feel like we needed this date to move on to the next step of our relationship. Technically, Lake has never asked me to be his girlfriend and I don’t really know how he feels about our future. I sit on the bench by the fountain to put on my shoes.

Lake walks over to me slowly with his head down. “Can we skip dinner this once and go straight to our house?” His voice is low but I thought he just said.

“What house?” My eyebrows pull together, confused. Does he mean inside?

He waves away my question and begins strolling to his car. “Are you good with that? There’s even a shower we can use.” He glances over his shoulder asking, but it seems like his mind is already made up.

I quickly get up, nodding because I didn’t really want to reschedule tonight’s plans. I’ve been wanting this for a long time. Lake holds open the passenger side door for me and I get in. He grins waiting until I buckle up before closing the door.

We drive in a comfortable silence for a while then he clears his throat. I turn and just stare for a few seconds. Lake is by far one of the most attractive men in the world. So to know I make him even a little nervous makes me giddy and flirtatious.

“I’ve been meaning to ask you something.” He says eyes on the road, staring out the windshield.

“Okay, what is it?” The fear I’m experiencing can’t be described. I hold my breath waiting for the big question.

“Why haven’t you ever asked me to play your little singing game?” There isn’t an expression on his face and he doesn’t even look at me. He just gets on the freeway driving to our destination.

I want to laugh because I was actually scared but I know better than to tease him right now. This is a huge deal for him to step outside his comfort zone and to care about my

wants over his own. Why is my mind trying to calculate the risk of recording him? Lake would definitely kill me but this could be a once in a lifetime thing.

His head whips to me, then he frowns because I haven't said anything yet. "Nevermind, that was a stupid question." He sounds really upset so I work on damage control. I grab his hand and put it on my thigh. When he looks at me again, lust dances in his eyes.

"No, it's not. I never thought you would if I asked. You are after all, big badass Lake Masters." I give him a flirtatious grin and wiggle my eyebrows.

He laughs then says, "I like to say Lake Mother Fucking Masters but that works too." He changes the radio connecting his phone and I'm speechless. "I already picked out the song though." I'm amazed he thought I would argue with him.

I'm so down for this!

Once again I'm completely speechless when "Slow Hands," by Niall Horan starts. *Holy Shit Lake begins singing.* He has a beautiful voice too, like really fucking good.

He doesn't look at me the whole time and just sings all the words. He glances over when I join in and squeezes my hand, bringing it to his lips. We finish the song laughing at my funky dance moves. Then he licks his lips looking at me and I groan.

My underwear would be toast if I was wearing any. I squirm at the wetness between my legs staring at him. Lake speeds up like he knows with his hands tight on the steering wheel. He gets off the freeway and makes a couple right turns before the car stops. I sit up to look out the windshield.

"Where are we?" I'm trying to see, but the massive fence blocks my view.

"This is our sex house. I've been thinking long and hard since you came back." He glances at me then pulls into the property when the gates open. The house is beautiful. It's not anywhere near as big as the beach house, but definitely not

considered small. A mini mansion would accurately describe it.

“I thought you were taking me to your apartment.” I’m really confused while staring at the house. Was I wrong this whole time? Is that something he plans on keeping on the side? My heart sinks and I get sick to my stomach. He parks the car and turns off the engine. I need to get out and get some fresh air before I have a panic attack.

Lake locks the door when I try to open it and my head snaps to him. “What are you doing?” His tone is curious but also firmly pissed. “I will never take you there.” He shakes his head and I see regret in his teal eyes.

That makes me want to cry and I feel the tears in my eyes even now.

“I’m not really feeling so well. Maybe, you can take me home and show me your new house some other time.” I didn’t even know he was moving out. Gage told me about Sage but no one said anything about Lake.

Lake baffles me when he reaches over and places a hand on my forehead. He frowns while watching me closely. “You don’t feel hot. Should I call the doctor or take you to the hospital?” True concern is written all over his gorgeous face.

“No, it’s okay. I just...I-” I glance at the beautiful house again. He really picked a great place. I take a deep breath and meet his eyes. ” I’m sure you will be happy here. It’s just I thought you wanted to be with me. Not just dating but...like be my Master and explore those fantasies with me.” I finish in a rush of embarrassment. My cheeks have to be bright red by now.

He laughs out loud and that hurts even more. I close my eyes to try to prevent the tears from falling. When his hand takes my chin, my eyes pop open and meet his.

“I guess I need to explain myself better. Normally, this isn’t a problem for me. I swear woman, you make me tongue tied sometimes.” He stares at me and I’m still confused so I just wait for him to continue. “I can’t take you to my old

apartment because I sold it. The thought of taking you there didn't feel right to me." He shakes his head then gestures out the window. "I had this one built for us."

"You built me my own pleasure house?" *No freaking way!* I look out the window again like I have x-ray vision and I can see inside.

"I'm calling it our Sex House, but yes I did. The guys are going to want to use it too I'm sure. They'll be allowed to design the bottom level, but the top is mine. There's a small kitchen, bathrooms of course and one room for sleeping. The rest are done in different themes." A wicked grin spreads across his face.

I know my face shows my excitement because I want to see everything.

"Before we start tonight, we have to deal with this." He hands me a small white envelope.

I pull out the papers, but don't read them. My heart squeezes and I tell myself this is normal. He does this with all the women because he needs to protect himself. I clear my throat, pushing down my sadness.

"Where's the pen?" I don't look at him. Instead, I glance out the window.

"What the fuck? I'm trying not to get insulted but you keep treating me like I'm a stranger. It's unsettling and honestly it's fucking pissing me off." My head turns to him and I just sit there staring. He's offended? Lake laughs and touches my forehead with his thumb. "Those frown lines are going to stay that way if you keep making that face."

I pull my head away from his touch and give him a dirty look. "Don't make fun of me and let me out of this car." Okay, yeah I'm throwing a fit. I need some air.

"Mistory, please read the papers." His voice is soothing like he's talking to a wounded animal.

I open the papers then blink several times after reading them. One is just his test results but the other is so much more and I read it again.

I, Lake Masters, belong to Mistory Alexandera for always and until my dying breath. She will own my soul for all of eternity.

Lake Masters

He's watching me with raised eyebrows and a smirk. I jump in his lap and attack his mouth. He groans and pulls my head back to change the angle of the kiss. His tongue fights with mine and I grab his hard cock. That makes him grunt and pull away shaking his head.

"Not yet," he covers my hand. "Do you accept me? You'll have to take all my flaws too, so you should think about it because there's no going back after tonight." He almost looks fearful of my reaction to his question.

"I will take *ALL* of you, Master." I tell him confidently and kiss his lips again. I'm elated that the feelings are mutual between us.

He nods then opens his door to help me out of the car. I adjust my dress and follow him up the short stairs to the front of the house. He unlocks the door for me and swings it open so I step inside. I jump, spinning around when he slams the door behind him.

Lake turns slowly to address me with a spark of lust in his teal eyes. "It's your first night here and I don't want to overwhelm you with all the details. We'll play it by ear and be spontaneous for tonight. What is your safe word?" He walks by me bumping me with his hard body and I shiver.

I have no idea what to say so I go with my tried and true, "Fake."

He shakes his finger at me laughing, "Alright Sex, keep it up. You can take off your shoes"

I wasn't actually teasing but I blush at the thought of talking back already. I slip off my heels and watch him.

Lake removes his suit jacket with major flair like the villain from some action movie. He hangs it on a waiting hook before looking at me again. "Sometimes, I'll want you to greet me naked on your knees waiting for a collar." He opens the

large black cabinet next to him to show me the inside. It's filled with different collars and matching leashes. There's even a few pairs of handcuffs and other things I can't see before he closes it again. "We'll have code names for everything so we don't ruin the illusion of our playtime. If we stay in character, it will increase the pleasure. If you say or even whisper your safe word at any time all actions stop and will not continue until a later date. So, make sure you mean it. Do you understand and agree to these terms?"

"Yes, Master." I'm going to learn so much from him.

Lake moves behind me and begins to unzip my dress slowly but he steps away once done. "Strip and put your clothes in there." He points at the laundry shoot next to the door.

I slowly begin to slip one strap off my shoulder.

"Stop," the word is barked out and I jump. He growls and his teeth are clenched together. "Mistory, are you wearing all the clothes I sent you?"

I freeze to look over my shoulder at him. I'm not sure if it's going to work but I try acting innocent. "No, Master. I was very bad."

"Fuckin' A, Sex." He scolds holding his fists clenched tight at his sides. "You will pay for that."

I'm sporting a wicked grin now and do as I'm told. He watches me as I take off the dress, shaking a finger at me again. His eyes roam my body like a caress and I shiver with anticipation. I incline my head towards the cabinet but he just shakes his head.

We take the stairs and start walking down the hallway. I try to peek in the rooms but to my disappointment most of them are closed. That makes me pout and become soaking wet at the same time. All I keep thinking is, this is all for me. I know it's petty but I'm so happy that no other woman has been here.

"Why are you smiling, Sex?" He curiously wonders tilting his head at me.

I don't lie to him because honesty is a huge part of all this. It's all about trust and surrender. Open and honest communication is why this world works so well for most people. BDSM is a strong partnership that takes cooperation and understanding from both parties.

"I'm jealous of the other women you've played with, Master." I hope my whine is barely noticeable.

"And that makes you smile?" He frowns, confused by my confession. We agreed not to talk about the past but he makes me possessive.

"No, the fact that you built this does." I spin around correcting him, my eyes moving everywhere trying to take it all in.

"Good Sex, just for that. I'll show you one room." He steps up to the next door on the right.

My Master's grin spreads as he opens the door slowly. He backs up so I can go in first. The lights flip on and I look around confused for a second. All I see are several sets of steel pipes mounted on the walls and floor. They're clustered together in weird positions all over the room. I walk closer to a set and see the little locks on the connecting pieces.

Oh my God.

The pipes will lock my body in different sexual positions. It's not traditional positions either but ones that expose all my holes to him. He can do with me as he pleases bent and twisted like that. All these traps demand trust in your partner. I will one hundred percent be at his mercy. No control will be in my hands and that's so sexy. I walk over to touch a contraption on the wall in front of me. It's two padded metal pieces that come out of the wall in a V shape.

"Your back goes against the wall and those keep you spread open." He points at another metal rod higher up on the wall. "That bar holds your arms out and it locks at both ends." He waits for my eyes to return to his before pushing a button.

I gasp when a large mechanical cock comes out of the wall. If I was sitting there, it would have entered me. "Oh," I

shift thinking about getting on this thing.

“Come on, we need a shower first.” He makes the cock disappear and drags me from the room laughing at my face.

I pull back trying to get one more glance. What was that large wooden platform for in the corner?

We walk past another door but it’s closed and I growl. The next room isn’t though so of course, I stop and stare. Lake curses then marches back to me. He rolls his eyes but doesn’t stop me from going in. This one has a huge bed in the middle of the room. On the floor around the bed is a roulette wheel with different sexual positions.

“Watch,” Lake says, then touches something on the wall.

Holy shit.

The bed has begun spinning slowly in a circle. When it stops, the arrow at the foot of the bed lands on doggie style. My eyes snap to him and he nods.

“I can add that too,” he points to another smaller wheel on the wall. That wheel has different toys on it. The wheel starts spinning and the big arrow lands on a butt plug.

“Are we staying in this room?” I shift next to him, okay with how both spins turned out.

He chuckles at my eagerness then pushes me out of the room, closing the door. “I wanted to build an escape room but it was starting to resemble a murder scene. So I went with that idea instead.”

“I like it, Master.” I purr the words and he slyly adjusts his cock. My heart races in anticipation of feeling him again.

“Actually,” his wicked grin is back. “A horror movie could have some appeal now that we’ve gone to the Halloween party. How do you feel about vampires?”

“Yes,” I don’t let him finish the word.

He laughs and it’s so refreshing to see him happy.

“Wait,” I stop walking, bewildered at this idea. “Are all the rooms related to us?”

Lake continues down the hall and doesn't answer my question. I follow him wondering if it's true, but don't push the topic.

“It truly is beautiful here. You did an amazing job.” I'm being honest, I really am impressed. This would have taken a lot of time to get done.

The architecture in this building screams Lake. He's an extremely talented and creative individual. He glances over, lifting his eyebrows at me. I try not to squirm when his teal eyes roam my body hungrily.

There's another large black cabinet up ahead. What's in there? My mind is nagging me to ask, but I want him to enjoy the control so I stay quiet. I look down once again, surprised I'm not uncomfortable walking around naked like this. I shouldn't be though because the guys have helped me be confident in my own skin. Plus, Lake keeps shooting me glances of pure lust. I kind of want to shake my goodies for him to see how he reacts.

Could I make him lose that careful control of his?

I want him to show me what makes him tick. My obsession will be to please him. I can feel the need already burning inside my heart.

“Some of this,” he waves his hand through the air. “Is really new for me too. I've never wanted a true relationship like this before. I'm a selfish man, Mistory. My needs were all that ever mattered. So I never wanted to learn about after care until now with you.” He wants me to know that I'm different from the others.

“Thank you, Master.” I reward him with a blinding smile that I rarely use. Basically, I wear my heart on my sleeve for him to see.

“This house was designed for your pleasure. I left a few rooms open that you may design on your own.” His

flirtatious grin tells me that my face just lit up from all the plans running through my mind.

“I trust you, Master.” That statement means everything to both of us.

“Hurry,” he commands and holds out his hand for me.

I take it without a second’s hesitation. We only go two doors down from our current location. He opens the door, pulling me along with him. When we walk in the room, I just stare trying to understand what I’m looking at. Once again I’m fascinated with the design but totally impressed by the possibilities the room will bring.

This isn’t a traditional bathroom in any way, shape, or form. A floor to ceiling glass wall separates a couch and the rest of the room. The whole room on the other side is covered in blue, gray and white marble. It’s like one giant shower with a big drain in the middle. The large chair in the center of the room confuses me the most. There are several silver handheld faucets facing it. In one corner there is a built-in seat and a dual head waterfall shower panel system.

He opens the glass doors, stands back and motions me inside. “Go sit down on the chair, Sex.”

“As you wish, Master.” I step inside and sigh when the tile is warm, not cold on my bare feet.

“Wait not yet,” he says with his hand reached out to stop me. “Different temperatures and pressures can be stimulating to extremely sensitive areas of the human body. This time we won’t use this but I’ll show you so you’ll dream about it.” His wickedly playful grin spreads as he touches a tile next to the chair. A tube pops up in the middle of the chair and water begins to pour out. Lake taps the tile once more and the flow speeds up. Then again with another tap it gets faster.

I feel like my sex crazed mind doesn’t understand what I’m looking at. My question is a low whisper, “Does it go inside?” I can’t take my eyes off the tube and the pulsing water.

“If I want it to,” his tone holds authority and my head whips to him. He turns off the tube then it disappears. “Sit down.” He gestures to the chair.

I expect the surface to be cold but the warm water has heated it. The faucet aimed at my lower half turns on and I gasp trying to block the spray until he growls. He bends down next to me and suddenly the chair begins vibrating. My body zings with new sexual energy and I hold my hands at my sides.

Lake stands to walk across the room. A secret door opens from the wall when he touches it. I wiggle on the chair because I’m starting to feel tingling in my pussy from all the movement and water. He reaches into the wall and produces a rolling cart. His eyes watch me closely as he approaches pushing the cabinet.

He turns on the other faucets and warm water covers my body. The streams don’t affect my vision though and I can still see him perfectly. The two upper faucets turn off moments later and I’m soaking wet now.

“Don’t move under any circumstances, okay?” His tone makes me shiver. I nod quickly and he smiles.

My eyes don’t leave him as he takes a bottle from the cart next to him. He squeezes liquid into his palm then returns it. I gasp when he steps into the water fully dressed without a care in the world. He leans over me to turn off the vibrating feature on the chair.

He stares at me then rubs his hands together before sinking them into my wet hair. I groan when his fingertips gently massage my scalp as he lathers the soap. His fingernails dig in deep, making me moan in pure delight. I arch against the chair then move closer to his glorious touch. My eyes open to stare at this man that has stolen a piece of my heart. I trust him completely knowing he won’t let soap burn my eyes. He stops only to grab the handheld sprayer. I lean back as warm water washes through my hair. Soapy water rolls down my body, enticing his gaze. His hand runs through my long hair again removing all the soap. Now he repeats the

process with the conditioner. I'm so relaxed that if I wasn't worked up and horny I would probably fall asleep.

This romantic side of him is very attractive and it makes me want him more. He's changed so much in the short time that I've known him. His clothes are plastered to his toned body and I really want to touch him, but I know he doesn't want me too. He finishes washing my hair and replaces the handhelds.

I think we're done until he starts slowly stripping off his clothes. His rock hard body is covered in beautiful art. The tattoos call to my tongue, trying to tempt my obedience. My eyes roam him greedily and he decides to rotate his hips like a sex machine. He slips off his shoes, socks, pants and boxers. Lake smiles, spinning around for me to see all of him.

I get up without thinking and touch his back before he can turn around. The dragon tattoo is holding a woman and she looks like me. *Holy shit! It's not a dream.* My hand caresses his back and he grunts his approval.

"Master, you're so beautiful." I whisper the statement because I'm still worried about getting up without permission.

"I'm sorry I don't have pretty words for you. You are the one who is beautiful. I want to show you that you matter but I don't know how." There's way too much regret in his voice.

I lean in to pepper kisses over his lower back.

"You're playing with fire, Sex. I wanted to take you to the den first." He growls when I keep touching him. "You're supposed to listen to me." He scolds then turns around swiftly to lift me up in his arms. That skilled mouth of his devours mine in a heated kiss that makes my toes curl in pleasure. His smooth tongue ring always adds that uniqueness that is this man.

Our naked bodies rub together, slick from the water. He gets another bottle from the cabinet and walks me over to the shower in the corner. I keep kissing all over his face and neck. He laughs a rare deep addictive sound that makes my

heart soar. I pout when he sets me on the large built-in seat. The tile is cold here and I yelp causing him to bend over with his amusement. I cross my arm over my middle feeling embarrassed and uncomfortable.

“Aww, don’t pout, Sex. No one makes me laugh like you, Sweetheart.” He almost looks as surprised as I am at his admission. I want to be the one who does it all for him. His teal eyes fill with lust and he turns on the water.

“I’m sorry for moving, Master.” I want to give him this.

He groans, loving the control over me and pours body wash over his hand. Then he begins washing my body with slow silky hands. Fuck, huge tattooed hands that rock my fucking world. The soap makes them slide over me. He isn’t even touching my naughty parts and my body is bow string tight. After his palms run along my nipples, his tattooed fingers pinch the peaks. My moans echo around us and he doesn’t stop or give me any mercy. I grip the tile seat hard trying to stop myself from reaching for him.

Finally, like coming home, his hands travel down my stomach towards my waiting pussy. I lean down and try to get closer to those big hands. Instead, Lake tortures me and bypasses my aching dripping center. I let out a frustrated huff, but moan seconds later when his fingers move to my inner thighs. He spreads my legs and I help him.

Lake steps back and washes off the soap all over me. His massive waiting cock is eye level with me and truly magnificent to stare at. The tattooed flames along his shaft dance when his cock jumps several times. My hand automatically goes to reach out for it.

Will it burn?

“Stop.” The command makes me freeze and my eyes meet his. His cocky grin flashes like the bad man he is. “You’re not listening.” He takes his own cock in his own hand. I watch closely leaning in as his big hand moves up and down his huge shaft. “Touch yourself for me.” He orders in his deep controlled Master voice.

My hand moves to my pussy's entrance but he smacks it away. "Not inside. That's for me. You can play with your clit."

"Yes, Master." I do as his commands and use two fingers in a circular motion around my clit. I push down harder, moving them faster as he begins stroking his cock again. We stare at each other as we please ourselves.

"Faster, Sex." He growls at me and it's like a spark to my clit.

I pant harder, my fingers working faster and I'm getting worked up. Shit, I may come already.

Lake pinches the tip of his cock and grunts. He reaches over and one of his fingers enters me deep.

I call his name, "Lake," ready to come.

"No, you may not come yet," Lake hisses at me. He removes his finger and pulls my hand away from my pussy. "No more touching, not here." He sprays both of us, rinsing us off one last time then shuts off the water.

My cheeks are hot and I feel lightheaded, but I really want to come. Thankfully, he holds my hand as we walk out the glass door. He retrieves two towels from the armoire in the corner I didn't see before. Unfortunately, he wraps one around his waist walking back to me. The other he uses to dry my wet body. I'm still humming with sexual frustration so every touch makes my knees weak. He makes sure I'm completely dry before putting the towel in the hamper next to the armoire.

I frown when he turns around, holding a white thin historical princess like dress. It's brilliant and nags at my mind to remember something important. Honestly, my body is buzzing from my almost orgasm. He strolls to me and slips the dress over my head. I get shy when he steps back and just stares for a few seconds. His grin spreads as he holds his hand out for me.

I take it and he laces our fingers together. We walk out of the bathroom and continue down the hall. I stare at our

joined hands knowing this isn't a typical Lake thing to do. He stops next to a door and sighs deeply.

“This is the dragon's den and my favorite room. I can't decide if you're the Princess or Warrior. Either way we want to keep you and lock you up forever.” The heavy wood door opens and he moves back so I can go first again.

I walk into the room and thankfully Lake's close behind me because my body goes limp from the sight before me. It's something from my dream. It's so realistic with the cage, and all the gold and jewels. Even the reflecting lights that look like real lava. The rock walls and waterfall are like a picture from my mind. This is “The Dark Gray Dragon's Den.”

One time Lake left me this note in my suite when he wasn't talking to me. I wrote down a story about a dream I had that night. It was about his dragon tattoos and I was the woman on his back with them. The dragons stole me from a castle and burned it to the ground so they wouldn't try to save me. I kept expecting a great knight to come rescue me but he never did. Instead, I was locked in this giant gold cage, tucked in their den. I described it as a bird cage. They never hurt me and feed me every day. I ended up falling in love with the dragons after living with them for some time. One day the dark gray moody dragon turned into a gorgeous man with bright teal eyes. He looked just like Lake. We finally made love on all the gold in the den. We even fucked hard on the rocks by the waterfall that ran through the cave too.

Lake actually told me he loved the story and asked me to write more. I can't believe he remembered. I was under the impression that he hated me back then. The light in the corner draws my attention and I start crying walking to the wall.

My story is framed and mounted on the wall. He clears his throat so I spin around.

“I love you, Lake”



Chapter 20 - The Predator Gets His Prey

Master Lake "The Dark Gray Dragon"

My body locks tight and I'm grateful my ass doesn't fall over. There's a strong fist wrapped around my heart. I have never wanted something more in my life than to hear those words from her.

"Mistory, I love you more than fucking air." I don't hold back and run to her. My mouth attacks hers and she meets me with the same need I feel deep within. I push her against the hard rock surface that I had created just for her.

