

Enslaved

The Life of Anna, Part 1



Marissa Honeycutt

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By Marissa Honeycutt

Kristi Cramer, Editor

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All portrayals of sexual acts are between consenting adults (aka, over the age of 18).

*****WARNING*****

This book is for grown-ups. This book is not for people who are easily offended, get nightmares easily, or have difficulty reading books about tough subjects. I do not glorify bad things, but bad things do happen to my poor characters.

This is not your typical love story. My heroine does not fall in love and live happily ever after...at least not like the typical heroine. There is a happily ever after, but it is a long, painful journey to that end.

Anna's story is told in five, novel-length books. Consider this your introduction to Anna and her world.

There is a subculture within our own world that you've only heard whispers of. The conspiracy theorists wish they knew Anna's story. What the conspiracy theorists think they know is only put out there to keep them from the real story.

This book will likely offend you. This book might make you cry; it might make you throw up. It is a dark book. As my friend, Heidi, said, "It's dark. It gets darker. It gets even darker, and then it gets even more darker.

And then, just when you think it can't get any darker, it does."

But, don't worry. I take you to the deep end gradually. ;)

There are many sexual situations in this series of books. People die. People get hurt. Things aren't always truly the way they appear to be. The antagonist isn't just a bad guy; he's EVIL. My heroine's worldview is skewed; things that may appall you are perfectly normal to her. You'll see why within a few chapters of Book One.

All sexual acts portrayed in this book are between persons of legal age (aka 18 years old). All sexual acts portrayed in this book are between non-related persons. Any violence is non-gratuitous and crucial to the plot and character development.

Do not read this if you are under the age of consent in your country. Do not get angry if the subject or actual book upsets you. If you're reading this, you've been warned.

DEDICATION

So many people, I can hardly count!

I'm half-afraid to start listing people, for fear of forgetting someone.

I have a mind like a sieve.

My loving husband, Brian, who found out about my twisted mind after 8 years of marriage and still loves me.

Kristi, my editor, who still isn't sure what she got herself into by agreeing to the position.

Rachael, from Dreams Come True Promotions, my amazing promoter and friend.

My first readers from the DMC on Goodreads. You guys helped me find out I wasn't the only twisted person in the world...SM Johnson, BlueRabella, Kelle, Ellen, Lisa.

Darby, my #1 Fangirl, who put out a dare for something new to read. I dared and got not only a great reader, but a great friend as well.

Heidi and Ginny, two early readers who have supported me so enthusiastically it warms me to my core.

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Heidi, Karen, Vicky

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Dylan, an amazing beta reader that I'd be lost without.

All my online friends, new and old that have been so amazingly supporting, not only of my writing, but during my bad days as well. Too many to name, but you know who you are and I hold you deeply in my heart.

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PROLOGUE

Anna stood in silence, the room before her dimly lit by silver moonlight streaming in through tall windows to her left. The loud argument she'd just witnessed was fading, leaving her ears ringing as the silence of this new room settled over her. Her eyes adjusted, allowing her to see that the room was enormous; larger than her guardian's kitchen and living room combined, with the ceiling hidden in the shadows above. She could see the faint outline of a white fireplace along the wall to her right. Across the room a vast shadow resolved into the largest canopy bed she'd ever seen.

She should be terrified. Just a few moments before, she'd been in a smaller, sunlit room; an office of some sort. Two giant men had stood in front of her, shouting loudly at one another in a language she didn't understand. They were both handsome, with thick blond hair and cobalt-blue eyes. One man was older than the other; one of the few differences between the two. Father and son maybe?

Their faces were flushed and their hands gestured wildly. The only word she understood was the number 'nine', repeated over and over again in voices so loud and so deep that the sound reverberated in her chest.

Why? Anna thought to herself. What is so special about the number nine?

The harshness of their tone made her want to cover her ears with her hands, but the fear of being noticed kept her frozen in place.

The older man stabbed his finger towards the younger man, emphasizing his words with the movements. The younger man kept one hand on his chest and pointed towards the door, shouting back just as loudly. His eyes were dark with emotion.