Her small hands roam my shaved head and it turns me on more. I flick my piercing over her tongue until we're both panting. She wraps her legs around me and pulls at my waist. My towel falls to the floor and I enter her against the wall. It's tight, wet and bareback like I've never experienced before. Her cum leaks down my leg as I move in her slowly letting her adjust to my size. Once she feels wet enough I thrust in and out of her harder and faster. She screams my name and I growl, biting her neck.

The part of me that wants control makes me stop moving. I pull out wet from her and she whines at me, leaning

heavily on the rock wall. I hold her up and keep my cock out of range of her pussy and hands.

“The fantasy will begin now.” I have to clear my throat because I’m so fucking excited and you can hear it in my voice.

Mistory nods like the perfect obedient pet and stands on her own two feet adjusting the white dress.

I walk to the cage slowly and open the door. The metal rattles and my cock pulses with the sound. “Get inside the cage, Sex.”

She doesn’t even hesitate, which is beyond sexy for me. I help her once she gets to the door and watch her body disappear inside. The door closes with a loud steel on steel slam and I lock the door from the outside. I release a deep breath trying to calm my own dragons. “Is it just like your story?” I ask while walking around the front of the cage staring at her.

Her bright blue eyes shine with eagerness as they travel the room. She smiles happily and I see her nipples through the thin fabric. “Yes, like you read my mind.”

That makes me thrilled and the feeling of accomplishment fills me, but I have a part to play here. “I don’t think I heard you correctly.” My tone is laced with power and authority.

She doesn’t say anything confused. My eyebrows go up warning her to think quickly. Then it dawns on her and she bows to me. *Perfect*. My cock jumps and she sees it. “Master,” she smiles at me, straightening. “Please forgive me, *dragon*?”

I grab the cage trying to call on my control and shake it. “You got me dirty after my shower and that isn’t acceptable. Bend over now.” My tone is sharp and clearly a demand.

Mistory snaps to attention, shivering while walking closer to me. She leans forward getting close to the cage staring up at me.

“Open for me, Princess.” I growl the words, grinding my teeth at her submissive quickness.

She pops her mouth wide open for me.

I stick my cock through the cage right in front of her. “Clean me, Sex.”

Mistory attacks my fire with her tongue, licking me all over. I thrust into her mouth when her lips wrap around me. She gags but keeps taking more of my cock. Her fingers slip out of the cage to roll my balls in her hand.

My hands wrap around the bars, fingers digging into the metal cage and I’m holding on tight. The cage rattles loudly under the force of my grip and she gags on my cock. The sounds bouncing off the walls are gloriously exciting. I pump into her mouth and she chokes but hums on me. My hips speed up wanting to help me finish. Mistory leans closer grabbing the cage too. She’s trying to take all of me, but my cock is too big for her mouth.

My strong control and self-discipline rule here. So I take a deep breath and make myself withdraw from her wet mouth. I know my willpower is something of envy by most. With this flex of determination, I’m testing myself too. We’ll never live out our fantasies if I fuck her before they even begin. I want to rip that white thin dress off her so badly but I settle for a different idea.

“You’re stunning to watch worship my cock with your mouth.” She licks her lips and I grab the cage aggressively making her jump. “Sex, I’m going to chain you up and fuck both your holes. I want you to think about that while you dance for me.” I want to grab my cock when her eyes light with desire. “Strip for me, my warrior goddess.” I step back and flip the two switches on the panel next to me.

It becomes dark in the room and a single light shines above her. She looks up shielding her eyes and I’m afraid she won’t do it, but then she glances at me smiling. Her hips start rolling and she grabs her breasts seductively staring at me. Instead of removing the dress over her head like I think she’s going to, she drops one sleeve off her shoulder to show me her large nipple. Mistory moves to the next one repeating the process and my mouth waters for a taste of her skin. Her hips

never stop moving as the material falls to the bottom of the cage. She spins around wiggling her ass and bends over to tease me.

In a move that is reckless and unbelievably sexy she jumps on the swing I built inside. I have no idea why I added that feature but seeing her like this I'm fucking glad I did. She flips on the bar showing off and my cock is here for it. I watch her a little longer then walk to the cabinet in the corner and open it. When I look over my shoulder she's watching me just swinging. She's not actually trying to see what I'm doing but staring at my ass instead. So of course, I flex it for her. She begins catcalling me like a construction worker.

I laugh until she says, "Dragon's are super sexy."

The door is closed with a snap and I rush to her. I set everything I need on the small side table next to me. I had a step built around the cage to bring her level with my cock if I wanted. My feet hit the top and she gets off the swing. I motion her over to where the chains are attached to padded cuffs. She places her hands through the cage for me without question and I lock them up tight.

All the chains are attached to a high tech system that can be adjusted based on how long I want the chains. I hit a button and the chains begin ticking, moving her arms above her head slowly. I hit another button and the floor of the cage tilts away from me making her bottom half lift up high. The last button turns her body around mid air. Once I loosen the guard on the chain's lever, I can control her so I pull her to me. Her back hits the cage hard in front of me. I wrap one more heavy chain around her waist to hold her in place.

I stare at her chained up before me then smack her with my cock. She moans, trying to swing backwards to penetrate herself on me. I slide my hand up her neck and squeeze a few times. She bucks against the chains moaning for me. Her long dark hair curtains her beautiful body and my cock begs for her.

Her pussy is soaking wet and waiting for me. My finger enters her from behind and she groans deep in her throat, pulling on her chains hard. I play with her until she's

dripping and begging me to fuck her. She sighs when I leave her body, shaking with need. I grab the butt plug I had custom made for her.

I open the small door and reach inside to show her. “See this? I had it made for you. I couldn’t decide on gold for the dragon in me.” I twist it in front of her so she gets a good look. “Or this dark blue topaz I found that matches your eyes. So I picked both.” She moans and slams herself against the cage. I cover the large ball with lube and she watches me closely. I lift the shiny gold pleasure bringer so she can see it better. “Sex, what do you want from me?” I flip a switch so the bright light above her turns into a bed of stars.

She gasps and whispers, “so beautiful.” The awe in Mistory tone makes my grin spread. She tugs on the chains making them rattle to get a better look at me. The lust and desire in her eyes makes my fire scream with hunger. “I want you to put that in my ass and fuck me against this cage.” Her ass slams into the cage again. “Please Master, fill my holes.”

My control snaps and I’m on her quick. I push on her lower back to get her to bend over more. She cries out as I slowly push the plug into her tight back hole. I reach down to make sure there’s only pleasure by playing with her clit. She pants pushing back against it getting wild. The butt plug isn’t big because I would never let a toy have that much fun. Besides, I want her nice and tight for my cock. My fingers work her over, circling her clit and massaging it to perfection. She finally takes the whole plug with only the jeweled end showing.

“You are such a good little Princess Warrior for taking all that gold. Are you ready for my fire too, Sex? Will you come all over my cock like a good girl?” My fingers are still rubbing her clit slowly so she can’t speak. Her moans and pants fill the air around us like a magical song. I pull her back and impale her on my hard cock. I make myself hold still deep inside her. I pull out slowly and then thrust harder into her. My hand wraps around her hair tightly and I start pulling her back on me. Her body bucks and arches against the chains. Every rattle and bang is like music to my cock. “I didn’t hear you.”

“Yes Master, please make me come on your fire.” I reward her by pumping my hips fast. My abs push the butt plug deeper into her and she tells me all about it in great detail. The chains over her head rattle with each one of my thrusts. She’s dripping all over me and finally comes with a deep roar. My hips don’t stop and I sink deeper now with all her cum leaking out.

“Maybe, I can turn you into a little dragon with my cum. Do you want my cum inside your pussy, Sex?” I don’t want it to finish this fast but it’s been such a long time. I’ve dreamed about this for months.

“Please Master, I want all of you forever. This is just the beginning.” Her words aren’t helping the situation any and I’m trying to prolong my reaction. I release her hair and she sighs. My hands run down her smooth skin and body. Then my fingers find her clit again. Mistory’s wetness is covering my thighs and it feeds my ego pushing me to give her more. I exercise complete control and step away from the cage. Mistory body sags bonelessly against her cuffed hands and stomach chain.

I open the door and step inside the huge cage. She looks up at me grinning, trying to be flirtatious but she’s exhausted from that orgasm. I step on the built in seat to reach up and adjust her arms. I’m worried about blood flow and the pain that comes with it. I have plans for us all night long.

I actually screech like a little bitch when her tongue touches my cock. Of course, I grip her head and enter her mouth willingly. She gags when I push her mouth on me deeper and I groan, pulling away.

I hold her chin and look deep in her eyes. Then I tap her face with my cock right on the cheek. “You are bad, but that mouth of yours is too good.” She sucks on me some more. “Enough,” I growl, pulling away reluctantly. “I want your pussy instead,” and two of my fingers enter her once. I step forward releasing her arms and they fall to her sides. “You need to stand for a second. Can you handle that Warrior Princess?” She flips me off and I laugh.

The rest of the chains hit the floor and she groans but I pick her up quickly. She wraps her legs around my hips and I lift her higher. Her small hand slips between us and she lines us up. I enter her hard, grunting from the feel of this new angle. Her arms wrap around my neck pulling me closer. I move to the swing using it to balance her in the air. Her fingertips and palms roam my body making me groan. It's not lost on her that I crave her hands on me. It's never been like this before, only with Mistory. Normally one touch from a woman and I'm totally limp. Everything is different with her. I fuck her harder, moving faster in and out of her wet pussy.

My hand reaches out to find the plug and I get a good grip on it. I thrust up over and over, trying to get her to the next orgasm. Her walls tighten around me and I keep fucking her harder. My mouth covers hers and we kiss like it's the first time. When I know we're both close, I bottom out and pull the plug from her coming deep inside her pussy. She screams my name, shaking in my arms from the pleasure. My mouth meets her neck and I bite down.

"My dragon Master." She whispers, next to my ear still panting.

"There's no pouting here. I'll show you three more rooms today, but that's it." I laugh out loud when she sticks her tongue out at me. I fucking feel fantastic right now. "That way," I point to the other end of the hall.

Her bright blue eyes go wide and she gets giddy with excitement. Mistory spins on her toes like a dancer to head in the right direction. Looks like orgasms do wonders for her attitude too. I will definitely remember that and she can keep helping me with mine.

I'm a little embarrassed about this room but I know she'll love it. My need to make her happy always catches me off guard. She's vibrating with energy and feeling super proud of herself for conning me into letting her wear that dark gray teddy. Little does she know I really like Sex in my signature

color. Her hips are swaying rhythmically in front of me and she's doing it on purpose. It makes me growl and she giggles.

I grab a remote off the wall from one of the charging stations I installed throughout the house. The technology in this house is grade A and I can control everything from these remotes.

"Go ahead," I gesture to the closed door with my head. I'll let her open this one.

She smiles brightly like an adult being told it's an open bar. Her hand's twisting the knob, but my Sex looks over her shoulder verifying I still want her to go inside. That makes my dick hard and I step forward to push the door open for her. Mistory literally jumps up and down running into the room screaming.

"This is your wind down room. That's a touch screen but you can also use this." I hold up the remote for her to see. The giant screen connects to her new updated Amazon account. "It has the one click buying features activity with unlimited everything and you can even play audio books."

Her mouth is hanging open in amazement and that makes me grin. "You got me a wall tablet?" She picks up the matching smaller one. "And a new tablet? This is so freaking romantic, Lake." Her eyes are laughing at me as she runs her hand over the plush sofas.

"Let's not get carried away." I laugh it off and shake my head. I'm not a romantic.

"Does this have my reading history on it?" She begins tapping the screen on a mission.

"Probably, we will talk about that part later." She looks at me and rolls her eyes. "There's another surprise in this room." Her head whips to me. I walk to the wall and hit the green button there. She claps and cheers when the ice machines pop out of the wall. It's fully stocked for her to use right now. She jumps over the back of the couch to make herself a drink.

“I’m going to get fat but it’s so worth it.” Mistory moans as she takes the first sip of her frozen treat. “Okay, I’m going to be here for a while. I can’t believe I have unlimited access to Amazon. This is so awesome! Where is my phone? I think it’s in the car.” She’s pulling up a list of shows on the TV. “Nevermind, I forgot where I was for a second.” Finally, it dawned on her, we’re here for other stuff but then she just says, “I shouldn’t invite anyone here.” She winks at me, sipping her drink. That little she devil.

“You better not watch that. That’s a group show.” I point at the screen. We watch “The Boys” together every Thursday night. It’s a new tradition we started recently. She gives me a wicked smile that makes me laugh. “Seriously, no cheating. Plus, don’t you want to see more rooms?”

To my complete shock she just shrugs and returns her focus to the TV. When she presses play, I jump over the couch and shut it off.

“Hey party pooper, why did you do that?” She’s sipping her drink and looks adorable but I’m in charge right now.

“Get up now and address me correctly.” My tone is not one to be ignored and if I had a whip I would crack it.

She snaps to attention and her eyes only widen briefly. “I’m sorry, Master.” She begins crawling on the couch to me and my cock likes that. *Hell yeah.* She stands up and walks right past me to turn on the TV again.

“You little troublemaker, take off that teddy right this instant. No clothes for you. Follow me when you’re done.” I march out of the room but steal a glance of her getting undressed. “Hurry up!” I yell and she jumps at my order. Her tits bounce and she shivers excited.

In the hall I open the cabinet doors, searching for what I want. Toys and costumes are scattered all over this house, tastefully hidden in cabinets and walls. I showed her the dress up room earlier. She’s standing next to me now naked and smiling like a good girl. I show her the collar and leash I picked out. Mistory sticks her neck out for me to attach it. The

snapping sound makes my cock jump. Her eyes shine because she's horny as hell too.

I wrap my hand around the chain using it to pull her closer to me. My mouth takes hers in a deep dirty kiss. I hold the leash tight as I pull her down the hall and she happily follows with rock hard nipples. I can tell she's getting off on this type of play too and that makes me thrilled. Unfortunately, we don't have far to walk, but I pull on the chain every once in a while and she moans for me.

I've planned every inch of this house. If you're paying attention you will see little pictures on the plaques next to each door. I'll explain everything to her later when we have more time or she can read the handbook I made. The picture for this room shows a thunder cloud. I open the door and let her enter the room before me. Effortlessly, I find the hidden switch on the wall and flip it. Soft gray light filters into the room from above. Moments later, gentle flowing water pours from the scattered holes in the ceiling. Her gasp is sweet music to my ears. My body's buzzing with anticipation and automatically moves closer to hers.

"This room simulates rainfall. It also represents our first meeting. Did you know I wanted to fuck your pretty little mouth...the...very...first...day?" I growl in Mistory's ear, bumping her with my erection to emphasize my point.

I step back to let my hand crack across her ass for good measure. My gorgeous Sex moans for her Master like a good girl. I want to fuck her again right here but I have another room in mind. It's a full circle type of day. I grab a towel, drying us both quickly. She hands me the leash after I dispose of the towel, making me smile. I pull her from the room and down the hall to the next room.

"This is the last one." I open the door and walk in then turn on the lights.

"Lake, why does this look exactly like the kitchen at home?" She spins around looking at everything totally confused.

“Because we had sex for the first time in that kitchen.” I become shy at the thoughtfulness this room shows. She has her hand over her mouth with tears filling her eyes. “Well, don’t do that. I guess I shouldn’t tell you that this is the same table too.” I touch the table I had moved here.

She runs and jumps in my arms. “I love you, Lake.”

I hold her to me tightly. “That’s what I’ve been trying to show you. I love you too, Mistory.” She cries but I know she isn’t sad.



Chapter 21 - Time To Make My Move

Lake Mother Fucking Masters

I set my phone down on the counter smiling to myself briefly. My parents said they were proud of me for taking this next step in my future. They couldn't stop talking about Mistory and our plans for Thanksgiving soon. So much so that I almost hung up on them just now without saying goodbye. Mom was talking about the Hawaii vacation and weddings. My dad's weren't any better either and I don't need the added stress of the dreadful parents' pressure.

They were right about one thing though, she does make me a happier man. I wonder if she's here yet? After catching some waves this morning I took off without saying goodbye. I want to text her but my anxiety is overwhelming at the moment. My mantra has been on my lips all day.

“I'm in control always in control.”

It's a big day today. We've had to reschedule this show multiple times because we couldn't find Mistory in the beginning. I know the cast and crew are excited to be working again. The show is still very popular and pulls in great ratings for the network.

There's an unexpected knock at my dressing room door. My frown's immediate and I growl at the intrusion. No one's supposed to bother me right now because I gave specific orders when I got here. The knock sounds again, and before I can say anything Ty strolls in like he owns the place.

"Bro, how ya doin'?" We do the typical guy hand shake.

"I'm good. What have you been up to?" I haven't seen or spoken to him since Mistory was kidnapped. That thought makes my mood sour even more.

"Not much. I got the summons to get to California so here I am. I forgot how fucking hot it is here." He whines like he has any room to talk.

"I'll take my dry heat over your humidity any day. How's stuff at the shop?" Ty and his twin brother owned their own shop in Florida. I have a plan that he's going to love but I can't tell him yet without ruining the surprise. I'm honestly not sure what he'll say.

"Good, it's been busy since the show started airing. New fans want new tattoos which is always a good thing." He plays with the spike in his chin and glances at his phone.

I can tell something is wrong with him, even though he's acting like everything is peachy keen. My eyes narrow now that I'm suspicious, and really take in his appearance. His normal jokester laid back personality is gone. I'm not good at talking about feelings, but I know Mistory would tell me to ask.

"Everything good with you?" I clear my throat, obviously uncomfortable with the whole sharing thing.

His head lifts and he plasters a fake smile on his face for me. "Yeah," then he sighs, letting the mask fade. *Oh shit*, my friend may be heartbroken. He meets my eyes, shaking his head resigned with his situation. "Betrayal from strangers and enemies is ten times easier than by people you love."

Wow, that was deep and one hundred percent accurate. Who hurt him?

“Did your bro-” I’m cut off by another knock at my door. I curse and hold up a hand. “One second, I’ll tell whoever that is to leave then you can tell me all about it. I’m really good at hiding bodies.” I open the door and I’m pleasantly surprised to see all my family and my woman.

That has a nice ring to it.

“Good to know,” Gage says, patting my shoulder on the way in. He spots Ty and the two strike up a conversation. Everyone else pushes by me and files into my room without an invitation, but I’m happy they’re here.

Mistory stops at the door waiting while staring at me. I still can’t believe I told her that I love her and I do. Her grin’s massive, eyes bright and gorgeous. She gets to see the tattoo today, that one I inked on her back.

“Who are we killing?” She teases me, tilting her head in question. I know she would do that for me, if I needed her to and that’s an indescribable feeling. Her hand comes from behind her back and it’s holding a small gray box.

“Is that for me?” I know that sounded a little high pitched but I wasn’t expecting something.

She nods, shyly ducking her head but she’s also really happy batting her eyelashes. Her little body begins bouncing around, and she just can’t contain herself. She pushes the box in my hands smiling.

“Thank you,” I say looking at the box. Then I do something else that shocks the shit out of me. I lean into her like I have a fucking secret. “I’ll tell you the gossip later, I don’t know much.”

She gets even more geeked because she loves gossip. Her mom got her addicted to celebrity gossip and it grew from there. I love knowing facts about her like that shit. I’m becoming soft and I don’t give a fuck.

My eyes travel her body in the robe the production team put her in. It’s too short to be walking around in. I’m just about to tell her that fact, when she bends closer and her scent

hits me. My thoughts are a mess after a scene from the house sneaks up on me. It looks like I'm training myself too.

“Oh, you know a secret?” She looks over my shoulder, her eyebrows high. “Is it about Ty? His brother was looking for him earlier.” She whispers looking at the man with narrowed eyes.

“Not yet, yes, and interesting.” I nod glancing at him too. We laugh when everyone gives us a weird look. “Wonder why they aren't together.” The twins are normally connected at the hip. They're really tight, even more than me and my own twin.

“You can grill him later. Open it up already.” She points at the box, her cool composure gone.

It's a big deal to get a gift from her. The guys always brag about her thoughtful gestures and I'm usually extremely jealous so I try not to pay attention. For some reason I'm embarrassed to open it with her watching me, but I tear into the box like a kid on his birthday.

All I can do is stare at the touching treasure in awe. I'm a little choked up because it's fucking super cool and damn it, totally perfect for me. It's a figurine of a dark gray dragon with tattoos that match my own. He even has a tattoo gun in his hand and a surfboard at his feet. This had to be customized because the dragon's eyes are teal too.

I look up and she's still staring at me, a little unsure of herself. “I fucking love it, as much as I love you.”

Suddenly, she leaps straight into my arms and I catch her out of reflex. We laugh when I spin her around. I'm happy that she comes to me on her own free will now. It seems like she really actually loves me. I know she said it the other night but what if that was only because she was being sentimental.

“Yay! I love it as much as I love you too.” That makes my cold dead heart pump back to life with the fire and love that can only be her.

We come together, attacking each other's mouths. Our tongues roll together becoming one endless motion. I rub

against her and she does the same. Can I kick everyone out of here real quick? Fuck yes, I can. I'm Lake Mother Fucking Masters. Shit, the guys can stay.

"Hey guys!" We break apart and Mistory smiles at me before we turn our attention to the door frame. "I'm sorry for interrupting, but I'm bored as hell and I don't know anyone here. I figured you two would be here at least. Do you know when this will start?" She looks sick like she's lost weight and not the healthy way.

"Hi Roxy, how are you doing?" Mistory has a heart of gold and it's showing right now. Roxy wasn't always nice to her. They probably made up because everyone's drawn to Mistory like that. "Did you enjoy your time off and have fun visiting home?"

Mistory hits me and her eyes widen. She tilts her head towards Roxy and I frown at her lifting my arms. What does that mean? I look back at Roxy and her lips are twitching like she watched the whole exchange and understands Mistory.

Man, women are crazy.

Roxy's small smile drops and she shakes her head. The sharp edge is back in her guarded eyes before she talks. "Not really. My boss is a creep who doesn't appreciate me. That's why I *NEED* to win this show." She rolls her eyes, hating the vulnerable admission. "He's one of those male chauvinists that thinks only sluts work at tattoo shops and they aren't any good. I have more talent in my little pinky, but I get no respect." Roxy's eyes are blazing as she wiggles her smallest digit at us.

I didn't realize her circumstances were that bad. My plan sounds even more promising now and I can really help Roxy change her life. I glance back at Mistory and she nods. Okay, I get it and my woman doesn't even know my plans yet.

"We aren't sure when they'll call us since we're recording with a live attendance today." I look at Mistory and she nods again, understanding my silent question. *So this is what it's like, huh?* I'm already on the same wavelength as her.

My grin spreads and I even sound friendly. “Come in, Roxy. You’re more than welcome to chill with us.”

“If she stays, I go,” Ty snarls from behind me and Mistory grabs my hand.

Well, damn. Most of the people in the room flinch at the tone and the silence becomes uncomfortable fast.

Roxy’s face falls defeated and devastated by his comment. She spins around ready to leave and runs right into Win. His hands land on her shoulders to help her balance so she doesn’t fall.

When did Win cut his hair? You can’t even tell the brothers apart now.

“Sorry, Winston,” Roxy chokes on her apology while staring at him.

“Hey, what’s wrong Fox?” Win’s voice is soothing and extremely warm. My head tilts, watching them closely. He leans down trying to whisper in her ear, but she pulls away fast, shaking her head.

Panic and fear is written all over Roxy’s face when she glances our way, but she isn’t looking at us. Nope, it’s Tyson that has her scared to death. She’s waiting for his reaction.

Holy shit!

Mistory steps closer to me wide-eyed and I think she knows too. She’s one smart cookie. We don’t know the details but it seems obvious.

“You’ve got to be kidding me. Fuck this shit.” Ty’s furious because he watched that little scene too. He storms by us and only stops in front of the two in the tight hallway. Ty addresses his brother and doesn’t even acknowledge Roxy standing next to him. “You fucking promised,” he spits at his twin. I’ve never seen him this mad before and never at his brother.

Win crosses his arms and rolls his eyes. “Shut up, I was looking for you. Maybe if you weren’t running from your problems, I wouldn’t be here right now. Ever think of that?”

Win's gaze moves to Roxy, then back to his brother. He backs up when Ty gets in his face.

"You're only here because I made the mistake of picking you for my canvas. I'll never rely on you for anything again, Winston. Don't worry." Ty snarls at his twin again. I've never heard him call him that before.

Roxy's curled into herself in a defensive position. She's definitely not feeding off this like I would have once thought of her character in the past. Instead, she has a sadness in her eyes and she's very concerned with the brothers fighting.

Mistory pulls my head down and I bend to kiss her deeply. She pulls away much too soon for my liking but I let her go. Then she amazes me once again by going to help Roxy. She wraps her arm around the other woman for comfort. Roxy's body actually sags with relief for the added support.

"Let's go get some snacks. Jesse said there's like tables of food for us to munch on." Roxy nods as she let's Mistory lead her away from the brothers.

Wes and Jesse nod at us then follow the women down the hall.

"What the fuck? I'm not Captain Save-A-Hoe, or anything but what's going on?" I demand answers from the two pouting jackasses in front of me. They're mirror images of each other and even their angry faces are matching right now.

"It's a misunderstanding and a big mistake that happened the last time we were here." Win's words don't match his tone. He doesn't actually believe it was a mistake.

"You got the hoe part right at least." Ty's bitter laugh is beneath him. I'm pretty astonished that Ty would say something like that about Roxy.

Win abruptly attacks Ty and we all have to pull the brothers apart. I'm just trying not to get hit by flying fists. I have a bad habit of punching back even if it's an accident. These brothers are from Miami so they know how to throw

down. Fuck, how's this bitterness going to work on TV? They answer my silent question without being aware.

“As soon as this is done and I win this competition, I'll give you your share then I'm gone and we are through.” Ty sounds serious and that's just ridiculous. They were going to get a bigger shop together. The Florida twins didn't come from money like us but they're fucking talented.

“T we need to talk about this but right now isn't the time. Let's go to your dressing room.” Win tries to talk sense into his brother.

“Don't call me that and stay out of my dressing room. Aren't you sick of acting like me?” Ty doesn't wait for his answer and takes off.

Win sighs and looks at all of us. “I don't know what to do. I've never felt like this before.” He walks off in the opposite direction his brother just took.

Well shit, I have my own stuff to worry about and hopefully my news will give them time to fix this. I look at the little dragon in my hand and I swear I get strength from it.

“What the fuck was that about?” Gage questions me, confused.

“We took a small commercial break to pay our sponsors, but we're back live with a live studio attendance.” Mike waits for the cameras to pan to the attendees. “Now that we've introduced you to the final contestants' teams, please watch the big screen to see a recap of this season.” The lights dim and the video starts on multiple screens around us.

“Are you nervous, *Mi Sirenita*? I still can't believe you haven't seen it yet.” Gage kisses Mistory slyly on her back.

Why didn't I show her yet?

“Hey, block us,” I tell my crew. They frown but do what I say quickly, shielding us from view. I give her a towel and she covers herself without being asked.

Mistory looks at me like I'm nuts when I wheel her chair over to the TV screen next to my station. I had an extra one set up here just in case.

"Lake, what are you doing?" She's glancing around and looks embarrassed.

"I want to show you the tattoo before everyone else. I should have done this before." What if she doesn't like it? She nods, staring at the screen waiting for the image to pop up. I grab the handheld camera wand and I have no problems because they showed me how to use it earlier. I start on her lower back close to her butt so she can get the full effect.

The tattoo is of her sitting against a large beautiful tree full of life. There's a laptop in her hands and she's sporting her author face. The one she gets when she's thinking really hard about a plot twist or fight scene. She never has a problem with the sex scenes. In the tattoo above her head is a massive thought bubble where I've added elements of all the story ideas she's ever told me. I will always treasure the days she sat in my chair and spilled her guts without being aware. I know she'll end up writing all these stories one day and I'll encourage her through the whole process. Shit, I'll start a publishing company for her if need be.

I run the camera along her back so she can see all the details. All our friends are smiling at us. I'm a basket case though because she hasn't said anything yet.

"It's like you're in my head." She stares at me, wonder and awe is aimed in my direction. Her hand lands on my knee, and she points at the screen. "Those are my books. You really listened when I used to talk about them? Lake, I think I want to try writing again." She laughs wiping her eyes and I can't explain the true bliss I feel right now.

"You like it? I know you said some of these are just ideas but I believe in you. We all do." I gesture to my family and they all nod.

The lights come back on and I wheel her chair back in front of a screen. Only her back is on display for everyone to see.

“As you can see it’s been a badass season. Today we’re going to do the final reveal on the full back tattoos. The contestants did these tats a few months ago so they’re fully healed.” Larry gestures to the twins and it’s obvious they’re still fighting. However, the tattoo on Win’s back is fucking bitchin’.

“The inspiration for this piece came from an evil fox that got caught in the hen house.” Ty spits the words more than a little dramatically at the judges. Win and Ty begin fighting in hushed tones. Mike explains the tattoo to the attendees and gives his opinion on the design and application. Unfortunately, Ty’s comment doesn’t match the very life-like tattoo of a beautiful red fox. She’s in a deep forest with other animals but she’s definitely the focal point.

The judges move on to the next contestant and I wait for my turn relieved because I know Mistory already loves her tattoo. She smiles at me and I catch myself before I wave at her like a dork.

I’m so fucking nervous because I haven’t told anyone about this. There needs to be genuine reactions to the news when they hear it. So, I decided to keep it a secret. I’m really hoping Mistory isn’t mad at me when she learns the truth.

Larry’s about to ask me a question about Mistory’s tattoo but I’m going to talk about something else and take over the show.

“Hey Masters, long time no see.” Larry says to me then looks at the camera as instructed.

“What’s up, Larry? How’s life treating you, old man?” That makes everyone chuckle and we shake hands.

Larry whispers, “Asshole, I’m not old” but his mic is on and everyone hears him. They’ll have to try and cut that later. I’m not sure how that’s done when we’re live.

We move towards Mistory and stand behind her facing the people in the room. Larry leans forward looking at her tattoo and I automatically growl. He laughs at me while

stepping away from my woman. She blushes and says my name under her breath. The cameraman comes closer to us and points at Larry.

“This is a fantastic work of art, man. I can’t believe how much detail you did here.” Larry doesn’t touch her skin, instead he uses the screen reflecting my tattoo on it. I breathe easier and smile when she winks at me. “Where did your inspiration come from? You have a great imagination to come up with all this.” He gestures to her stunning tat.

“It’s all Mistory and her ideas. She’s an author and these are the books she’s going to write.” I look at the camera and wink. “Watch out America, this woman’s going to be famous.” I bend down to kiss her shoulder. The whole room gasps or whistles. Mistory gives me a look full of love and respect.

I turn and face a camera pointing at it in case it isn’t the one they’re using. The cameraman is lost but follows my orders. “I have some news to share. I’ve decided to step down from this contest. The final competition will still be at TNT with my partners prior approval.” My friends all nod when I look at them even if they’re confused. Mistory covers herself, I’m so glad she fought to put on those shorts. The robe was making my murder vibes come close to the surface. She stands next to me and takes my hand like she knew I needed her. I know everything will be okay now.

“That really blows. Why are you quitting?” Mike sounds disappointed and stunned as he walks over to us.

Larry doesn’t care about the cameras and he’s already on his phone. He’s grinning like the joker a few seconds later. He hangs up and bows to me. “Well played, Masters.”

“I’m not quitting. I bought the whole lot. This show is now owned by me. All the staff and crew will get signing bonuses.” Those people get loud all of a sudden but quiet down when I lift a hand in the air. “I’m keeping some stuff the same and changing others. Of course, if these three legendary artists will stay on as judges, we’ll be happy to have them.” My friends nod happily. They all seem stoked about the new

change in management. “I’ll be adding special shows to our lineup next season. For example, cancer survivors, military personnel, and mental health awareness just to name a few.” I steal a glance at Mistory and she squeezes my hand. “One of my partners even had a great idea about bringing tattoo artists from other countries here to have a tournament like the Olympics.” I look at Gage and he nods excited about the idea. He wanted to mentor an artist from Mexico and I really like the idea.

“What about this year? I need this win, Lake.” Poor Roxy looks shook and she may be shaking too. I actually feel bad for her. She’s had a hard life and it doesn’t seem to be getting any better lately. Roxy is talented and this is just the beginning of her journey.

“He can’t compete in the show if he owns it. He would have to forfeit the prize.” Larry informs her, knowing all the rules. He’s still smiling because this is the best news for him. He doesn’t even know I’m inviting Kat on the show as the first woman judge too. I need to ask her first or I’d tell him now.

“That’s right I’m DQ’ed because I now own the show. The new Masters of Ink show will continue in January. The last three contestants will get time off for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. Then you’ll need to bring your game faces and prove you deserve to win the new grand prize. The taping will be done here in California.” I raise my eyebrows at Roxy. She’ll still need to earn it. Roxy hasn’t won anything yet.

“What’s the new grand prize?” Katelyn asks, pissed off and confused. She’s the other contestant still in the running. I wish I could kick her off but she’d probably sue me. I know she slept with Rick to get here. I just don’t know who’s helping her stay but I’ll figure it out.

“You’re off the show completely?” Ty asks curious. He’s stealing glances at Roxy and I’m sure he wants to talk to her about this. They were so close.

What happened?

“I won’t be on the show this year, but I’ll be involved. Plus, I could even guest judge every once in a while.” I look down at Mistory. She’s smiling hugely, watching me with loads of respect. My chest puffs out automatically. “I have other priorities now, and big plans for the future.” It’s true all of it, but I throw that information in for the Deadman too.

Mistory sticks out her tongue and I laugh. I kiss her head and finish saying goodbye to people who have been a part of my life the last seven years.

“I appreciate everything this show has done for me and all the people involved but there’s something you all need to know.” I look straight into the camera talking to America. Yeah, I flash my cocky grin that most women go crazy over. “The EX head producer of this show has been blackmailing me for over seven years of my life. We have to do better and change the way manipulation has found its way in this industry. You can’t let people like him win.” The cameraman doesn’t pan away from me and I know we are live. I paid for extra time and there are no commercials during this break. That’s what happens when you mess with someone who has as much money as me.

Shit is about to change and I’m taking back control over my life. Rick will come for me but this time I’ll be ready, and I always win.



Chapter 22 - Show For The Deadman

Lex The Girlfriend

I decided to stay at my parents house this weekend. I haven't spent any time with my little sisters lately and they're growing so much everyday. They have kid problems that I was only too happy to get lost in. We had a huge sleepover in the front room last night and it was like old times. The guys acted like I was punishing them, but I just needed some time to think. They were not okay with the whole idea at first. However, I stopped getting texts every five minutes and they seemed to get over it eventually. I put away the vacuum then inspect my work. No matter what activity we do, popcorn always falls on the carpet. Then someone steps on it and it's mom yelling from there so I volunteered to clean up when Nicky asked for it.

"I'm going to workout." I call down the hall to anyone still here. It's hot already when I open the back door and head to the personal gym my dad created.

I throw some feed to the pigs and goats before walking into the converted garage. It's been over a week since we spread the fake news. The Deadman hasn't made a move yet and I'm getting impatient. Everyone thinks I'm pregnant so

that's driving me nuts too. It's weird and uncomfortable for me. Even the guys are having a hard time separating pretend from reality sometimes. Gage was talking to his parents about it when we went to visit their graves last week. I sent up a silent prayer asking God to explain to the Lopez' that I wasn't ready but I loved their son very much.

I'm so emotional lately and I'm sick of worrying all the time. I hate that the Deadman is controlling my every move because I can't let my guard down. I plug in the treadmill, setting the incline at twelve. My phone gets plugged in next and I pull up the first song. I've made a plan to run my cares away for a while so I get to work on the chore at hand.

My shoes are hitting the treadmill hard with each stride I take. Dua Lipa and Martin Garrix's sexy voices pour out of the speakers. This song is sad and I hope it doesn't reflect my current relationships. "Scared to be Lonely," plays and I try to sing but my throat gets tight. I have to clear it before making myself run harder. Hot tears threaten to ruin my perfectly good workout and I need to get my shit together.

The door slams open to the right of me and I yelp in surprise. I almost fall on my face at the unexpected interruption and I have to jump off like a crazy person with my hands out to catch myself. Thankfully, I pulled the emergency stop on my way down. Treadmill burns are no joke and hurt like a bitch. I pop up off the ground quickly, embarrassed that I got caught slipping. Sweat drips in my eyes so I wipe my face using the underside of my shirt. I can't see who's bothering me because the sun is ridiculously bright. My shirt falls back in place and I hold a hand up to my forehead trying to see.

My heart breaks a little at the sight of the men that just walked in. Anthony closes the door and they invade my space. The song playing makes this gathering even sadder. I'm pretty sure I've been a monster bitch to them. They keep coming back though and I'm so grateful they love me. It's hard not to be scared for all of us, but I shouldn't be taking it out on them.

Jesse grabs my phone and stops the song that's making me want to cry. "That song isn't true at all." His harsh tone

shows displeasure as he thumbs through my phone looking for another one.

I turn to Gage because he's sitting on the couch pouting with his big arms over his chest. He's just waiting patiently watching me.

Anthony begins shooting hoops on my little sister's toy basketball game. His shoulders are tense even though he's messing around. I know he's watching me from the corner of his eye too because I feel the weight of his stare and sadness.

"We want to know when you're coming home, *Mi Sirenita*?" Gage stares me down using those beautiful green eyes, speaking for the others.

Anthony stops playing after making a great shot with no reaction and moves to the couch to sit down. He's shifting a lot, rubbing his knees and wincing. *Is he in pain?* I look at Gage next, and he's rubbing his lower back. Even Jesse's long hair is crazy like he just woke up.

What's wrong with them?

"Why do you guys look like shit?" All three heads snap to me sporting wide eyes. Then they all roar with laughter so loud I jump back in shock. I cross my arms, giving them dirty looks. "Fine, don't tell me then."

"You know me, I'll always be a cocky bastard, but honestly that's just plain funny, *Loca*." Gage calls me crazy shaking his head, totally amused and I frown.

Anthony seems perplexed by my reaction too. He laughs harder when he sees I'm serious with my foot tapping. "Well I guess I'm not as confident as Gage here because your confusion is concerning to me." Anthony frowns, glancing at the other two but then grins again.

"I personally love it and wouldn't have it any other way." Jesse looks up smiling, still messing with my phone. What is he doing anyway?

"Okay weirdos, I have no idea what you're talking about." They all laugh again and that pisses me off.

Gage sits forward, his piercing eyes dancing when he raises his eyebrows. “Mistery, you do realize we are fucking hot right? That women always throw themselves at us.” Gage hits Anthony and points at Jesse, looking for their agreement. Anthony has his mouth open in a big O. Jesse’s silent still focused on my phone but I see his lips twitching.

I tilt my head to stare at Gage. “Women throw themselves at you? Like how? When does this happen? Maybe you’re too much for someone like me to handle. I wouldn’t want to steal you from your fans.” I turn my back before I start laughing in his face. My hand reaches for the refrigerator but Gage slams me into the surface.

“You think it’s funny to tease me like that? There will never be another woman for me. I’m yours forever, *Mi Sirenita*.” He spins me around, pushing his body against mine. His mouth covers mine and I open for him. Gage’s kiss is greedy and punishing for my words. “I’m kinda grumpy because we slept in the car last night.” I gasp and he takes my mouth again.

Gage picks me up to carry me to the couch. He puts me down between himself and Anthony. They sigh, holding me together and I kiss their hands. I missed them too.

“Why didn’t you tell me? You could have come inside.” I glance at them all, sending them a warning look. “That better never happen again.”

Jesse finally finds the song he was looking for this whole time. I laugh because it’s one of my favorites, and also very fitting. Julia Michaels’ beautiful and unique voice sings about herself in “Issues.” Jesse pulls me off the couch and takes my seat. He tugs me on his lap a second later, wrapping his strong arms around me. I snuggle into him and grab the guys’ hands.

Gage kisses my head, Anthony touches my leg and Jesse just holds me.

“One day we won’t have to worry. Then you guys will be bored of me.” I know it’s fishing but I’ll take the reassurance now.

“Never,” they all three say together. We all begin laughing at the probability of that happening.

Gage grabs my face, kissing me long and deep. His tongue is working magic on my hormones. Jesse protests for my attention by tickling my neck with his beard. Anthony touches my back, massaging me. I moan in Gage’s mouth because Anthony’s good at back rubs. We’re getting worked up fast, and the sexual energy is off the charts.

“I’m sick of waiting for this fucker to mess up my life.” Anthony stands irritated and frustrated like me. He keeps turning down broadcasting gigs because he doesn’t want to leave, even for a weekend. I offered to go with him but KISS said it wasn’t a good idea right now.

I get up and run to Anthony, “catch me.” I jump into his arms and he holds my ass in his big hands. He licks my lips, kissing and sucking on my tongue. The barbell from his piercing hitting our teeth causes us to both moan with delight.

I feel two more sets of hands on me rubbing and caressing my body. Anthony kisses me one more time then sets me on my feet. My tank top and sports bra are pulled over my head quickly. The fresh air sends goosebumps over my skin and makes my nipples tight from the temperature change. Jesse takes one hard peak into his greedy mouth and it’s amazing when Gage finds the other.

Anthony pulls down my workout pants exposing my ass to them. I help him by kicking off my shoes and he removes the last of my clothes. The guys are still worshipping my breasts and I moan when I feel teeth. Anthony kneels before me, his large tattooed hand moves down my body. His skilled fingers slide over my clit to play with my wetness.

My other two guys devour me by licking and sucking my tits and neck. Gage spits on a finger, getting it nice and wet. He watches me grinning as he runs the wet finger along my ass. I buck and shiver when he pushes it inside my back hole. My body automatically clamps down on his thick digit. I love getting fucked there and he loves being the one to do it. Once I’m wet enough Anthony pushes two long fingers

through my lips, finger fucking me deep. Jesse attacks my mouth, swallowing my cries of pleasure. The kiss he gives me is amazing and feels divine.

“What the fuck are you guys doing in here?” We all break apart at the sound of Lake’s deep voice. Well, at least I try to push everyone off me, but it’s like a toddler trying to move an elephant. The guys don’t even flinch and they just continue trying to make me come.

No one really cares about Lake being here because they already know we’re all in this together. Anthony’s fingers move back to my clit and I moan holding onto the others. My eyes meet Lake’s teal ones across the room as my knees get weak. The want I see there is intoxicating and makes me hot all over. Lake just stands at the door frame staring at us. Suddenly, he closes the door and locks it with a flick of his wrist.

“Her parents can come down here at any minute. Why would you start this now? We have a whole fucking house for this.” Lake’s trying to act mad at us, but he licks his lips while his eyes roam my body. “Get dressed now, Mistory.”

I moan super loud and bow back from the extreme pleasure. My pussy floods when I look down over my shoulder and see the guys playing there. Jesse licks the top of my back moving down lower. His beard always adds a different sensation. He stops to rest his head on my ass watching closely as he spreads my ass cheeks for his friend. Gage’s finger slides in and out of my back hole. It’s so intense that my legs keep giving out. I glance over to see Anthony staring at me too. His fingers haven’t stopped moving over my clit. Anthony winks then pushes his fingers deep inside me. My hips rock against their hands. They both sink deeper and I know they can feel each other.

“Get up, Tony.” Lake barks strolling over to us shaking his head. “Push her face down into the carpet, Gage. Jesse you spread her ass cheeks more.”

Anthony grabs a pillow from the couch and throws it at the ground in front of me. Lake gets impatient when people

don't listen to him. He growls at Gage then pushes me face first into the floor. Someone slides the pillow under my stomach which pushes my ass up further.

"*Mi Sirenita*, we're all here." Gage whispers in my ear, licking the shell as he sits up. Since he likes to watch he's excited for this and so am I.

It's an odd angle but I stare as Gage and Jesse spread me with their big hands. The sound of zippers opening makes me moan in anticipation. I'm going to be so sore later, and I don't even care.

"Tony, lick her ass and get it ready for Gage's cock." Lake orders Anthony but he just freezes next to me.

Anthony is only a sub to me and only when I want. Otherwise he will beat your ass, so don't get it twisted. I sit up to look at Anthony and Lake growls because I don't have permission. Anthony's chest is puffed up and it seems like he's going to flex on Lake.

"*Mistress* needs your help." My tone is stern and flirtatious as I stare at Anthony. "Do it-" I can't even finish my thought and I'm panting hard. Jesse's using his leather gloves on my nipples so it's making it hard to speak.

Anthony groans then gets on the ground behind his *Mistress* not wanting to be left out. Gage pushes me down this time and I'm completely exposed to all of them. I make myself hold still but I'm shaking while waiting. My eyes find Lake as he moves into my view. He's stroking his massive tattooed cock watching me. I buck uncontrollably when Anthony's tongue touches my sensitive spot. That movement only pushes his face deeper inside me. Anthony wastes no time attacking that hole with his tongue and piercing. While Anthony eats my ass, he stretches my tight hole. Gage begins fingering my pussy and I stare at Lake's cock.

Lake licks his lips staring at me and I watch his hand moving rapidly. "Jesse, feed her that pierced cock of yours." My eyes widen and Lake nods, smirking at me.

Jesse steps forward to lift me up to my hands and knees. His big cock and reverse Prince Albert taps my lips until I open for him. He pushes into my mouth and holds my hair controlling the motion.

I fall back against Anthony from the force of Jesse's thrusts. It makes it hard for Anthony to keep pleasing me which just excites him to do a better job. He pulls me closer to his mouth using my hips to get what he wants. His tongue ring enters me from behind and I choke on Jesse.

"Mistery give me control of your pet or command him yourself." Both Anthony and I moan at the thoughts that statement caused. Jesse lets go of my head and I pull off his cock. I look over my shoulder at Anthony letting him decide. He nods then I nod at Lake. Everyone's buzzing with built up sexual frustration. "Good, now listen up. I'm in charge so just play along and enjoy. Tony, get up now and go sit on your hands right there." He points at a spot on the couch. "Don't move unless I say so." Lake's voice is firm.

Anthony glances at me wide-eyed and grinning. He's geeked as he jumps up to follow the orders. His hands go under his body weight and he watches us ready for the show to begin.

My gaze meets Lake's and this fool is smirking at me. How did he know Anthony would like that? "I love control, Sex. I thought you knew that by now." Lake points at the other end of the couch. "Gage sits next to Tony. No touching." Lake warns Tony, shaking his finger at him. Gage strolls to the couch smiling like a mad man. Did he just fucking skip?

It's hard to concentrate on what they're saying because Jesse keeps running his leather glove gently over my face. He's letting me smell the erotic leather scent that turns me on now.

"I don't have my gloves, Blue Eyes but I can't wait to feel that wet pussy all over my bare cock." He leans in, speaking close to my ear. The bite on my neck makes my legs give out and he catches me before I fall. His laugh is all husky

against my skin like a fantasy. “Stay with us, Love.” He tickles me and I giggle, pushing him away.

My eyes return to the men on the couch. I lose my breath when I see Gage’s cock strong and tall covered in shiny lube. He winks and strokes it for me. Wow, that’s exciting and intimidating at the same time. I have no idea where the lube came from and I’m definitely impressed.

Lake snaps his fingers and my head whips to him. I’m not insulted at all but very turned on. He’s about to own me and I’m okay with that. We’re all waiting on his commands and he’s eating it up. He removes his shirt showing me all that tattooed skin and muscles. Lake is a walking dream but everyone knows that already. He stops in front of me and Jesse straightens to hold me immobile for his friend.

“My art on your skin is a huge turn on for me.” Lake runs a big tattooed hand down my spine lovingly. “This will always be my best work.” He bends over me, sliding his tongue along my back with his smooth piercing. “You make me mad, woman. Right, Jesse?” Lake asks him but his eyes don’t leave me.

“Crazy psycho mother fuckers.” Jesse growls into my hair.

Lake smacks my ass and Jesse rubs the same spot after. The whole working as a team thing is doing wonders for me. My wetness keeps spreading down my legs and I’m beyond horny. I glance over at the groaning coming from the couch.

Yep, Anthony’s ready too because he’s leaning on his hands hard. His erection is still trapped in his pants. I know he wouldn’t want it any other way because he likes the torturing pain of wanting.

Lake holds out his hand for me and I take it. “Come here, Sex.” He pulls me to his body once, kisses my neck then leads me to Gage. “This will be real fun and you’ll love every minute. Gage, close your legs for now.”

Gage does as he’s told while hungrily staring at me with green eyes. He reaches out to run a soothing hand down

my arm. He's so beautiful sitting here naked and standing at attention for me.

"Sex, turn around, spread wide and have a seat. Gage, hold your cock for the lady to help you slide in." Lake steps up to help me when I spin.

I shiver once hard, doing as he says and slowly try to sit down. Lake kisses me once, holding my hands to stare into my eyes. I feel Gage breaching my backdoor and I cry out trying to sit up out of reflex.

Jesse comes forward to raise my arms over my head, locking me in place. Lake makes me watch as his hand disappears from view to start rubbing my clit. Gage leans over and runs kisses down my back. He's trying to relax me, but this angle is deep and he's not a small man.

"She's so fucking tight." Gage pants with the effort of holding back. "*Mi Sirenita*, I want to fill this tight hole completely." He licks my spine, going deeper inside.

Lake kisses my forehead, he looks down at me with tender eyes. "Sweetheart, we need to stretch you some more because Tony wants to try your ass but he's so big. We don't want him to hurt you."

My eyes meet Anthony's and he nods, licking his lips. "Please, *Mistress*?" I moan when Gage sinks in even more.

Unexpectedly, Lake steps between my thighs and I gasp as he bends to push Gage's legs apart. Everyone moans watching the action. Lake holds my face and kisses me deeply. His tongue slides over mine in a dance of ecstasy. I lean into the kiss but Jesse still has my arms. Lake's large hands land on my shoulders and he gently begins pushing me down, which makes Gage's cock slide inside my hole more.

Suddenly, Lake kneels in front of me. He opens my legs further to use his skilled tongue on my dripping pussy. The pleasure of his mouth makes me arch against Gage. I scream a second later because Gage's cock goes all the way inside me. Lake keeps licking and flicking my clit to offset any pain.

Gage takes my hips in a firm grip and starts moving in and out slowly. Lake leans in to suck on my clit. I wish I could see Lake better from this angle, but he's pushing me back against Gage. I feel the delicious stretching. Gage's chest pushes against my back as he thrusts into me.

Lake sucks my clit once again then stands. "Jesse go ahead and take her sweet pussy. Fuck both her holes." His eyes meet mine when he speaks the dirty words to Jesse and Gage. He watches me while licking my taste off his lips.

Jesse adjusts his grip on me and holds my arms with one of his hands now. He bends to kiss me, before pushing deep inside me in one thrust of his hips. He releases me from the kiss to take my nipple in his hot wet mouth. I open my mouth to scream at the extreme feeling of double penetration but Lake puts Anthony's fingers in it. I'm so full and tight with both of them inside me. The guys find a good rhythm, their arms wrap around each other to lock me in place. I bite down on Anthony and he shivers, groaning from the pain.

"Back up some Jesse. Pull her back to you, Gage. That's it. Now we can see that beautiful clit. Can you suck it, Tony?" Lake's authority and dirty talk are top notch.

Anthony's head pushes between our bodies, and he roots around making all three of us moan. Finally, he finds my clit like a golden treasure. He sucks and nips at it with his teeth. This time I shout coming hard. Jesse dives back inside and they both fuck me riding out my orgasm. I lose track of myself and my limp body. Jesse's hips move at record speed, pumping in and out of me. He stops deep inside me coming then kisses me breathlessly. I get a wink before he backs up heading to the bathroom.

All of a sudden Lake pushes my legs up to my chest while Gage thrusts hard from underneath. Gage keeps whispering to me in Spanish. I can't translate the words that fast and my mind is overloaded from pleasure. I'm also preoccupied with his deep thrusts. He holds me tight then comes licking my neck.

“I love you, *Mi Sirenita*.” Gage’s husky voice sends chills up my spine.

I’m pulled off Gage when Lake steps back taking me with him. Gage stands on shaky legs then tugs me to his chest. He leans in, kissing me long and deep.

“I love you, Lion Heart.” His grin is massive and just for me. He kisses my head before following Jesse.

Lake kisses my neck from behind rubbing his erection on my ass. He whispers next to my ear. “Can you take more, Sex or should we give you a break?”

I turn in his arms and I kiss him. My tongue aggressively meets his. “Please Lake, I need you, all of you.”

He puts a finger on my nose and I stick my tongue out for him. Pleased with my answer he smiles down at me. Now he moves over to the couch to sit down and he pats his lap for me. “Come ride my fire, my sweet Mistory.”

“Yes, Master.” I say while bowing my head. Lake’s eyes flash with approval and want.

I crawl on his lap to straddle his waist. He wants me to face him, so he can control me better. Anthony won’t mind either, it’s a win, win. Lake takes both my hands in his to hold them securely behind my back. He bites my shoulder, holding me as he begins to thrust up to meet my hips. He fucks me like that for a few minutes, making Anthony watch because that’s what he likes.

Lake pulls me closer using a tight grip on my ass cheeks with his big hands to control my movements. “Are you ready, Love?” I jolt at the name, staring at the gorgeous man.

“Yes, Master.” I say but he lifts one brow. “My Love.” Wow, that smile, holy mackerel.

Lake kisses me again, and I use my hips and knees to ride him. He growls, stopping me by pulling my hair.

“Tony my man, can you handle this tight ass?” I don’t dare move my arms because I know that’s what he wants.

Lake wraps his arms around me to spread my cheeks for Anthony.

I look behind me and sigh when I see all the lube on him. Anthony is long and wide. Plus, the piercings add even more width. My throat gets dry when I feel his huge dick trying to breach me. I'm a little nervous and scared. He's going slow and I pant with every movement.

Anthony leans forward to whisper. "*Mistress*, you feel so tight pinching and pulling on my cross bars. It feels so good, Sexy." His hand runs between us to find my clit.

Lake doesn't move, he's letting me adjust to Anthony size. I moan then relax against Lake's chest. My body bends closer to Lake which opens me up more for the other man. Anthony's using shallow thrusts to slide into my asshole because of his size. He's stretching me more and more, loving every minute of this. Lake starts moving now and it's almost too much.

I'm limp and weak so the men do all the work. The goosebumps on my skin make me shiver. Lake keeps kissing me and Anthony sucks on my neck. All our moans mix together in a perfect sex song.

Deep grunts make me turn my head to the sound. I see Gage touching himself and he blows me a kiss. Jesse's watching too, his dick is hard again. I want them to come on us but that would be hard to clean up down here.

"I'm close, *Mistress*. I love you, Sexy." He moans in my ear from behind. Anthony's panting hard through his release a few moments later. He leans over me for a second to catch his breath.

"I love you too." I twist his nipple ring and he yelps then moans again, rolling off me.

Lake holds me by the shoulders fucking me slow deep staring right into my eyes. I hold on tightly, grinding down on him. It feels amazing and I'm close again. He licks my neck and blows on my ear until I come on his fire. I can feel his

cum shoot inside me. My head hits his shoulder because I'm trying to calm my racing heart beat.

They all help me clean up in the small bathroom. We get dressed in an after awesome sex haze laughing with each other. Jesse and Anthony are already talking about food. I kiss all my men one by one before heading out the garage.

"Let's go home." Gage says picking me up, kissing my lips. I nod, happy they didn't listen to me and came over anyway.

"Wait, what's that?" I wiggle so he releases me and run to the fence. There's a giant RV parked on the side of the house.

"You didn't actually think we slept in a car did you?" *Well duh.* I spin and Lake's teal eyes light up with mischief. "It's yours now. We can go camping and shit." He says and the others nod.

"I'll never get used to this." I tell them because it's so odd to have this much money.

"We are counting on that." Jesse says laughing at my expression. "That's why we love you."

I mouth, "I love you too," at him.

"You're different." Anthony gives me that commercial smile while petting all my animals.

"Every woman says they don't want to be considered different." All the guys nod, agreeing with Gage. "But when they finally meet the right person or people, you want to be unique and different."

"That's what we are, all of us. Special, unique and different." I tell the men, smiling, ready to leave. I love them all so much.

They all flash me drop dead gorgeous grins as we head for the house.

All that sex gave me an idea.

My plan is falling into place perfectly. After our playtime earlier, I told the guys about this idea. They all agreed that it was time to do something about our problem. We wanted to get the Deadman's attention. That's why we're all going to Serendipity to party and cause a scene for our audience.

The guys are supposed to be there blowing off steam and distancing themselves from their nagging pregnant girlfriend. I'm not going to lie, I almost called the whole thing off when I saw them all dressed up.

Thankfully, Vic called me when I got home to let me know that the movie moved up shooting. They'll be starting right after Thanksgiving, instead of in March like they originally planned. She said they get off for Christmas and New Years though when I started protesting about the holidays.

Since Vic is leaving soon, we're using this as an excuse for a girl's night out. We'll just "accidentally" run into the guys at the club. Makes sense right? So, why do I have a bad feeling in the pit of my stomach right now? I laugh at my girls dancing around me singing in the back of our cargo van.

Jace and Seth are our personal security guards tonight. There's another SUV behind us with more KISS guys too.

I look down at my clothes feeling ridiculous. I'm wearing a red babydoll tee and white jeans tonight. This outfit could be worn to hide a pregnancy easily so I went with it. All the baby comments have made me a little self-conscious about my body.

We all jump out of the van when it comes to a stop in front of the club. Zeke and Ethan meet us at the front door whistling for us. The bouncer we all know, let us in with a head nod. I wink at Derek and he smiles turning beet red. I flip off X, he's a big mouth fucker who just flips me off back. I'm mad at him because he says my Steelers suck.

The club is packed like always with the music pumping as we step inside. We stay close together walking to the VIP area and head upstairs.

A bouncer at the top frowns at us. “We are at capacity up here.” He shakes his head pointing down stairs.

“Yeah right, you’re kidding.” Sage laughs, hitting the guy on the shoulder. “I own part of this place.”

“I’m not. Rules are rules. The Fire Marshall would have my ass if I let you in.” The handsome Basshole smirks at us gesturing down stairs.

I see Gage and Anthony talking to a large group of people. They see us too but pretend we aren’t even here. I’m completely stunned as I watch them duck into the crowd and disappear from sight.

“Why didn’t they come over here?” Tina leans in asking me. I shrug pissed off because I have no idea.

“I’ll find us a table downstairs. Don’t worry.” Jace kisses my head and takes off with Seth. Two guards close in to take their place.

“Let’s not trip over the Marshall. Just take this.” Zeke tries to hand the guy a hundred dollar bill.

The bouncer just eyes the money and crosses his arms over his chest. “The Marshall is my dad.” He lifts up his sleeve showing a badass fireman tattoo. *Damn it, those Bassholes.* “We’re all firefighters.” The guys paid him to be here.

“Look there’s Jesse and Lake with Blake.” Vic points across the room. We look but just like before my guys bolt. Blake comes towards us with a smile for Vic.

No fucking way!

Oh, so we’re acting like we’re fighting? I wish they would’ve said something so I didn’t look like an ass pinning over here. I’m probably going to be in some gossip magazine after this. You can just tell by the crowd that there are more fans than celebrities up here. Technically, there’s plenty of room for us considering we’re the true VIPs.

Okay, I’m just being grouchy. My emotions are all over the place and I’m trying not to get jealous. I just heard some

chick scream Lake's name. For people who don't want me in danger, they sure are leaving me alone. When Gage makes eye contact, I wave and he ignores me.

I'm so done!

I'm really pissed now so I spin around and stomp down the stairs. Jace waves us over and he already has drinks ordered too. This guy tries to hand me water and I laugh at him stealing Seth's shot instead. Seth is speechless for a second then starts complaining to Jace.

I've been double fisting shots all night and dancing my ass off. I'm actually pretty wasted which isn't great. My temper is spiking and my attitude sucks. For some reason, I thought the Deadman would just show up here and that would be it. I would kill him on the spot then move on with my life. However, nothing ever goes as planned.

I'm supposed to be drinking and "acting" recklessly right now. Basically, making myself vulnerable for an attack. It's been six hours without a peep from the bad guys, and I've given up hope that anything will happen tonight.

Blake stole Vic away from me earlier and I think they actually left. I'm not sure if they're dating or what's going on. The movie will definitely bring them closer together. I mean their characters are dating. Tina and Cash are currently dancing up a storm. Jace had to show Zeke something important. Whatever that means, not fishy at all. I don't know where Bry or Sage are right now.

I make myself relax and take another drink. When I hear the women in the booth next to me talking about sneaking upstairs to get lucky with my men, I come close to losing my shit. Honestly, now I'm cutting off sex to all of them. I'm done. I'll just have Tina tell me the name of that new toy she was bragging about. You know that shit is serious when I bring up the s word with no in front of it. Even Bry and Wes are on my shit list tonight. All my friends are being total Bassholes. They can properly go fuck themselves for all I care.

I casually look up to the VIP section and my eyes narrow searching for my guys. I'm super pissed at all of them at this point. I take another drink of my beer and pray I don't get sick. Wait, how does the saying go again? Oh yeah, liquor, beer have no fear. Beer, liquor sicker quicker. I'm drinking beer now so check.

The problem is when I suggested this idea, I didn't realize the club was going to be this full of fucking women. Was that stupid of me? Yeah, so what. I'm so bitchy even my mind is snapping at me. I'm currently having severe jealousy issues. The alcohol isn't helping with my paranoia either. I've given up trying to boost my ego tonight. I want to catch the bad guys *AND* have my men shower me with love in front of all these women.

My eyes find the large very loud bachelorette party upstairs. Anthony and Jesse are over there taking pictures with their fans. I don't give a shit that they want autographs for their boyfriends apparently according to Anthony's text. Yeah right, I'm not buying it. Plus, I don't care.

I take another drink bobbing my head to the music. Maybe I should go dance again? The dance floor is really crowded though and it'll mess with my anxiety. I glance up at the balcony and see Lake and Gage staring at me.

The women next to me wave and scream trying to get their attention. My guys don't even look their way. I lift my middle fingers to my lips and kiss them dramatically. Then I lift my arms in the air and flip off both my guys. Those Bassholes actually make a show out of acting like they catch my kiss. Gage taps his heart and Lake steps back, touching his fire.

I focus back on my beer so they can't see me laugh.

The next time I sneak a glance upstairs, Lake and Gage are at the bar. They're arguing with the PR guy from Masters of Ink. He probably wants them to sign more autographs. They had banners advertising the show up tonight so everyone's talking about it. Okay, a few people asked for my autograph too and it was really embarrassing. One chick said I was

badass because I had multiple hot lovers and I felt obligated to correct her. They are supposed to be my boyfriends.

A waitress sets down more beers and hands me a note. She rolls her eyes and pushes my money back in my hand before walking off. I slip both in my back pocket without even reading the note. My phone vibrates on the table and I don't check my notifications either. The guys are being buttholes and nagging. *Butthole, that's a funny word. I'm drunk.* I've already been told by several people that I need to stop drinking but that only makes me angry and want to drink more. I'm sick of them telling me what to do and I'm sick of waiting for the Deadman to strike. I can do what I want, and I want to dance.

I stand up on shaky legs, winking at another waitress that tries to help me balance. "Thanks lady, we stick together." She laughs and once I'm good, takes off. I make my way to the dance floor, smiling at everyone as I go. The music is loud with a good beat. I throw my head back enjoying the rhythm and energy of the room. My hips move, swaying to music and I feel fucking confident.

Some guy begins dancing too close so I move away. I bend down, grabbing a blade from my ankle when the guy keeps following me. He throws up his hands and walks away when I flash it at him. The guards fall back as I nod at them. I said I was drunk, not helpless.

Cash and Tina are next to me a second later smiling. They've got the moves, totally in sync with each other. Sage and Zeke come up laughing to bogey with us. Jace pops up with Bry grinning like clowns while moving to the music. All the Kelly Brothers can dance. Two songs turn into three and I lose track of time.

I'm sweaty and maybe a little lightheaded too.

"Oh my God, Mistory. You're bleeding" Zeke unexpectedly picks me up and runs towards the bathroom.

Jace calls after him and the gang is hot on his tail. Thankfully, I hold on to Zeke because I'm really dizzy now and I hope I don't puke all over. Someone's going to get the picture and post it all over social media.

Why is he trippin'?

“Put...meeee...ooown.” That doesn’t sound right and my head flops around, causing intense nausea.

“I’m so sorry.” Zeke whispers, hugging me and kicking open the door. Women start screaming, but he ignores them and sets me on the counter gently.

Sage runs to my side, trying to cover me with a jacket.

What the hell? She knows what’s going on because Gage told her.

“Damn it. There goes that plan.” She’s speaking low so only I can hear her. “Oh Lex, I’m so sorry.” That part she says loudly and she looks like she’s crying. I look at her confused and dumbfounded. She leans in to whisper to me. “You started your period and you’re wearing white pants.” Sage moves the jacket and looks down, widening her eyes.

I follow her gaze and gasp when I see I’ve been attacked by a shark.

“Fuck! We have to do something.” I tell Sage and act like I’m crying. This is why I’ve been emotional and sick lately. Dr. Maraschino told me this could happen. Oh man, I feel horrible for couples who really have to go through this. My tears turn real as I cry for all of them. This was a stupid idea. I just want my life back.

The Kelly Brothers look devastated blocking the door and they know the truth.

“Yep. I hope you didn’t just put a huge target on your back, Sis.” Sage smiles briefly at me then turns to the door. “Zeke, please go get Windy.”

Thank God, we invited the good doctor tonight. She can help me cover this up to make it look real too. My reflection in the mirror shows I’m all snotty crying with makeup running down my cheeks. I turn on the water and splash some on my face. Sage hands me some paper towels.

All my guys come barreling into the room seconds later. I give them the bird and tell them to fuck off. Jesse hops

on the sink next to me and pulls me to his lap. Gage jumps up next, kissing my head holding me. Anthony tries to get in my lap and I laugh. Jesse pushes him to my other side. Lake stares at us with an expression I can't read.

Is he upset?

He walks over to us calmly and lays across us like we are his couch. *The Master will sit now.* We all sit in silence holding each other until...

The counter breaks, which breaks the sink, which breaks a pipe. Then water shoots through the room soaking us. We don't move, even when Jace starts yelling at us.

It doesn't take much for me to break down in tears when Windy enters the room.

“What's wrong, Baby Girl?” She says with a sad tone.



Chapter 23 - Well, Shit!

Detective Lex

I've been sitting here far too long to have nothing done yet. I lift the top of the laptop, move the mouse to verify. Yep, nothing is typed there, it's just a blank white screen. I wanted to just open my working file and write but I was automatically intimidated by my own words. Then I tried a new document but nothing will come to me. It's like my characters are waiting for my life to stop being so fucked up.

I don't even have the balls to go into my writing room. Instead, I'm sitting in the writing nook Lake made for me outside. It's shady and there's a ceiling fan but I'm still outside so it's hot. I sip the lemonade then hold the cold glass to my forehead. Mrs. Crocker keeps checking on me, trying to bring me snacks.

Wes walks by slowly like he's waiting for me to call out to him. He's upset because he was off the night everyone thinks I had a miscarriage. It really sucks we have to lie to our friends, but we just aren't sure who we can trust. Wes walks by again, head on a swivel.

"Dude, you're driving me nuts and you know damn well, I'm not writing. Do you hear any key tapping over

here?" I laugh when he comes towards me with relief on his face.

Wes stops near my desk and kicks the ground with his eyes everywhere but on me. "I just wanted to...say hi. I'm back now and I'm not going anywhere." He wrings his hands uncomfortably while shuffling his feet. He's wearing his signature Men in Black outfit even in this weather. Totally rockin' the Chris Hemsworth vibe today. He could be his double.

"Wes, it's not your fault. I've been telling you that since it happened." Why is he so crazy about this?

Unless...

I reach for the glass and swing my arm like I'm being clumsy. Unexpectedly, Wes is there in an instant. He saves the glass but leaves himself open. I react effectively by pulling my blade on him and grabbing his arm. Since he's bent over on one knee I have the upper hand. The blade against his neck is eagerly waiting. I twist his hand behind his back harder. My knee digs into his thigh and I yank his arm higher in the wrong direction. Maybe, he could get away but I would slice through his arteries like butter.

"Why are you doing this? Ouch, that hurts. Shit, I thought we were friends." Wes tries to look at me but I tighten my hold not letting him move.

"Prove you're not the enemy, Wes. Are you really who you say you are? I hate fucking secrets." I scream at him, and tug his arm again.

His smile drops, and his body relaxes. "I know but I can't tell you everything, Lex. I'm sorry, not yet. I will however tell you that Jim is my uncle and he wants me to protect you." My knife cuts into his skin and he grunts as blood leaks down to his shirt.

"Jim and Carol?" I snarl at him confused. He nods then hisses when my knife cuts him again.

"I promise I'm not the bad guy here. I just want to help you. I just uh, I kinda started talking to Jenny. The night she

got shot, we bonded in that scary situation. We want to see where it goes, you know?" He's shy and his ears are red with embarrassment.

"Who do you work for?" I let him go, kicking him in the back to get him away from me. Maybe it's a dick move but can't let your guard down for anyone.

"That I can't tell you. I'm sorry." He gets up holding his neck and checking the blood on his fingers. "Lex, I would never hurt you." He stands straighter, his eyes dead serious as he addresses me. "I'm a man of honor."

"You better not be lying, Wes. I was actually starting to like you. Jim has been lying the whole time? Carol too? All those fake dinners. What bullshit." I throw a knife by Wes' head and it sinks deep into the magnolia tree.

"No, my aunt doesn't know and my uncle thinks of you as his own. I swear you are part of the family, lass." His eyes go wide at the slip of his accent.

"Are you even fucking American? Holy shit!" My mind spins and this is too much to take in.

"I still feel horrible about the baby. I'm really sorry about that. I should have been there." He stares at the ground with guilt consuming him. Wes keeps talking about that and it's pissing me off.

"There was never a baby, Wes. We are trying to catch the guy who kidnapped me." He curses, upset by the new information. I pull out my phone and text everyone telling them we need a family meeting.

"Come on, follow me." I wave Wes over and put away my laptop, swinging the bag over my shoulder. It's super cute and Gage got it for me. It reads, "Women that love books do it better." My phone goes off so I check the notifications.

Dark Dragon: You're special room

When we get to the bookshelf, most of the people are already here. I pull the right book and the case moves to the right. A solid metal door reveals itself. I open the door with my fingerprint and scan my eye. Wes closes the door behind us

and I stare at the very large room before me. I pinch Anthony's ass as he walks by because he likes it. Gage gives me a kiss then strolls to a chair to sit.

Jesse shows me his hands covered with paint so I lean in to kiss him. He disappears into what I guess is the bathroom. Shit, this panic room has everything. Lake had it built for me when I was gone. I'm the only one who can open it. I expressed my concerns about being locked in here and not being able to get out if I was hurt, but I was reassured I would always be safe.

I trust Lake completely now. I look at the gorgeous man who has grown so much since I met him. His therapy is going fantastic, and I was honored that he asked me to start going with him. He winks at me and I blush. He leans against the wall watching everything with those unique teal eyes.

"It's been almost a week since the club play went down. So I called this meeting to have a recap." My guys are staring at Wes like he has another head. They don't understand why he's here. "Oh, did I forget to mention that people need to come clean." I point at Wes and Lake growls, but I hold up a hand to stop him. "Wes was worried about the baby, and I wanted to tell him the truth."

"It could be real. We could actually do it. My parents did. How do you feel about four babies at once?" Lake stares at me and I think I may have a heart attack. The fool seems dead serious too.

My eyes find the guys' around the room and they all have mixed emotions, but mostly just pure shock. Either from this news coming from Mr. Masters himself or the very idea of babies.

I burst out laughing and shake my head at the man. I literally have to wipe my eyes from laughing so hard. "Yeah, no. I'm not ready for kids and we need time together first. Maybe, travel a little. We haven't even had a fuck fest yet. That stuff at my parents doesn't count. I'm not making a room at the Sex House a nursery." I shake my head aggressively. Nope, I've got plans.

Wes looks horrified. Jace laughs and pats him on the back. “You’ll get used to it.” He tells him and I flip Jace off. My BBFF just returns the gesture and I smile.

“What she said.” Anthony says his eyes spark with heated desire. He can’t wait for me to build him a room. Of course, I have this whole football, ocean idea. It will be epic.

“At least yet,” I say flirtatiously and all the guys groan while shifting. “Besides, we technically just started this.” I point at all of them, checking their reactions. Jesse and Anthony nod automatically, and I release a sigh of relief.

I know how Gage feels about the whole baby thing. I walk over to him, bending down to kiss his head. Lion Heart grabs me and pulls me to his lap. It’s hard for him to pretend about something he really wants. Gage would love a baby right now and I’m just not ready yet.

The guys start to protest around me because I’m sitting on Gage. Everyone has been a little more clingy than normal, myself included. Lake growls deep in his throat and I kiss Gage once then pull away to get up.

“I’m letting that slide because it’s my night tonight.” Jesse says his focus on the phone in his hands. “We have company,” and he hits the button on the wall. The video screen shows us the new arrivals at the door.

“Yeah and now you can’t watch, Gage.” Anthony teases him being naughty. He knows Gage loves watching me have sex with the others.

“Wanna bet? You have no say, buddy.” Gage flips him off. They start wrestling and Gage almost falls out of the chair.

I head to the door to open it because I’m the only one that can. I’ve invited everyone because it’s time to start trusting my friends and family or set another trap. The Kelly Brothers knew mostly everything anyway. Sage and Zeke aren’t coming because they’re at her new house waiting on someone. We were lucky that Tina and Cash stayed over last night. Vic just so happened to be visiting Blake so they’re both here.

“Let’s talk about this later.” I tell the guys and open the door. The others follow me inside, confused and impressed by the place. Everyone finds empty spots around the room. “You’re here because we trust you with this information. Don’t make us regret that.” Jesse hands out the files to everyone. “You can catch up while we brainstorm. What do we do now that the pregnancy didn’t work? The Deadman is still MIA. We need him to make a move.”

The guys shift uncomfortable with my comment, but it’s fucking true. The new arrivals jump in feet first, reviewing the papers in front of them.

“Technically, we don’t know if the plan worked or not. They should leave Lex alone now that the “baby” is gone. That was the plan from the beginning. If they believed she wasn’t pregnant, then they might have kidnapped her again to make sure it happened. They messed with your birth control so it was part of their main plan. Hopefully, they’ll start focusing on Jesse now and we can catch these fuckers once and for all.” Bry’s statement doesn’t make me or anyone else feel better.

Jesse doesn’t seem worried in the least.

I run over a quick recap of the fake pregnancy, our plan and the suspects. Everyone looks kind of sad talking about the baby that never existed. This whole thing played with all of our emotions. It would’ve been ten times harder had they succeeded in their attempt to take away my rights. I look around the room and the guys still seem off. We’ll have another talk later, just to make sure we’re all on the same page. Vic wipes her eyes and Blake holds her whispering comforting words. Thankfully, no one seems mad at us for lying. They understand this is a life or death situation.

“From what I see this is a slam dunk case. Why hasn’t this Agent just arrested the Jackson couple?” Tina looks up from the papers confused.

“Hey, wasn’t Ethan’s family really close with the Jackson’s?” Seth questions half listening, watching his phone.

That’s news to me.

“Yes, a lot of the parents would get together for parties. Mine were only invited because I dated Brittany. You had to have money to go.” Jesse tells us with a pinched brow, thinking about the past.

“Could Ethan be the father?” I ask them because he isn’t even on the list.

“No way, Ethan is your age. Brittany wouldn’t have fucked him. Plus, he didn’t go to school with us.” Lake stands straighter shaking his head at the idea.

“His sister went to school with us, though.” Gage says and everyone nods agreeing. “But those two hate each other so I wouldn’t ask him. He doesn’t like her at all.”

“That’s the one that has a major crush on Lake, right?” Cash asks, remembering the Magic Mountain trip just as her image pops in my head.

Bitch! I can be jealous if I want.

I growl accidentally, and they all laugh at me. Lake grins pleased as punch at my reaction of jealousy. That doesn’t really matter and neither does she. My phone starts ringing but I ignore it. This is more important and almost anyone I care to talk to is in this room.

“The Jackson’s are at the top of the list but there’s no money trail.” Bry frowns looking at his phone. “No evidence at all.”

“Frank doesn’t know shit about cars, bombs and guns. There’s no way he attacked Lex either. She would snap him like a twig.” Jesse states facts we’ve already discussed.

My phone rings again, making them look my way, waiting for me to answer. I shrug but the ringing doesn’t stop. It starts again.

“Who is calling you?” Lake demands so I check the screen.

I sigh, picking up the line. “Hey Donaldson, this isn’t a good time. Can I call you back later?” Lake smirks like he

knew the whole time, which he didn't. I stick out my tongue and he laughs.

“Nope, Frank Jackson was just attacked outside his office. He was left for dead but the old man's a fighter.” Donaldson drops the bomb and I have to sit down.

“Oh shit, no way. What happened?” The people around me go on high alert at my tone.

“We're still reviewing the camera's footage. I'm going to ask Bry to take a look too because I think everyone was hacked,...but Lex, Susan Jackson is pointing the finger at Jesse. Well, actually all of you guys. She says you've been harassing them.” Donaldson sounds pissed and tired. This case is exhausting to her too.

“Yeah fucking right, we didn't do shit.” My eyes meet Jesse's ocean ones staring at me with concern.

“I know. Meet me at the address I'm texting you. I need to take your official statements. You should probably call Cash too. Have Bry send me your GPS location records. Thankfully, KISS' idea to watch everyone will pay off big time.” Donaldson covers the phone yelling at someone.

“I'll tell Bry, and Cash is already here. We'll be there soon.” I hang up the phone, still stunned by this latest development.

If Frank was attacked today, then surely he doesn't have anything to do with the Deadman, right? I take a deep breath to prepare myself to share the information I just got.



Chapter 24 - Didn't I Ask For This?

Badass Lex

“Yeah, I’ll let you know if I hear anything else. Be prepared, Lex. Don’t let your guard down.” Donaldson stresses on the phone.

“I know this whole thing is really messing with Jesse’s head.” I sigh and say goodbye. We still have no idea who attacked Frank. Thankfully, we’re no longer suspects either.

“Hey, is it cool if I go outside for a minute to use my phone?” Seth asks, staring at his phone. He’s wearing a goofy grin and I take a second to really look at him. Of course, he’s very attractive like his brothers. All the Kelly Brothers look similar but with different colored hair. Seth has middle brown, Bry is dirty blond and then Jace’s color is close to mine. They are all covered in tats and muscles. Seth has horror movie themed tattoos everywhere, which are so bad ass.

“You’re a strange one, MK.” His head comes up frowning. “Middle Kelly, duh.” Seth laughs then looks at his phone again. “What do you do on that phone all day?” I try to look at the screen and he pulls it back shaking his head.

“You know what I do for a living, Lex.” He points to the KISS logo on his black shirt.

“Yeah, that keeps you busy but who keeps you entertained?” I’m pretty sure Seth has a girlfriend and I think the drunk party animal thing is all an act but I have no hard evidence. “Who are you always talking to or are you working on your OnlyFans account?” I tease him, wiggling my eyebrows.

Seth’s eyes bug out in panic as he puts the phone in his pocket. “I closed that account a couple years ago and Bry deleted everything on the internet. Did you see something?” Okay, this dude is actually freaking out because he really had an account?

I last all of two seconds before I break down laughing so hard I almost fall over. His eyes narrow and his worry is replaced by amusement.

“You’re not funny on my level yet, but keep trying, Lex.” He pulls out his phone again when it goes off. Seth glances back at me after checking it. “I’ll be right outside, cool?” I nod dramatically and he looks at the phone again. “Wes and Jesse will be here within the hour. The restaurant took longer than anticipated. Lake and Gage will be here shortly too. Kevin and the new guy are working the gate.” I can tell he’s reluctant to leave me alone and that’s just crazy.

“Dude, I’m good. Go call your girlfriend.” I’m just teasing him, but he pales and his mouth gapes open like a fish. I laugh and push him towards the door. “Remind me to never take you gambling. Your poker face sucks. Go on Romeo before I tell your brothers.” Seth practically runs to the door.

I check the cameras before I do the same with the alarms. Security is still good and the guards are in place. I’m not stupid, I know I need to be on my toes. I head to the closet to get cleaning supplies to pass the time. It’s difficult to properly clean the waiting areas when everyone’s here. Plus, it takes forever with all the glass everywhere. That doesn’t even include the big mirrors that were my suggestion.

It's been weeks since we developed a plan and tried to use me as bait. Donaldson's getting heat from the FBI to wrap up this case or leave it open. They want her to let the local authorities take over. At this point, they believe it was a stalker that is no longer interested.

I call bullshit on that theory but I just smile and nod so no one knows what an anxious ball of nerves I am. Things at TNT are almost back to normal and we are working at max capacity. Today all the guys had stuff to do and they just so happened to wrap up their clients quickly.

Once I get all the supplies and turn on the radio, I stand before the huge shop intimidated by all the work. Glass walls and cabinets lined most of the space here. I get the windex and start attacking all the surfaces that need cleaning around the shop. The long cabinets always collect the most fingerprints and dust. There's so many cool pictures and celebrity signatures in here that everyone stops to look. A lot of the pictures are of the whole crew at different stages in their lives. I would have loved to have met them in high school. I'm sure they ruled that school and everyone in it. I'm definitely honored that there's a whole shelf dedicated to this year. I'm in a lot of the photos too. There's even pictures of all our new tattoos. I start blushing just thinking about all the ones of me at our house and their offices.

"What's up, Lex? How are you doing today?" The deep voice scared the shit out of me.

I nearly jumped out of my skin because I didn't hear the door chime. My smile is automatic when I spin around to greet my guest.

Zeke's standing on the other side of the glass divider leaning against my desk. There's a beautiful large bouquet of flowers in his hands. He's wearing a giant smile, buzz cut, and muscles in denim with a white shirt.

"Hi Zeke, are you here to see Sage? She had to meet the realtor and should be back soon." I move to the mirrors so I'm a little closer to him. I don't want to be rude but I need to keep cleaning to get done by the time the guys get here.

“Yeah cool, I’ll wait for her. It’s strange she would need to meet with the realtor again though. She made me do that with her already.” He frowns and shakes his head dismissing the thought.

That’s why they weren’t there. Sage made him? What’s going on? I laugh, trying to make light of my comment. “Honestly, she could’ve said a doctor’s appointment. I wasn’t really paying attention and everyone was in here earlier driving me nuts.” I use my finger twirling it by my ear. “The rock stars kept trying to have a recording session right here.”

Zeke fake chuckles at my lame comments. “Oh, uh yeah, that makes sense.” He runs a hand over the back of his neck before meeting my eyes. “I wanted to tell you I’m really sorry for your loss. I’m sure you’ve heard that a lot already. I don’t want to make you sad but I got you these flowers.” He holds them out to me.

Well shit, that’s sad and makes me want to cry. I walk to him and give him a hug. The flowers are bright, warm and very colorful. “I love them, thanks!”

I take the vase with a smile to the glass cabinet. After arranging it perfectly, I know clients will love the pop of color over here. I’ve prolonged it long enough so I turn around ready to either dismiss it or try to explain the truth.

“If it’s okay Zeke, I really don’t want to talk about it.” He has a sympathetic look on his face and I feel bad. I’ll just tell him, I was going to do it the other day anyway. “Actually, you don’t understand, Zeke. I w-”

He cuts me off waving his hand. “Actually I do understand. I’ve lost a baby too. Though we weren’t in love or anything like you are. It was an accident and never was supposed to happen. We were going to give the baby up for adoption.” Zeke’s choked up so he clears his throat.

My hand moves over my mouth and tears roll down my face. I’m a horrible person and the guilt is heavy. I’ve brought his trauma back with my lies. “I’m so sorry.” My heart squeezed at my words.

He shakes his head, rubbing the back of his neck again. “Why? It’s not your fault. You’ve been through enough lately.” I see pity in his eyes and my spine straightens. “And recently it’s been brought to my attention that I have a lot of misplaced anger. I’ve decided I’m ready to move on. I want to clear my conscience and start over.” Zeke’s tone is strong and true.

What does that mean?

I get a paper towel and wipe my eyes. “Wow, I’m so sorry, Zeke. That’s really sad. Did the mother do something?” I grab the windex to work on the glass some more. The flowers catch my eye and I frown then I shake my head.

I’m being paranoid.

“It’s okay, it was a long time ago. I’m trying to forgive and forget.” Zeke says, still behind me.

I have no idea why but my eyes roam the pictures. One image pops into my mind and keeps nagging me. *There it is.* The group picture is from their college days. You never would’ve guessed it per the photo because the two people aren’t even looking at each other. It’s almost like they hate each other, besides it was rare for him to be there.

“It was you.” I spin and jump back because he’s much closer to me now.

“You don’t understand. We didn’t love each other or anything. I was super drunk looking for Sage one night and Brittany was upset because she thought Jesse was cheating.” Zeke pleads with me to understand.

I back away further trying not to seem obvious. I’m going to pull my blade but I know he has a gun.

“I’m not going to hurt you, damn it. Stop looking at me like that.” Zeke snarls at me then relaxes, stepping away with his hands up. “I’m serious. You have nothing to fear from me. I wanted to warn you and come clean.” He’s frustrated and I don’t trust him at all.

“Brittany loved Jesse more than herself. Which is saying a lot because she was very selfish. Her mom died when she was young and her father was always working. He

showered her with money and she became spoiled fast. Plus, she was an only child with a younger step mom that didn't like her." Zeke has backed up all the way to the other side of the room. He's leaning against the wall acting casual. I guess I've earned his respect because I know his body is on alert.

"How do you know all this?" My eyes narrow on him.

"I'll get to that. Sage thought Jesse was cheating because she found texts and emails from another woman in New York. It wasn't until after we slept together that we learned they were from a college counselor. Jesse planned on moving and going to college in New York." He looks at me, then nods. "I guess you know some of this. Jesse must really love you. He didn't love Brittany. Anyone could see that."

"So you guys cheated on your friend like that?" Yes, I'm pissed for my man.

"We were never going to be together. I've had plenty of opportunities over the years so I could've been with her if I wanted. My dad started a lawn service after the military. Frank has several properties and my dad worked for him for years. They always invited us to their parties. Brittany was my friend and what she didn't tell me, Sage did. They were best friends and shared everything." He rolls his eyes like best friends tell their boyfriends everything. Okay, maybe they do.

"How was she going to hide the baby from Jesse? You say she loved him. He knew he wasn't the father." It doesn't make sense.

"She actually had a good plan." His eyebrows raise in respect. "To my shock, she was going to let Jesse go to school in New York. They would do the long distance thing and she would have the baby. She already picked out a wealthy, eager family to adopt the baby. The plan was to have the baby in secret. Then she would move up there after to be with Jesse. He wouldn't ever know, but then Brittany had to drink and drive like a moron. That never made sense to me because Brittany wasn't a drinker." Zeke shakes his head, like that's the craziest part of that information dump.

“Wait, what’s that?” Zeke turns to the door and I bend so quickly he doesn’t see me when he looks back in my direction. Thankfully, my jacket helps me palm my blade.

“I’m not sure. It looks like the gate spotlight.” I only glance briefly at the door then my eyes move to the screen across the room, but I can’t see shit from this angle.

He snaps his fingers trying to get my attention. He’s stupid if he thinks I’m not watching him.

I’ve got a really bad feeling about the answer to this next question. I meet his eyes like a woman. “Are you behind this whole thing? Are you the Deadman?” I show him my blade and even show off by grabbing another. His eyebrows go up, impressed with my skills.

“Girl, you missed your calling. The special forces would be happy to have you.” He laughs and I don’t. He holds up his hands right before I’m about to let a knife fly.

“Answer the questions, now.” I throw one while grabbing another. “I missed on purpose. I’m serious now.” I scream at him furious.

“Technically, yes but absolutely no-...fuuuuck.” His hand whips out but he’s too late. My knife sticks into his wrist. Not the hand or the arm but the fucking wrist. It’s all about the pain.

He pulls it out, then drops it to the floor. Zeke takes off his shirt, wrapping it about the injury. I show him more knives and he curses. I know my smile is evil because I’ve waited for this, dreamed about it even.

The pain I inflict will be long and seem like torture.

“I never kidnapped you but I know who did.” He looks at his wound. It’s bleeding badly. He has a red shirt now because the white is drenched in blood. “I had all this hatred toward Jesse bottled up and that fucker used it against me. It’s not an excuse but fighting in the military is no joke. That was never my dream. I didn’t want the same life as my father. Unfortunately, God had other plans. I’ve been dealt a shitty hand in this life.” He looks down and laughs.

“Are you asking for my sympathy after everything you’ve been a part of?” I’m actually shocked and my tone is bitter.

“No, I don’t deserve that but he did manipulate me. He used my ego and resentment against me. Not an excuse, I know.” Zeke holds up his hands. “When I was told I can finally get Jesse back for everything, I jumped at the chance, but I’m big enough to admit when I’m wrong.”

“What did Jesse do to you? You didn’t even like Brittany.” I’m confused and bored.

“I blamed Jesse for making me join the military. My dad was meant for the service but I wasn’t, and now my life is over. I’m lost and I don’t know who I am or what I want.” He does look devastated but fuck that.

“You’re not making sense.” I tap my foot getting ready to go off.

“Mr. Jackson promised my father I would get a scholarship through his company. Then he gave my college dream to Jesse. His parents didn’t have the money and Brittany threw a huge fit. The worst part was Jesse didn’t even use it because he got one for football. It was too late for me to use it because I already enlisted. So this is my life.” He waves his arms, dripping blood on the floor.

Wow, that’s crazy.

“Sage called me at the wrong time in my life. She started bragging about her relationship with Bryson and how happy she was. I was jealous but willing to let it go. The next time we spoke she mentioned you and how sprung Jesse was on you. The Deadman was calling me every day. When I first got here I just gave them information, nothing important. Then I got to know you and saw how the guys felt. I couldn’t just take off, or I wouldn’t be able to set up roadblocks for you.” He wants me to believe he was helping me by giving my enemy information? “They’re desperate now. I got a call this morning saying it would be handled after today and to leave. They’re coming, Lex. We need to go into hiding.” Zeke’s asking me to trust him and he tries to step closer.

Yeah right, buddy. Like I would fall for that.

“You tried to kill me, Zeke.” He shakes his head aggressively. I secure my blades and flip close to him. I’m about to unload every single one of my knives in Zeke’s body.

Suddenly, the lights go out and it’s pitch black. I hear the sirens and sigh. Shit, I push the button on my necklace.

Unexpectedly, Zeke jumps next to me and tries to grab my hand. I fight him but he throws me to the floor behind a desk. “I’m sorry, Lex. I think he’s here. Fuck, it wasn’t supposed to be like this. Just know the only thing I did wrong was inviting Kara to that party.”

We hear multiple gunshots outside. From my training I know there’s different guns shooting. Oh no, Seth. I try to stand and Zeke pulls me down. He acts like he’s about to get up and I grab his arm.

“Wait. Tell me who’s here.” I hiss at him trying to see anything in the darkness. He opens his mouth to speak.

The front door opens and two canisters roll into the room hitting the glass wall next to us. They’re releasing some kind of gas into the room. The smoke is heavy and blinding instantly.

Shit!

“Cover your face and hide. If I don’t come back, try the back door. Don’t get trapped in an office, Lex.” He leaves me and I want to call out but I’m scared. I have no idea how many are here. Zeke had said he and them.

I try to look through the glass, but see nothing. When the front door opens, light spills into the room briefly. Can I trust him?

“Hey, it’s just me. She isn’t here. I thought I told you guys I would handle this. This is getting out of control. You set a fire?” Zeke’s voice is dripping in disgust.

I start crawling towards the back door. I’m making good progress but I want to know more. I pass Lake’s office

and think about stopping but I keep going when I can still hear Zeke's voice.

He's letting me hear their conversation. "No one was supposed to get hurt. They've all learned their lessons don't you think?" I can't hear the other person but I know it's a man. I think they're by the front door now. "Where are the guards and Seth?"

My heart squeezes at the question and I move faster. I don't stop the tears from coming or wipe them. The other man speaks again.

"What? It wasn't even your baby. We were giving it up for adoption. I forgive Jesse. He's cool, you're just an asshole." Zeke laughs at something the other man says.

I want to listen but instead I move faster. I can see the back door ahead of me now. There's a light laminated under the door. I don't dare look over my shoulder even though my knees are killing me from the hard tiled floor.

A single shot goes off and I stop dead for a brief second. That's my cue. I jump up and start running for the door. I feel hot wind sail by my head. *A fucking bullet.* I throw myself forward, flipping twice and slam into the door hard. I roll out the back door and start running.

Fierce pain splits the back of my head as something hits me hard. I throw out my hands trying to catch myself as I go down like a ton of bricks.

"Going somewhere, poor girl? I got her." Kara screams then kicks me in my side laughing like a hyena.

The back door opens again and slams a second later. "Good job. Now help me out. Go get the car for me."

Kara kicks me again and runs off laughing. Too bad for Kara because she gets about five feet away before her laugh turns into a scream and she goes down. He shot her in the back in cold blood just like Tamera. I have no idea if she's alive or dead and I don't care.

I try to scream over the sirens but start choking. The black smoke is heavy all around us and the scent of a large fire

is strong.

A boot lands by my head and I make myself look up. He's wearing a mask again. I spit at him and cry out in pain from the jarring motion. My head hurts bad but I need to fight for my fucking life. I roll over and stab him in the boot. He grunts in pain then kicks me in the face unaffected by my blade. There was too much resistance in that blow to cause any real damage.

What the fuck? I can't take too many more of these kicks.

“Dumb bitch, they're steeltoes. I swear women these days get dumber by the generation. You think you're good with a knife, little girl?” He laughs all dramatically like some super villain.

He's talking too much so I use my legs to try and sweep his. The dickface lands hard on the ground next to me. I watch in satisfaction as his head hits the concrete. My other blade finally connects with this guy's leg. I stand up and only make it two steps when something else hits my head. I cry out, grabbing my head and instantly get dizzy.

The fuckface takes advantage of my weakness and jumps on my back. I try to flip him but it's the wrong angle. I kick out, swinging my arms to no prevail. The needle pierces my skin before I know what's happening.

Not again.

I hear an explosion in the distance. My head swims, my body goes limp and my eyes get heavy. I'm going to pass out.



Chapter 25 - Surprise

Badass Lex

“Are you crazy? Why did you bring her here?” The woman’s voice is irritated and a little scared.

I sit still and just listen. Sometimes that’s the only option. Learn as much as possible to use later.

“Shut up and stop nagging me. That’s all you ever do now. I told you there’s a change in plans.” The man sighs and I hear ice hitting glass.

“Well, all you ever do is make problems I have to clean up, spend my fucking money and drink like a fish.” The woman yells at the man clearly upset.

A second later I hear the unmistakable sound of a fist hitting a face. The woman cries out and she must have hit the floor. “You said you would never hit me again. You promised to change. Frank is still alive and he knows about you now.” She begins crying uncontrollably.

Susan Jackson.

“Oh shut up and get out of here. I need to make the ransom call. I don’t want you in here sniveling like a baby when I’m talking.” I hear some more noise and I try to open my eyes. “I said get the fuck out.” There’s more sounds and

the woman screams in pain. “Get up,” he sighs again. “Nevermind I’ll use the other room.” She cries out again, probably from another blow.

When I hear the door slam I make my move. My head is still pounding something awful. I check for my blades and I feel two. Unfortunately, my hands are tied behind my back so I can’t get them. I still hear Susan crying but I ignore her. I fold into myself and try to shift closer to the desk. Maybe, I can use the chair to sit up.

“I know you’re awake. I’ll help you if you help me.” Susan sniffs and moves closer to me.

I roll over and see her standing by a cart. She fills a napkin with ice and puts it on her face.

“Don’t look at me like that.” She pours herself a glass of amber liquid and downs it in one drink. “I thought he loved me. I was so desperate for a family that I turned a blind eye to everything else.” She sighs, puts down the makeshift cold press and fixes her hair. The black eye is already forming from his assault.

“I’m not judging you. Women do stupid shit for love. I get that.” I nod, acting like I understand but I want her to help me. “Can you untie me? My arms really hurt.”

Her eyes narrow looking at me. “You’ll be fine for a minute. Plus, I don’t trust you. He’s been all damp about your fighting skills. I’m not interested in getting hurt. Wait. I’ll be right back.” She runs out the door before I can stop her.

I try to get my blade again. I’ve practiced this a hundred times but I’m dizzy. The drugs are still in my system and they’re making me less effective. I use my abs to sit up while pushing up on my wrists and my back hits the chair.

The door swings open and I fall to the floor hoping it isn’t him. It’s not, so I curse like a teenager learning new cuss words.

Is she for real?

Susan’s holding a butcher knife out at me. This isn’t the right time but I laugh anyway.

“You are going to cut yourself.” I tell her seriously. I’m panting now trying to sit up again.

“It’s for my protection and I think I can cut that rope.” Susan walks over to me holding the knife. I mad dog her but she raises her eyebrows at me. “Do you want to be free or not? I’m glad you’re tough because there’s men outside helping him.”

“How many?” Shit, I didn’t think about that.

She smiles sweetly at me. “See you’re smart too. That’s why Jesse loves you.”

I recoil at the mention of my boyfriend. “How could you do this to him?” I hiss at her, pissed all over again.

“He couldn’t let it go.” She says tears filling her eyes. “He blamed Jesse for us losing the baby. The man I thought I loved turned into a bitter asshole. He’s been blackmailing me for years. Frank made me sign a prenuptial agreement when we got married. I’ve never worked a day in my life and I can’t start over at this age. I still love Frank but I don’t even know who I am anymore.” She wipes her eyes and straightens her shoulders.

“Who are you talking about?” I ask her, confused, showing her my hands as a reminder. She comes closer and bends down to cut the rope.

“I know he cheats on me all the time and I can’t do anything about it. Honestly, I hate him, but I’m scared.” Susan whispers like he may hear.

I can feel the rope start loosening so I shift closer to her. The door opens unexpectedly and she stands up gasping. She drops the knife next to me and I cover it with my leg.

“What the fuck are you doing in here?” He walks into the room, or more like limps thanks to my knife wound. I’m extremely pleased with myself for landing that blow. The man’s wearing the mask but I can hear his real voice.

It sounds familiar.

“Nothing, I was talking to her about Brittany.” She doesn’t move and just stands right next to me.

“Why would you talk about her? Brittany hated you with a passion. How many times did she tell Frank to divorce you?” He’s condescending and laughs at her. The asshole even raises his hand like he’s going to hit her just to watch her flinch. “She only agreed you could adopt the baby because you blackmailed her with James. You were just a desperate woman. Shit, you still are.” The disgust he aims at her is vicious.

“You’re a cruel man. I was only trying to make you happy and give us what we both wanted. I tried so hard to get Brittany to like me. She hated me because she thought her father loved me more than her. Boy was she wrong.” Susan sounds sad and maybe even lonely.

“Look how that plan turned out. They both died. Brittany never fulfilled her promise to give us James’ baby.” The Deadman rants, waving his arms around.

I see my chance so I take it. I owe Susan nothing. Plus, I’ll try to help her if I can, but no promises.

“What do you mean, Jesse’s baby?” I smirk at him like I know a secret because apparently I do.

“Shut up,” she sneers at me, completely furious. Her eyes are wide and I know she’s scared.

“The one that died in her belly when her car hit that light pole and center divider.” The masked man says nonchalantly.

Susan seems spooked, pale and sick. “How did you know that?”

I’m not going to let them start fighting again. So I drop a bomb.

“Brittany was never pregnant with Jesse’s baby. She cheated on him with Zeke. Why do you think she was giving it up for adoption? She loved Jesse.” I’m so pleased with myself when I can tell I’ve confused him.

He stares at Susan waiting for an answer. “Do you know something you’re not telling me, Susan?” The hate in his tone is clear, the underline warning too.

“She’s lying, just trying to turn us against each other. You know how bad we both wanted a baby. We tried so many times to get pregnant. It was a miracle when I overheard Brittany on the phone. I don’t know why she would be drinking. She promised to take care of herself, and it was part of the contract.” Susan’s upset at the memories we’re rehashing.

“I told you Tamera was going to help you with that but you were always so jealous. You never wanted help.” The mention of that woman brings everything back to me.

“You didn’t sleep with that woman for me. Stop lying to me and yourself. We never even needed her because Lex didn’t have babies either. Tamera wasn’t even close to that group like she said she was. I still can’t believe she was trying to kill me.” Susan says wide-eyed, wringing her hands together.

“I promise you Tamera wasn’t intimidated by you. He shot her in cold blood in the back right in front of me like a coward. She had no idea it was coming either. He’s a venomous snake that needs his head chopped off.” I snarl the words, hatred laced in my tone.

The Deadman just laughs like the heartless bastard he is. Susan begins crying again because she’s finally coming to terms with the fact that everything she once thought she knew is a lie.

“None of this means anything and I’m bored of talking about it.” His phone starts ringing and he answers on the first ring. “Hello, yes, of course. Wonderful, I’ll be waiting.” The affection in his tone is undeniable. He’s listening to something the caller is saying, not watching me.

My attack isn’t going to do much with my hands tied like this, but I’ll try to the best of my ability. I’ll never give up and I decide it’s time. I jump to my feet, grabbing the butcher

knife in both my hands and run full tilt at him. I swing my body around at the last second and fall on him hard.

The butcher knife stabs him in the side, hopefully it's a gut shot. His scream makes me laugh. My head connects with the floor and I groan dizzy again. He gets up and kicks me in the stomach but I fold into myself to absorb the blow. I lose air for a second as I cry out. He kicks me again and curses at me.

"Don't, you're hurting her." Susan surprises the hell out of me by covering me with her body.

He kicks her a few times. "You're right, Susan. I need her for the money. You, I don't need at all so I would keep that in mind."

"My life wasn't supposed to be like this. Just kill me already." She cries over me and I don't know what to do.

I appreciate her helping me, but I need to get out of here. I try to reach for the knife and he steps on my hand. He picks me up by my ponytail, then drags me back to the chair. I have no choice but to go because he's ripping out all my hair.

He lifts me up, slamming my back against the chair. I try to bite him when he grabs my breast.

"We can fix that no problem." He knocks my head into the wood desk hard.

My body goes limp and my head's pounding from all the trauma. I see him step away, but I just can't make myself move.

I think I'm going to throw up.

He's in front of me again and there's a ball gag in his hand. I try to kick out but he blocks me effortlessly. He slaps me across the face making my teeth snap together. Each blow makes the pounding in my head worse.

"Let's see how much he really likes you. He needs to be quicker." I squint trying to see him through the pain. He plays with his phone for a second, then smiles at me. The return notification comes in fast. He starts laughing and I know I've heard this voice but it's different somehow. "Wow, I

guess he does love you. I wonder how poor Brittany would feel about that.”

Susan begins moving on the floor across the room. I think she passed out from the trauma. I’m looking at a similar outcome if I can’t get the dizziness under control.

“Get up, Susan.” He screams at her. She tries to stand, terrified of this man. “Stop playing around. We don’t have time for this. Go change your clothes and put some makeup on your face. You need to look presentable.” He’s still yelling as she makes it to the door slowly. “Hurry up, you’re so lazy.” Susan disappears and my eyes get heavy.

The Deadman’s phone starts going ballistic with notifications. He looks down staring at the screen. I know I can’t see his actual face, but I guarantee this mad man is grinning right now. You can hear the pleasure in his tone when he speaks next.

“Our special guest has arrived. It’s time for the party to start.” He removes a small black box from his pocket and tucks it into the mask. “Go let him in, Susan and bring him to me.” The Deadman looks at me. “Are you ready to see your lover?” I scream and he sticks the gag in my mouth.



Chapter 26 - All In

Jesse Moody Bastard

“Just follow me. It’s the only way to save her.” I’m pretty sure Susan has a black eye and she’s shaking like a leaf. She’s scared shitless, which throws me off.

“I can help you. Just tell me where Lex is.” I try using a soothing tone because I’m not above begging. I’ll offer her assistance, anything really if she’ll help me find Lex.

Susan just keeps walking, silently crying and limping. She stops in front of Frank’s old office door, but I know he’s still at the hospital so my head tilts in wonder. She takes a deep breath before opening the door and walking in.

I reluctantly follow her into the room, knowing this is a trap and horrible idea. What other options do I have? Someone hits me from behind, the pain is instant and I fall to my knees. You’re going to have to hit me harder than that to knock me out. I’m dizzy but I try to get back up.

“Don’t move. Put the cuffs on him, Susan. Don’t try anything stupid or I will put a bullet in your girlfriend’s head.” His threat makes me freeze and he laughs.

I try looking over my shoulder, but I can’t see him completely. What I do see makes my blood boil. The mask

man is behind me and he has a gun pointed at my woman. I put my hands behind my back following orders.

My eyes are only for Lex now. I stare at her trying to evaluate her injuries. Relief fills my heart knowing she's still breathing and okay. However, it's quickly replaced by anger when I see the ball gag in her mouth and all the bruises on her gorgeous face.

“You’ll pay for this. One of us will leave here alive and I guarantee it won’t be you.” The Deadman just laughs at my threat but he doesn’t realize it’s a fucking promise. He has no idea what we’re capable of.

What I will do for her.

Susan leans over me to snap the cuffs on and that’s when I see the true fear in her eyes. She’s been beaten pretty badly too. The marks are more pronounced this close to my face, and the makeup doesn’t cover them at all.

“Now stand up and sit in the chair next to your slut over there.” He moves further away with the gun still pointing at her.

I use my knees and athleticism to get up because my hands are behind my back. I walk over to my love eagerly. “Are you okay, Blue Eyes?” She nods but I know she’s been drugged because her eyes are dilated. There’s blood all over her head so I try to find the injury. Her wound has to be bad since I can see blood in her dark hair. “Get that out of her mouth or there’s no point in talking. I won’t help you get the money you’re after.” I’m holding all the cards because this dumbass wants money.

“You have no say here. I’ll just hurt her and you’ll do whatever I want. Now sit down.” He points at the chair, but I shake my head looking around.

“Do you think Lake wants something you fucked up? He’s used to the finer things in life and he’s not going to want damaged merchandise.” I spare a glance at Lex even though I shouldn’t. I don’t want her to think I mean any of this. She nods, and I sigh with relief knowing she understands. For

some reason I have a strong hunch about his motivation. “So remove the gag and I’ll call right now. No cops, just give me a phone. Lake’s good for the money, he probably even has cash.” He’s thinking about it, tapping his chin with the gun. Too bad it won’t go off and blow his face off. That would be fucking epic.

“Fine, sit down first. Susan, remove her gag.” She jumps to help Lex. Okay, maybe Susan will be spared today. She removes the ball and apologizes to Lex, crying. “Shut up, you are such a whiny bitch.” He yells at Susan and tries to kick her when she moves away from us. I growl and stand. He uses the gun to aggressively point it at Lex. I sit back down which makes him laugh harder.

“You need us to get money from Lake.” I spit at him and feel helpless just sitting here. My leg tenses getting ready to jump again.

Lex leans over trying to touch me with her shoulder. “Jesse, I love you. Make a move and don’t worry about me.” Lex grins, winks and blows me a kiss.

Fuck, she’s fucking perfect. I would never risk her life though.

“You think I’m playing with you, don’t you?” The Deadman laughs like he just told a joke. He straightens his tie and leaves the room giddy for some reason. His body language shows tons of confidence and that worries me.

I jump up and start working on the ropes around Lex. “I’m going to get you free then you run. There aren’t many guards so stay towards the back of the property by the pool house. The guys will be here soon. This is the Jackson’s old property so it threw us off at first. Well, more like three houses ago. He knew about your tracking jewelry because they hid them in every fucking property Frank owns. The Deadman texted me from Susan’s number because he wants money.” The rope falls off Lex, but her hands are still tied behind her back. Fuck, this is hard with cuffs on. “I think he’s planning on making you the fall guy.” I look at Susan letting her know my

theory. She stops searching the room and stares at me wide-eyed.

“I’ll find the key to the cuffs. I’m so sorry.” Susan wipes her eyes then continues opening drawers. “I’ve never hurt anyone in my life. It’s always been that lunatic.”

“Jesse, why did you come? He’s going to kill you.” Lex’s tears break my heart and she’s trying to help me with the rope.

“I love you and I’ll never let anything happen to you again. I’m sorry, Blue Eyes.” Damn it, I hate being helpless like this.

We all hear the noise in the hall outside the door. I sit back down and Lex shifts to look weak. Susan grabs a butch knife and charges him when he opens the door. She stops short as he kicks her in the stomach. Her body falls to the floor and the knife drops from her grip.

My heart stops when he continues walking towards us dragging someone on the floor behind him laughing. *Who is that?* There’s a rope wrapped around a bag over her head. The woman’s cries of pain make my temper soar. This asshole is going to die slowly now. Rage fills my being and I shake the cuffs aggressively.

The Deadman throws her in front of me. He bends, cutting the rope and rips the cover off her head. Her face is covered in smeared makeup and there’s tape on her mouth. The huge lump on her forehead makes me vibrate with hostility.

I scream, “Mom,” without being aware. Lex’s talking to me, maybe calling my name but I can’t make out the words. I stand then freeze suddenly when the sound of a silenced gunshot echoes around us. Lex screams. A bullet hits the desk next to me which makes reality settle in. I stop struggling and it takes everything inside me to make myself sit back down. I hear Lex breathing hard and guilt eats at me.

“Good, nice to see you can listen. Susan get up before I shoot you. Tie him up first. Then bring the other chair over

here and help her up.” The man motions to Susan using the gun.

She crawls to the desk and uses it to help her stand. The rope isn't tight but with the cuffs it's impossible to get free. She wants to help us without getting killed.

I look back at the two women that mean the whole world to me. This is a personal attack. Who is the Deadman?

Susan moves a chair closer to us. She gently removes the tape from my mom's mouth. Then she tries to help my mom up. Once up mom yanks her arms from Susan's grip and slams her bound hands into the other woman's chest. Susan falls back surprised and crying.

“Don't touch me.” Mom turns to me with regret written all over her face. She starts crying, staring at me. “I'm so sorry, Jesse. When I found out about their affair, I thought it was my only opportunity to make a better life for you.”

“Shut up and get in the chair. How about I kill your freak of a child?” The Deadman laughs and something about that comment jogs a memory.

“Don't do this. I'll give you money. Just leave him alone.” My mom begs and gets in the chair next to Lex.

“Yes, your mom wanted to join the party. She got too noisy for her own good. The bitch should've stuck to blackmailing me instead. Tell your mother hi, James.” He calls me that name on purpose.

The blood drains from my body. *No it can't be.*

The Deadman laughs again and removes a black box from his mask. “Surprise!”

My mind screams at me and I freeze.

My father rips off the mask and grins at me.

“No.” I whisper and even blink a few times.

“Who is that?” Lex whispers but she knows because I look just like him. She's looking for confirmation.

“Dear old dad didn’t die of cancer. I’m more fit than I’ve ever been in my life. I don’t have to work and I’m military trained. I have plenty of time to focus solely on my skills now.” He puffs out his chest proud of himself.

“I’m sorry, son. I should’ve told you but he ruined your life for so long. I thought if he died, you could finally be happy and move on. He left us alone for years with my threats to tell Frank.” My mom cries, regret choking her words.

“No one knows mommy dearest was talking to Frank when he was attacked. I cleaned the video. Thanks to Susan’s money, I’ve been fine tuning my skills.” Wyatt brags more. His ego’s still massive. “She really is useless now-a-days anyway. Right, Susan? You never could have a baby like a normal woman.”

Susan flinches and he laughs hard holding his stomach.

“You’re a dickless twat.” Lex screams mad for Susan.

“Your sperm died with your brain cells, Wyatt.” Mom seems to be on Susan’s side.

Susan smiles at her, grateful for the confidence. “Yeah, it’s not my fault you couldn’t get me pregnant. You’re so stupid. You didn’t even know I saw a doctor. It wasn’t me.” Susan shakes her head mocking him. She points at my mom. “Just like it wasn’t her. It was you. You’re the one that was shooting blanks. You promised me. That’s the only reason I slept with you in the first place. You acted like you cared after my fourth miscarriage and Frank wanted to quit trying. I was vulnerable but that wasn’t an excuse.” Susan stares at my mom, tears rolling down her face. “I’m really sorry.” She looks at me and Lex. “To all of you.”

Susan hits the floor a second later. The shot barely registers because it happened so fast.

“No!” My mom screams and gets up running to her, but the asshole body checks her and she falls crying out in pain.

I stand the chair still tied to me. A bullet hits the floor next to Lex and I sit back down staring at my mom.

“Don’t get up again. She actually thought I didn’t know her slut of a daughter wasn’t pregnant with your kid. She thinks I’m stupid. Those two tried to pass off someone else’s kid as my own. Brittany got what she deserved and now Susan did too.” Wyatt shrugs, not caring at all. He isn’t my father. He’s nothing to me.

“You killed Brittany?” Lex’s stock question stops all my thoughts. Her voice is laced with disgust like she already knows the answer.

No way! For real?

“Well, I didn’t know what else to do. I wasn’t going to support some kid that wasn’t mine. Plus, I couldn’t lose Frank Jackson’s funding. He’s been supporting me for years. How do you think I’ve lived the life I deserved this long? I did have some help though.” He adjusts his tie and runs a hand through his hair.

It makes me sick knowing I look just like him.

The door opens and Ethan’s sister Stephanie walks into the room grinning like a fool.

What the fuck?

She looks around excitement dancing in her eyes. “What did I miss?” Her sinister laugh sends chills down my spine. She used to try and hang out with Sage and Brittany all the time. They never liked her and now I know why.

“Not much. They asked about Brittany.” Wyatt’s tone shows his amusement. He’s a sick bastard.

“Oh her,” she crinkles her nose in disgust. Then she smiles like a psycho. “It really looked like she was driving, huh? No one knew we made her drink all that liquor.” Wyatt stares at Stephanie like she hung the moon and I’m going to be sick. She walks to him swaying her hips like she’s some hot model.

“We don’t talk about the details, Baby, remember?” Wyatt pulls her to him but she steps away.

“When will the money be here, dear? I’ve taken Susan’s credit card and booked our vacation. I’m thrilled about the hotel and they have this whole couple’s spa. Did you get the full fifty million? I don’t have much left from daddy. He’s cut me off for good this time.” She pouts, wrapping her arms around him now leaning in for a kiss. They use tongues and I want to puke.

“Oh, a massage sounds fantastic. Yes, the funds will be transferred.” He looks at his watch smiling. “In about an hour. Did you pack? You can take whatever you want. Susan won’t need it anymore.” He laughs and points to Susan’s still form laying on the floor. I’m hoping she’s playing dead or passed out from the bullet.

Stephanie’s eyes light up and she claps. “You finally did it? Oh, you do love me. Thanks honey, that makes me so happy.” She starts grinding against him and I can’t believe I have to watch this wack asses play Bonnie and Clyde.

“Does it make the baby happy too?” Wyatt gets starry-eyed and tries to rub her stomach.

“Of course.” Stephanie steps back, uncomfortably laughing.

He doesn’t notice but I do and I smile. Looks like no matter how young they are he can’t get the job done. I file that information away to use later.

She pulls back and her eyes narrow on Lex. “You fucked everything up when you came along. I was supposed to get that job at TNT.” She picks up some of Lex’s hair. She leans in whispering, but I can hear her. “I planned on trying to fuck them all. Lake was mine first, bitch.” Stephanie backs away gasping all dramatically. “What? How dare you.” She slaps Lex across the face and we both growl.

I try to stand and another bullet hits the desk next to Lex.

“She’s pregnant, don’t you dare touch her. She can make babies unlike your woman.” Wyatt gloats like a moron so I tell him the truth.

“Stephanie’s a fucking tramp who will fuck anything that breathes as long as they have money. She’s a spoiled brat that has been stealing from her family for years. Ethan found her paper trail and now her father has cut her off. You are a pawn and you don’t even know it.” I laugh and Lex joins in.

The freeloading wanna-be rich couple gets mad that we would dare make fun of them.

Our laughter dies when a venomous smile spreads across Wyatt’s face. He walks to me chuckling like an evil villain. “I just realized you were wearing those fucking gloves. Time to take them off, you pussy.” I buck against the ropes as he comes closer to me.

Lex is screaming at him next to me, but I’m getting dizzy from the anxiety.

He kicks my chair, flipping it and me to the carpet. I hit my head on the floor but I don’t feel it because I’m terrified. My hands are free for a moment before he removes my gloves. My system goes into shock instantly and I leave my body.



Chapter 27 - We Are Too Legit To Be Underestimated

Badass Lex

“Jesse! Jesse, can you hear me?” I pull on the rope and I feel it give a little more. “Ocean Eyes, it’s okay I’m here. I’ll always be here. Come back to me, Jesse. Breathe, you got this. I believe in you.” I try to calm him through his panic attack.

Wyatt laughs at his own son and I know I’m going to kill him. He’s a fucking monster. “He can’t hear you when he’s like that. He’s a pussy. You should have seen him when he was a boy. Crying like a baby because he didn’t have his girly gloves on.” He rubs his eyes fake crying.

I imagine stabbing him in the neck repeatedly.

“He looks like he’s going to die and it’s grossing me out.” Stephanie complains with an upturned nose.

I stare at this woman I barely know, but hate all the same. I’m going to kill this chick too. My moral compass is gone, dead and buried. I’ll pray for forgiveness and my soul when this is over. Brittany deserves this revenge so does her unborn child.

Wyatt’s phone goes off and he pulls it out to check it. He grins then shows Stephanie the screen. They start cheering,

dancing around then making out like teenagers. The guys are smart, they wouldn't give them the money without knowing we're okay.

Jesse's mom begins moaning on the floor and that's a good sign. However, Jesse's breathing is becoming more labored. Wyatt made the mistake of uncuffing his hands to get his gloves off. He's stopped shaking, which is good, but he isn't responding to me yet.

"Jesse, I love you. We'll get out of here and I'll get you a new pair of gloves. Just hang in there. I love you, Jesse." I hope he can hear me.

He moans my name and my heart soars.

I can do this.

"I'm going to kill you both. I've been waiting for this for months and for everything you've done it will be filled with pain." I let my temper win, spitting threats like acid. They have the nerve to look shocked at my reaction.

The phone goes off again and this time Wyatt's face falls when he checks the notifications. "That asshole, Lake was always a rich prick."

"What about Lake?" Stephanie gets way too excited at the mention of my boyfriend. "Is he here? Oh my God." She runs out the room touching her hair.

"Stephanie, damn it, you dumb woman." Wyatt rolls his eyes while shaking his head. He glances at me tilting his head. His stare is getting uncomfortable. "They're all really obsessed with you, huh? Maybe, I should take you with us instead." His smile spreads. "How do you feel about babies?"

I gag at the thought of him touching me. He laughs, touching himself, then looks down at the phone again.

"Why would you do all this? You wanted to punish your son because you couldn't have more kids? This is nuts. Why would it be his fault? That's why you wanted me pregnant?" Is it even possible to reason with someone like him?

“You wouldn’t understand, you’re just a woman.” He sneers at me like that answer explains everything. “Are you even paying attention? Fine I’ll tell you, but listen this time.” He rolls his eyes like I’m a little kid. “It’s always been about the money. I needed Susan to believe I wanted you pregnant because I was harboring anger for Brittany’s brat. She tried to talk me out of it, but I wear the pants.” This douchebag is so proud of himself. He nods when I don’t comment like I wouldn’t dare argue with him. “I really wanted you knocked up because I knew I could ransom you. You’re a woman, you’re worth more with a baby. Everyone knows that.”

“You are a fucking dumbass. Do you know what we call you?” I ask, laughing with a massive grin on my face.

“Oh, I would love to know.” His cockiness gets ahead of himself and he smiles wide.

“The Deadman because that’s what you are, a dead man. The walls are closing in all around you. You’re so fucking stupid you don’t get it. Then again that makes perfect sense to me. You’ve ruined all these lives just to have a child with your bloodline. A man tough and strong enough to carry on your name.”

He nods with his ego firmly in place, chest all puffed up. “That’s right.”

“Wyatt you’re a fucking moron because Jesse is ten times the man you’ll ever be. I can’t wait to see him kill you, to watch the life drain from your miserable body.” I laugh loud and long until...

Wyatt smacks me across the face and I taste blood. I can feel it dripping down my face but it just eggs me on.

We hear some commotion on the other side of the door and I scream yes in my head.

Nothing happens then it bursts open. Unfortunately, it’s only Stephanie. My disappointment is heavy and my heart sinks. This bitch is in a fucking ball gown like she’s attending a fundraiser or gala. Her hair even looks like it has rhinestones scattered in it.

“I saw a black SUV at the front gate on the security camera, but I didn’t let them in. I don’t know where all the guards are. Maybe they’re taking a break?” She adds huge diamonds to her ears while talking like this is totally normal. “When can we leave? Did you get the money yet? Susan has better clothes than I thought. You should’ve brought me here sooner.” Stephanie whines and isn’t even panicked at all. She sounds perfectly calm, more interested in being materialistic.

Big mistake.

“No, I didn’t get the money yet. Change of plans, we’re taking her with us.” Wyatt points at me and Stephanie rolls her eyes.

Her lip pops out pouting. “I didn’t get her a ticket. I guess we can get it when we get to the airport.” She shrugs her shoulders, running a hand over her dress admiring the material.

“She doesn’t need one. We’re going to drug her and put her in a suitcase. She won’t go with us quietly.” He glances at me and he’s totally correct.

“Good idea!” She starts clapping.

“Well, get her up. We need to hurry.” Wyatt starts collecting papers and stuffing everything into a briefcase.

“I’m not going to carry her.” Stephanie looks at him like he’s crazy. “I’m pregnant, remember?” Her smile widens at him, patting her stomach to emphasize her point.

“Alright, fine.” He sighs then begins walking towards me with a determined look on his face.

I hear her say under her breath. “I’m not messing up my hair. Lake will be here soon.”

Holy shit! She’s a total airhead. Maybe, she’s just dumb?

“We should get her drunk and use one of Frank’s cars to drive her off a cliff, right into the ocean. That’s what I wanted to do to Brittany, remember? By the way, did you kill

Ethan yet? We shouldn't leave the country until we do that." She just checks her nails like she's talking about the weather.

Any sympathy I once had is completely gone.

"One problem at a time, Stephanie. Here you hold the gun for a second." Wyatt picks me up and throws me over his shoulder. I thrash but it's no use.

Suddenly, Jesse's mom kicks Stephanie and she falls on her face. Stephanie tries to shoot her and the bullet flies by Wyatt's face. That makes me roar with laughter. The two women start wrestling and it's a total catfight.

Time stops dead because we hear the explosion at the same time. Our heads whip to the door, but I know that was in the distance.

"It looks like my crew is here, Wyatt." I laugh teasing him. "Unlike you I'm a badass and take care of myself." I smack my elbow into the side of his head as hard as I can. My body bows back so he has no choice but to drop me. I kick his leg where I know I damaged earlier with my knife. He roars in pain, cursing like crazy. I pull hard on the rope holding my hands together and thank God after all that work it finally breaks free.

I roll away from Wyatt and grab for my blades. Shit, only one left. Jesse's mom cries out, getting my attention. I turn to see Stephanie has the gun at her head about to pull the trigger. I waste no time thinking.

My blade lands square in Stephanie's eye and she screams.

I flip and run to jump kick her in the face before the gun goes off. I pick up the butcher knife and stab her in the chest.

Wyatt screams and charges me. I try to use his momentum to flip him but he drops on me. I block my face so the first fist hits me in the chest. I lose all the air in my lungs and grunt in pain. My knee connects with his balls but another one of his punches lands on my shoulder.

I block my face, punches up as he hits my upper body. My head whips to the side from the blows. I see Jesse's eyes open about ten feet away. "I need you, Jesse!" I punch up at Wyatt but he just laughs in my face. He sits on my chest making it hard to breathe. "Jesse!" I scream.

"You are so fucking stupid." Wyatt yells in my face, trying to slap me. "You will take her place now and give me a baby."

I spit at him, kicking my legs and thrashing hard. "Please, Jesse." The desperation in my voice is sad.

Wyatt laughs, touching my breast. "He's a weak pathetic piece of shit. Let's have a kiss before we head out. Don't fig-"

There's a paintbrush sticking out of Wyatt's head. I try to push it in deeper, but he fights me.

Then his head explodes in front of my face. I push him off me and he tumbles to the floor.

I turn over to see Jesse's mom with the gun in her hands. She's bloody, scared and a little broken.

"Mistory," my name never sounded so sweet. I turn to see Jesse leaning against the desk. He's shaking but okay.

I crawl to him because I'm in way too much pain to walk. He tries to smile, but it doesn't work. Jesse reaches up and touches my face with his bare hand. It's surprisingly soft. My hand covers it, kissing his palm.

"I love you too, Blue Eyes." He winks then passes out.

The door splinters into a million pieces and the explosion is deafening.

Holy shit, I wasn't lying. Everyone I care about comes sailing through that door at record speed.

Dr. Maraschino tries to help me first but I point at Jesse.

Lake stares at me covered in blood. I know he wants to touch me but he's scared. He isn't in control and his knuckles

are hamburger meat.

Gage gets on the carpet next to me. He searches my face then kisses my head. I whimper from the pain and he curses. "*I love you, Mi Sirenita.*" Gage moves away to help the doctor with Jesse. He slips new gloves on Jesse and talks to him in low tones I can't hear.

The doctor moves over to help Jesse's mom.

Anthony falls to his knees before me. "I did nothing. I couldn't help you or kill them. I'm not worthy of your love." He bows his head in shame.

I take his face in my hands and lift it to mine. "Anthony, you aren't made for this. Your light is too bright and this would have dimmed it." I kiss his nose. The sadness in his eyes hurts me. "I love you but I'm glad you weren't here." He buries his head in my lap and I hold him staring at Lake who hasn't moved.

Liam and Donaldson check the bodies and make calls on their cell phones. They talk and seem to come to an agreement. Then they look around the room deciding what to do first.

"Susan's alive. She has a pulse." Wes says, and the doctor moves to help him with her.

"Okay, everyone up and out who isn't dead or Mistory." Liam says always getting straight to the point.

"The FBI will be here soon. Thanks to Liam and Gage, plus some magic from Bryson, we have stayed off local radar. Even the explosion and gunfire calls were rerouted. Everything will be handled before they get here. The place will be wiped clean of most evidence. Liam will make the scene reflect what we want. Lex you tell them you were kidnapped and you don't remember a lot of it. Keep the facts vague. Is Cash on his way?" Donaldson asks Lake and he nods, not taking his eyes off me.

"He's right here." Jace and Cash walk into the room. Jace's eyes meet mine and he runs to me. Lake stops him before he can touch me. Jace curses and tries to punch him.

Lake grabs his fist, growling at him. “I know how you feel. I want to touch her more than breathing but we need her to get checked out first. Gage hurt her just by kissing her head. The threat is over and our life will change now.” He glances back at me.

Everyone’s silent for a second, taking in the fact of that statement.

“Start to clear out. Now that Cash is here, don’t talk to anyone without your attorney present. It’s okay, Lex. You guys will be fine. I’ll be here to walk you through everything.” Donaldson looks around the room assessing the situation.

Kevin, Derek, Wes and Jim come in the room with a cart and decked out in full hazmat suits. Wes looks shy and salutes me. How did he change so quickly? Jim avoids eye contact. Liam gives them orders and they all nod.

Liam strolls to me smiling. “Lass, I’m mighty proud of you. You’re a proper badass.” He grins and I, of course, blush. “You never saw me and don’t know who I am. I’m a ghost like Casper.” He grins at me with raised eyebrows until I nod. “I’ll see you guys at Christmas. Remember for reference I like historical weapons.” He winks at me. “I need to handle a few things, if you’ll excuse me. Good day.” Liam walks out of the room like he owns the place.

Did the guys tell him I wanted to write a story about him? *Shit*. I help Jesse’s mom up and she hugs me gently.

“I’m so sorry.” She cries feeling guilty.

Anthony leans down to kiss me. He picks her up even though she protests. Jace picks up Susan and Dr. Maraschino holds something over her wound. Gage helps Jesse up on weak legs. Lake just stands back watching everything. It’s better that way. His rage will need an outlet soon. My guys reluctantly let Donaldson push them out the door.

I fall to the chair and rest my head on the desk. Cash rubs my back gently. Soon the clean up crew gets ready to leave and Wes sends me sad glances. Donaldson returns and

tells us everything is ready. I don't lift my head or open my eyes.

Sometime later, I have no idea. Cash taps me and tells me it's time. When I open my eyes to stand and lean on Cash the house is swarmed with law enforcement. Most people are wearing FBI jackets, vests etc. Gage's uncle is here too. He winks at me, telling his people to leave me alone.

The paramedics tell Cash to get me on a gurney and I pass out.



Chapter 28 - Thanksgiving With The Familia

Gage Lion Heart

Mistory squeezes my hand and I bring our joined hands to my lips kissing the thumbs. She smiles brightly at me and looks like a ray of sunshine in that bulky burnt orange sweater. I told her it was festive and she corrected me when I called it pumpkin earlier.

We decided to still have Thanksgiving even though it passed last week. We all needed time to heal our bodies and minds. Once again I wasn't happy that I couldn't help the woman I love. Honestly, it has been healing for all of them to take the final blows that took down that sinister man. Mistory's bruises are still under her makeup. She looks beautiful no matter what and we keep telling her that. She said it's time to move on and we don't need the reminders. Today we are having a huge feast so I understand why she wanted to cover them up.

I'm speeding now on this open dirt road because we are late and I don't want to get bitched at. The whole gang should be at my uncles' place by now. They are thrilled that I successfully got everyone to the Lopez Brothers Farm for Thanksgiving this year. Hopefully they'll cut me some slack.

Mistory and I decided to come up yesterday to make a pit stop and spend the night at my parents' old farm. We lost track of time this morning. Yes, we were having sex but we also toured the rest of the farm. I wanted to show Mistory some of the changes I've been secretly making to this small farm town. It deserved a face lift since it supplies a good portion of America with a steady food supply. The new school we are building will help the transportation problems local families are having here. My parents believed a good education is the foundation to every successful person. Unfortunately, they didn't have a bus system here. Well, they didn't before I stepped in. My uncles jumped on the opportunity to help too. They said my parents would be so proud of me. That I was doing the right thing with the family money I was so reluctant to use.

We set up more scholarships too and I even built huge daycare facilities at all our farms. I thought Mistory would be cringing the whole time with the baby thing so fresh but she was wonderful. She plopped down on the ABC carpet and started playing toy cars with all the kids. She even read them a story. One day we'll be awesome parents ourselves.

Most of the families struggling here are below the poverty level. If we can help people succeed with their dreams, why not?

Mistory went with me to visit my parents again a few days ago. It's become a routine and I've never felt closer to them. We decorated their graves with pumpkins, fall flowers and a big scarecrow. She said my dad would get a kick out of it. I laughed so hard I almost cried. Okay, maybe it was just all the emotions.

She remembered the story my uncles told us about my dad dressing up as a scarecrow to spy on my mom when they were in high school. Except dad didn't realize my uncles covered his pants in bird seed. The crows ended up attacking my dad's junk right in front of my mom. She climbed the pole hysterical to help him down and out of his pants. The Lopez Brothers proudly take credit for my dad finally asking her out.

I wish they were here to see how much I understand now what love really means.

Mistory begins bouncing around in her seat because she's excited. Her whole family is coming too. Plus, Jesse's mom, Anthony's and Lake's parents. Even all our friends will be there. Basically anyone that wanted to come that Mistory likes, she invited. She didn't have time with all the craziness to do anything special for Thanksgiving. However, she's already warned us that she plans on doing something really special for the kids around the shop for Christmas. I stop and wave at the guards then the iron gate opens before me.

"We have to make sure we bring food down here for them." Mistory frowns looking out the window and I laugh. She hates anyone missing out. I think she forgets people get compensated for working for us, but I just nod making her smile.

She's always so caring and a big sweetheart. Her hand smacks my thigh hard...and a badass. I laugh out loud, pulling her closer to give her a kiss before returning my eyes to the road. The driveway is crowded and even with all the room, we have a short walk to the house because of all the cars.

We hold hands strolling slowly to the front. I can't wait for her to see everything we've done and our new tattoos. My uncles' open the door before we get to the stairs. They line up to greet her, but could care less about me. The door shuts in my face and I'm shocked speechless. Then they all open it laughing and hug me.



Chapter 29 - Thanksgiving With The Fam

Anthony “Ant”

I stare at Ethan in the corner by himself. I’m really glad he decided to come today. Since he hangs out with Damien a lot, he was always at the house so we became close. He’s a good man and I know this has been hard on his family. Stephanie was definitely the black sheep and they never liked each other. Their dad had named Ethan the heir to their family’s enterprise when Ethan was young. She backstabbed her family plenty of times but this affected other people. The Masters’ and Riggs’ can be very convincing so Ethan accepted the invite. Shawna sits down next to him and hands him a drink. He takes it, thanking her but returns to silence with a distant look in his eyes.

Shawna looks sad and she sighs heavily. She glances at my brother and her eyes narrow. She looks away before he can see her. I think they got into a huge fight last week. Damien came home from school in the middle of the week and he normally doesn’t do that. He was pouting and slamming things around the house.

I watch my brother concerned about his mood. He hasn’t smiled once and my brother is always a jokester. I can

tell there's something wrong but I'm not sure what to do. I've told him he can tell me anything. Damien's talking to Champion and Mistory's cousin Kina. She's visiting from Japan again for the holidays. I think I'm going to plan a surprise trip there next year. I'll tell Gage to help me plan it too. Everyone will want to go.

My *Mistress* grabs my ass from behind and I groan. I love it when she does that. Lexy smiles, stepping next to me bumping my shoulder. "How were classes this week? Are more guys showing up now?"

I laugh because she was right. "Yes, you were a hundred percent right. Men love the idea of pro athletes taking the classes too." I kiss her lips and she bites me making my cock jump. "Jamie even got her whole dance class to sign up."

"That piece of furniture I told you about was delivered to the Sex House yesterday." Her tone is firm and commanding like my *Mistress*. We hear my bell and I adjust myself in these tight slacks. Lexy smiles but it slips when she stares at the trio acting weird. Her frown is adorable and I touch the wrinkle in her brow.

I purchased a small warehouse by TNT and turned it into a gym. More importantly we have self defense classes. I don't teach them but I still feel like I'm making a difference. I felt hopeless during the whole thing with Lexy and this has helped with my healing process.

"What's going on over there?" Lexy nods their way, asking my opinion and I shrug. I pull down her sweater and lick her neck making her giggle.

My parents, Cash and Tina head our way with big smiles. Cash still hasn't made a move on Tina. It's only a matter of time before someone snaps her up. He's acting like a dumbass. Lexy grins and hugs the women. My mom calls Damien over to join us.

Lexy doesn't even get nervous around my family anymore. I love that so I pull her closer to me. *Fuck it*. I pick her up, bringing her closer to my lips.

“Love you, Sexy.” I say happily kissing her nose.

“Love you more. Now put me down.” She smacks my chest giggling and I set her down. She rolls her eyes at my family but pulls me closer. “Dr. Riggs, it’s great to see you. Have you seen all the food?” Mistory rubs her stomach, licking her lips. My mom and the rest laugh agreeing with her. Her action did something different for me. I stare at her tongue and she smacks me when she sees me.

“How are you doing, Lexy? You look beautiful in that color. I wanted to tell you that the magazine published the photos we took.” My mom looks shy and it’s hilarious.

“Oh really, I would love to see them.” Lexy seems nervous now too. I kiss her head again and she smiles for me.

“I’m glad you said that.” Mom produces a magazine from thin air.

The picture on the cover is stunning. I’m so proud I may even get tears. Shit, I sniff and Cash chuckles. My dad hits him because he has tears in his eyes too. Lexy fits in with my family perfectly. The three women look tough and fierce in the middle together.

Lexy opens the magazine to the article with the interview. She starts crying reading all the nice words my mom had written about her. I’ve already seen it all. Lexy gasps and I look down.

Oh shit.

In the corner there’s a small picture of Shawna and Damien. It’s in print. Damien grabs it, and his eyes go wide. He looks at Shawna across the room and her gaze meets his just then. He closes the magazine and storms out of the room. Shawna frowns but doesn’t leave Ethan’s side. I notice Damien didn’t leave the magazine behind though.

I lean down to kiss Lexy. “I’ll get you another copy.”

Lexy nods, amazed by the whole scene. My mom just smiles like it was her plan all along. She’s so sneaky. Maybe she does know everything. She winks at me and hugs my lady again. Lexy showers mom with thanks wiping her eyes.

“I’m proud of you, son.” My dad says and I’m pretty sure I just stood taller.

Life is fucking awesome. I might even try to talk Lexy into letting me get a face tattoo. She looks at me shaking her head. *Dang it, she reads me well.*



Chapter 30 - Thanksgiving With True Family

Jesse Ocean Eyes

My mom waves at me across the room. She wants me to stop checking on her but that's difficult for me. She does look happy though, even now she's laughing at something Frank just said. I hate to think this and I'm not totally sure, but I think he loves her. I haven't seen them together in years. However, you wouldn't know by their body language.

I'm actually surprised at how close mom and Frank Jackson have become in this short time. I guess they stayed in contact for years. My mom said she was looking out for him. She assured me nothing has happened but he's hired her to be his personal nurse. They just told me they're going on a trip in a few months too. She said it was for business but I told her it didn't matter. I wished them well.

Frank was glad to learn the true story about Brittany. Some of the questions about his broken marriage, and the secrets in his house finally coming to light were good for him. He got sick of living the lie. I guess, the marriage was never one made from love. Susan needed stability and Frank was mourning his wife. I didn't know she was the babysitter. It definitely makes sense about Brittany's hostility towards the

woman. Frank's happy that Brittany's murderers are dead now and Cash has already drawn up divorce papers for Susan.

Susan didn't accept our invitation to come tonight, but she's finally happy too. The guys got together and gave her a nest egg for helping us when she did. She can live off that forever if she's reasonable. Even Lex gave her Zena's number. If she attended parenting class and more, maybe Zena can help Susan with adoption or a sperm donor. I was surprised to learn Susan's only thirty four. She feels free and ready to start living for the first time.

I wave to some of our family and friends. Then I make a beeline for the back door. I walk outside and breathe in the fresh night air. It smells like a farm mixed with flowers and I don't mind the smell at all.

I'm not sad or emotional about Wyatt in any way. Honestly, I said bye to him years ago in my mind. He's never been my father. He was my abuser and tormentor for most of my life.

My painting has even gotten better lately. I think the burden of a stalker and murderer after me was blocking my true emotions.

"Hey, are you hid-" that's all Lex gets out.

I spin around to pick her up and cover her mouth with mine. My tongue slides over hers and she moans. I grind into her then make myself pull back.

"I missed you. Did you have fun with Gage? Did he finally show you everything?" I kiss her again and feel her nodding to my questions.

"I missed you too, Ocean Eyes. It was amazing." She fans her face, trying to dry her tears. "You guys always impress me. You change people's lives."

"Yeah right, we are saints. You're the one trying to convince us to forgive Zeke." Lex looks sad and opens her mouth to stick up for him again. I cover it with mine quickly. "I know but that will take time. I do feel bad after learning about the scholarship stuff, but Lex, he supplied them with

information that hurt us too. Honestly, he's lucky we told the FBI he wasn't involved."

She nods, understanding reaches her bright blue eyes.

"Hey, do you want to try some more touching? We can do it longer this time. Maybe with both hands too." She's been helping me. It's unreal the feeling of skin on skin.

"Of course, I want to help in any way but you shouldn't push yourself until you're ready." She kisses my gloved hands. "I'm so proud of everything you've already accomplished."

My heart is solid and complete now with her.

She pulls me close to attack my mouth again. I would love to paint her naked in the vegetable fields tonight. I'm going to ask the guys to stay too and we'll go back to Gage's farm. I think he even mentioned a sunflower field he had planted for her that would be perfect. I'm about to tell her the plan when we are interrupted.

"Come on, you two love birds. We're going to eat now." Sage smiles at us and she's actually glowing with her happiness. Bryson's standing next to her grinning, sporting a black eye. He kisses her head pulling her away from the door and winking at us.

"I can't believe Bry knew about Zeke the whole time." Once he grew some balls, he told Sage. She agreed to be his spy and wanted to make sure Zeke wasn't a real threat. "We're going to their house warming next week too, FYI." Lexy kisses me then I put her down.

That was a crazy twist I never saw coming. Gage punched him good too for not telling us and putting Sage in danger. Bryson did say he couldn't tell me everything in the beginning. I just had no idea that's what he meant. He also claimed to have inside information which makes sense now.

We walk in the house full of chatter and love holding hands and smiling at each other.

This is my real family.



Chapter 31 - Thanksgiving With The Ones You Love

Mistory ~ Lex

I smile at my mom, and she kisses my head before waving at the other moms. She goes to stand by Aunt Zena, Alex, Wes and Jennifer. Yes, that's still weird for me. They asked if she could come and I really like those buttheads.

Alex has recently hired Jennifer to be his agent with the upcoming draft. Anthony has hooked him up with some NFL coaches and in return Alex has been promoting Anthony's classes. It turns out Anthony used to be a fan of Alex's and watched his career.

Wes still can't tell me his whole story, but I know it has something to do with his Uncle Jim. Which means Vic, and that seems like a natural connection. Now that I know they both work for Liam, it makes me think it has something to do with Blake. I spy my best friend chatting with my grandmas, Carol and Jim.

All the Lopez men have been charming my father because they want his permission to ask Aunt Zena out. If she knew they were all talking about her, she would jump all over

that. I jokingly asked about a Eddie Vadder look-alike friend. They started googling him when I walked away laughing.

Vic's going to see Christian soon but she says I shouldn't go. It's too soon and I shouldn't be flying yet. I really do need to check in with Sarah too. Last I heard, she's still in Colorado so I guess Creed forgave her. I need more information on that whole thing. I'll ask the guys what they think in a second.

My friends have been teasing me all night and I'm feeling stupid because I have no idea what they're talking about. They keep saying stuff like I'll be really busy soon and they're so happy about my adventure. I don't think they're talking about sex either so I'm a little confused. Maybe they know I've decided to start writing again. I met this cool author named Rainy Flower. She's super chill and very encouraging. She introduced me to Bailey Grayson too. Then there's this awesome chick named Cristina Dawn. Those three are a trip and so sweet.

"I have a great idea." Dr. Riggs sits down next to me on the couch. I smile loving how much we get along. "Have I ever shown you any pictures of my Anthony when he was a boy?" She busts out her phone and starts scrolling.

"No, never. Please let me see." I glance around and notice all the moms coming closer. Even Sage sits down by my feet.

"This is a good one." She hands me the phone with a beautiful smile. Anthony could be anywhere between six and eleven. He's at the beach with a surfboard in his arms. The waves are behind him and he's wearing a giant grin on his face. "He always loved surfing wherever we went. If there was an ocean, he was there." She says speaking fondly of her son.

The other Dr. Riggs joins us sitting on the back of the couch near his wife. Anthony smiles at me from across the room and I wave. The guys are in the middle of a heated game of cards.

"He's so tall and his smile was magnetic even back then." Our kid one day will have a smile like that. I hand back

her phone and she drops it giggling.

“How much did you drink tonight?” Jesse’s mom asks, laughing hard when Dr. Riggs winks at her.

“Let’s just say, my husband will be happy.” She smiles at said hubby and he kisses her head.

“OK, I’ve got pictures. Give me a second.” Jesse’s mom begins searching her phone now.

“Wait until you see this one, Mistory.” Lake’s mom laughs, thrilled at the new game. She slides closer to me, holding her phone out.

I take it from her eagerly because it’s Lake as a kid, duh. I just stare at the screen smiling. “Oh, he’s adorable.” Lake has to be about eight years old. He has hair, no tattoos and he’s in a perfectly tailored three piece suit. “Was this for a wedding or something?” Lake’s teal eyes command attention even back then.

“What are you ladies, and gentlemen,” Lake’s dad nods to Dr. Riggs, “doing over here?” He glances at the screen in my hand and his eyes go wide. “He would be so mad if he knew this is what you were doing.” Then he grins wide. “Let me see if I have any.” He pulls out his phone sitting by his wife. Lake’s dad laughs, beating the guys and taking all their money. Vic’s dad and my dad high five him and they start doing a victory dance.

Lake’s staring at us with raised eyebrows but Jesse yells at him for not paying attention. Man, that guy actually blows me a kiss and sticks out his tongue. Lake’s so romantic sometimes.

“Oh, I’ve got that beat.” Sage hands me her phone, giddy to see my reaction. She thinks this is the best picture.

I return Lake’s mom’s phone and look at the waiting one on my lap. It’s my Lion Heart and my heart melts. If this toddler Gage isn’t the cutest dang thing ever. All the Lopez family are dressed up as The Wizard of Oz. Sage is a cute little Dorothy in a red wagon. Gage is the precious little lion. He’s

smiling in his mom's arms. I look up to see green eyes watching me. He winks and blows me a kiss.

“Okay, this one. No, these two.” Jesse's mom hands me her phone and I give Sage back hers.

The first one is of Jesse at about ten. He's in full uniform with a ball in his hands. He isn't smiling though because it's game face time. I laugh totally understanding. My mom has a few soccer ones of me like this.

She leans over, swiping to the next picture. “This is the day he told me he was going to be an artist instead of a footballer.” Jesse's hair was longer way past his shoulders. His eyes coupled with that smile screams happiness. “His...I mean the Deadman.” I show no reaction. “Never let him have long hair. I think that's why he's stuck in between.” She nods at my man with a beautiful top knot on his head.

Jesse stands up laughing. He quickly does rock, paper scissors with the Kelly's. He stops, looks at me then bows. Then he blows me a kiss using his gloved hand. He's wearing the ones with our initials on them. All the guys started teasing him and he flips them off.

“I love them all. Please feel free to send me any baby pictures.” My phone starts going nuts and the moms laugh tapping their glasses together.

“We have tons of baby pictures. *los hermanos consiguen las fotos del bebé*” Jose calls out to his brothers to help look for pictures.

“Did someone say baby pictures?” *Oh no!* My mom pulls out her phone and walks over to the guys when they scream at her. She laughs and my dad pulls her into his lap kissing her. He's trying to help me by distracting her.



Chapter 32 - Thanksgiving With My People

Lake Masters

My parents hug me again before going to chat with Mistory's parents. They're so happy and proud of me. Da wants me to keep buying up the entertainment industry. He thinks I can make some great changes. Since I have a production company now, he suggested I look into a few movies too. I don't hate the idea so we'll see.

For now I'm just going to chill. I won't have a schedule or any pressing demands for the first time in a long time. I'm still going to a therapist and Mistory goes with me. I'm more honest when she's there. I tell my doctor everything now. The beast is quiet and content.

"Hey, I made sure everything is ready. I'm so excited for her. Here you go, just have her pull up the email." Tina hands me the tablet smiling from ear to ear. She's very efficient. She'll always have a job with us.

"Thanks, Tina. I really appreciate it. We need to talk about your future career plans." She smiles, nods and walks over to Sage.

I hold the tablet tighter and sigh to myself. I've nothing to worry about. I made sure everything at the shop was ready and Tina handled the rest. Or is it a store? Who knows. I'm interested in what she's going to name it.

"Hey guys, sorry we're late." Seth comes in with two women I've never seen. He's still wearing a cast and arm brace from the attack. He waves at me beet red all the way to his ears. Seth leads them out of the room quickly.

Gage laughs and hits my shoulder. I even let loose a chuckle myself. Mistory dances over giddy and smiling. I grab her hand as she tries to pass, pulling her to me.

"Don't tease him, Sex." I growl in her ear and kiss her neck. She grabs my face and I pull back on her hair. Our tongues meet in a heated kiss. I back up and kiss her nose. "Want to go on a date Monday?" She smiles so brightly my heart races.

"Yes, please Master." She nods, kissing my lips again.

"Is that a hint?" I ask her, raising my eyebrow. "You want to go to the Sex House?" She nods, moaning next to my ear. My cock gets even harder. "You're a bad girl. Guess you don't want the guys to come play on Tuesday then." I chuckle deep when she jumps in my arms attacking my face with kisses.

"Yes, we are going to have so much fun. I'm so excited. Did you tell the others yet?" She kisses me more, not letting me answer.

We hear a loud crash then some yelling. "Who the fuck do you think you are insulting me like that?" I put Mistory down and we frown at each other. We walked into the next room. One of the women Seth brought with him is yelling at Jace. She has her fists up ready to fight and she actually has good form too. Jace is on the floor holding his face. I think he has a bloody lip. "Is this how you people treat other people?"

Mistory looks at me and mouths, "you people?" I shrug at her not understanding either.

“Hey, I wasn’t trying to be rude, gorgeous. Don’t be mad.” Oh shit. Jace has pulled out his smooth voice. Mistory turns to me wide-eyed, I nod telling her I know already.

I lean in and whisper, “Watch.” She shivers, so I kiss her neck.

“Yeah right, why would you say that to me? Where is my sister? This was a bad idea. We need to leave.” She finally relaxes and starts looking around. Her cheeks turn red when she sees us. “Hi, I’m sorry. My sister invited me with her to meet her boyfriend.”

My eyes bug out this time and Mistory nods. “Seth has a girlfriend. I even met her at the hospital.” Well, dang. Seth was shot when Wyatt kidnapped Mistory but thankfully it wasn’t serious.

The woman clears her throat, throwing up her hands.

“Sorry,” Mistory and I say together.

“Hi, I’m Lex,” She tries to walk away but I pull Mistory back. It’s Jace’s face that provokes me to step in.

“Jace can help you find your sister. It’s a big house. I’m a hundred percent certain Jace was not trying to insult you in any way.” I add a friendly smile to help.

“Yeah, Jace is my best friend. He can be a Basshole sometimes but he’s cool people.” Mistory says joining my mission.

Jace finally comes to his senses and jumps up. The man has a crush and he walks over grinning. “I really am sorry. I only said that because I thought you were her.” He points at Mistory, and the chick’s eyebrows go up. “She’s my best friend and we talk like that.” He reaches out and plays with the hair around her face. “You have long dark hair too. But I see yours is actually black and very beautiful.” She just laughs in his face and walks out of the room.

I roar with laughter and Jace frowns. His hand is over his heart and there may be stars in his eyes. “Man, she has a great right hook.” Jace’s hand moves to his mouth.

“I think I heard she’s an MMA fighter or something.” His eyes light up at Mistory comment. “Well, what are you waiting for? Go win her heart, dork.” His smile is instant and he blows a kiss at Mistory.

She laughs, wrapping her arms around my neck. Her grin is radiant.

“You won’t be happy until all our friends are in relationships, right?” She gasps like I know her secret and I do. “I’ll help you. I’ve recently been told I’m pretty romantic.”

She giggles, “Oh Master, you totally are.” Mistory grabs my ass and runs away laughing.

I chase after her, growling but only teasing. I’m going to find an empty bedroom and spank her beautiful ass.



Chapter 33 - The Big Gift And The End

***Mi Sirenita* ~ Blue Eyes ~ Mistress ~ Sex**

The guys push me into a room and my eyes go wide when I see the other two. *Are we getting nasty?* I smile and all the guys groan, adjusting their pants.

“Not here for that, *Mi Sirenita*. But I could be convinced to take part in a quickie.” Gage tells the group shrugging. He kisses me, his tongue’s so soft.

“We need to make this fast. The surprise has to be done before it gets dark. You have to see it on video.” Gage covers his mouth like he’s spilled the beans and I guess he has. All the guys hit him, giving him a hard time.

“That’s why no one tells you anything.” Anthony pats Gage on the shoulder. “Let’s just tell her already.” He looks at all of them for confirmation.

“I’m getting a surprise?” I jump around a little. “What is it?”

“Show it to her already.” Jesse tells the others, his dark blue eyes bright with excitement too.

“Here, I’ll do it.” Gage tries to take the tablet but Lake snatches it back.

Lake growls at Gage showing his teeth. “No, give it to her and let her do it.” Lake hands me the tablet grinning.

“Fine, just open your email please.” Gage looks over my shoulder. He wants to start pacing.

I do as they said and open my email. I click on the link and it opens to a live stream. My gasp is loud and I automatically cover my mouth after.

It’s a stunning little shop with lots of bricks like TNT. My eyes narrow, it almost looks like the place they were building across the street. Gage has decided to take down the massive wall around TNT. The guys are helping rebuild the park where the Deadman blew up some cars.

Wow, this really does look familiar.

However, the one on the screen has cute little umbrella tables and chairs out front. I can’t see much of it so I push the arrows on the bottom. The view changes and starts moving slowly left. I frown, trying to figure it out by pushing more buttons.

“It’s a drone.” Lake says, shyly clearing his throat. “I thought the 3D view would be cool.”

“Oh, I’m sure it is. I’ll figure it out. Where is this? It looks like that building across the street.” I use two fingers instead and that moves the drone better.

I glance around trying to read their expressions. Gage is dying to say something. Anthony shakes a finger at him. Jesse laughs and winks at me. Lake just growls at everyone.

The door opens and the view moves inside. “What is this?” Tears fill my eyes because I think I already know.

“Go ahead, Gage.” Lake chuckles, giving him permission to tell me. It’s so good to hear him happy.

“What? I’m cool.” He tries to act like this isn’t killing him. Anthony opens his mouth so Gage says in a rush. “We built you a book store and there’s even a small Cafe.”

“Plus, there’s a room in the back for author meet and greets,” Jesse says winking at me. I told him one time that I wanted to do something like that for readers.

“It’s right across the street from us. You don’t have to open it. You can keep it for yourself if you want. We didn’t name it yet.” Lake rubs his neck but stops when I stare at him. He makes me giggle when he sticks out his tongue.

“We thought you would get bored working at TNT all the time. That was never the goal. I was just trying to win your heart.” Gage kisses me on the head.

“He was just trying to get in your pants but you stole all our hearts.” Jesse teases Gage and stares at me with hungry eyes. He said he wanted to try touching me again tomorrow. I’m super excited.

“Do you accept our gift?” They say together nervously.

A ringing starts and we all ignore it. Lake growls irradiated by the interruption. It must be his phone.

“Yes! Of course, I’m so excited I can’t wait to see it. You guys already stocked it with books too?” I look at the screen again. My mind is racing with all the stuff I need to do. When should I open? Oh and I need to PM Bailey about a name. She can be my first author. “And the authors can stay at the new hotel down the street.” Lake and Anthony nod like they already thought of that. “That Cafe is gorgeous too. We should serve something unique.” Gage nods. Oh, he has ideas. I look at the screen again. “Did you paint murals too?” Jesse nods, ducking his head shyly.

They are so perfect.

Lake’s phone rings again. He answers the call, after a few minutes. “You’ve got to be fucking kidding me. I knew it. She looked so familiar.” We all glance his way in concern. He hangs up and gets up.

I look around and no one knows what’s going on. I jump up to run after him which causes a chain reaction. What I find shocks the shit out of me though. Lake storms up to Vic.

He's furious and breathing deep. I stop momentarily caught off guard.

"What in the fuck did you do, Victory? How could you?" Lake stands over her trying to be intimidating. She's sitting down on the couch staring up at him. His temper is off the charts and she can tell.

Vic looks at Blake terrified.

I walk up and pull on Lake's arm. He shakes me off. "Lake?"

Vic standing not wanting to be in a vulnerable position I'm sure. She raises her hands smiling but Lake freaks out.

He actually tries to get in Vic's face. Thankfully, Blake steps between them. He looks at his brother like he's nuts. I don't like the fact he keeps dismissing me, but I want to calm him down.

I'm actually a little hurt this is how he's treating me. "Hey Lake, what's going on? You better not ignore me again." My tone is firm and dead serious. I pull on his arm. I'm clearly pissed and he isn't acknowledging me.

His teal eyes meet mine and I see real pain there. It makes me look to Vic for help with this. Why is he so upset?

"Mind your business, Lake." Vic is desperate but just the fact she said that means something, right? Regret and fear reflect on her face when she focuses on me. "I'm sorry." She looks back at Lake. "Please don't do this now." Vic's voice is small but her tone is fierce.

I want to know what the fuck is going on?

"What the fuck, bro? Back the fuck off, Lake now." Blake looks like he's going to punch him. Shit, Vic must mean a lot to him. They all know something I don't.

"You don't know what you're talking about little brother. It was my life too. All those years wasted." Lake actually pushes Blake.

I jump out of the way and pull Vic with me. Anthony and Jace grab Lake. "Get off me. Tell him you fucking liar.

You come to break bread with my family with all your dirty laundry.” Lake sneers at her.

“Lake, please stop. I’m sorry.” I turn to Vic, my best friend looks broken. The tough woman I know breaks down and runs off. Blake freaks out calling after her. He turns on his twin and punches Lake in the face. Lake falls into Anthony and Jace causing a domino effect. All the guys land hard on the floor. The parents and the Lopez men come running in the living room to see what’s going on.

I’m torn between checking on Vic or helping Lake. I have no idea what’s going on and neither does anyone else by the looks of it. The guys come closer to me but I don’t need help. Lake does. I point to him and the guys help me get him in a big room.

“Lake what’s going on.” I smooth a hand over his shaved head. I mean lasered. He’s corrected me before.

He pulls me into his lap and hugs me close. “I’m sorry. I need to let them work it out but that information was shocking.” Lake sticks his nose into my stomach, breathing deep. “It brought you to me and I’m a happier man now.” He nods his head to his friends. “We all are. We’ll be together forever. Our love will always conquer evil.”

The guys get close and we’re a tangled pile of limbs just holding each other. I can get used to this. We’re pretty badass too.

“Unless we are the evil.” I whisper.

They all laugh, nod and agree with me.

“I love all of you more than anything.” I tell all of them by looking at everyone individually. They tell me they love me too.

I stretch out feeling quite awesome with all them this close to me. I stare down at my hand. I could show them now. The guys say something I can’t hear, talking to each other. I take off my bandaid and hold up my hand to show them my surprise. Just seeing all their names on my ring finger makes me smile. It’s in order of how we met and Sage did a great job.

Gage

Jesse

Anthony

Lake

The guys all go nuts, shouting and cheering. Then they start attacking me with kisses. I laugh pushing them away, trying to kiss back.

They all lift up their own hands when they're done loving on me. My heart squeezes and I can't control the tears. They all have tattoos on their left fingers too. Even Jesse's glove has a clear peephole to see it. The tattoos are of my names.

Mi Sirenita

Lex

Lexy

Mistory

"I was going to put *Mistress* but that's just for us," Anthony says. I nod, biting his lip and he groans.

"You know I wanted to write, *Sex* but again it's personal. I didn't want you to be embarrassed either." Lake pulls my head back by my hair to let the others attack my neck and shoulders. He licks my lips, grinning.

"You'll always be my Blue Eyes but I wanted your real name." Jesse says tickling me with his beard.

"You can see them in the black light though. Just like mine says *Mistory*." Gage says confused then he covers his mouth.

"See, told you, you are not great with secrets." Jesse tells Gage rolling with laughter.

"No way! I love that" I get excited to see them.

"It's time for the real Thanksgiving feast. Take off her clothes." Lake tells them grinning wickedly at me. The guys have no problem with those orders.

Christmas is coming up. We are planning on visiting Sarah at the hotel after New Year's. The family was thrilled about going skiing together. Then we have our big Hawaii vacation, Gage planned. This is my new life and we have our whole lives ahead of us.

Author's Note:

That's the end for now. Hopefully, you'll want to read some of the side characters' stories. I've been told Mistory and her guys love popping into other people's books. Plus, I have plans for more books later on. I want to write Mistory's children's books too.

Lex had writer's block with her own book "Inked Revenge" but I'm sure with a little help from me we'll get that book out too one day.

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To my readers - I appreciate you more than anything. Please consider writing a review. Thanks again!

To my READING CREW on FB - I see you! Thanks for always commenting on my post and supporting me!

To ALL the badass authors who support other authors -
THANK YOU!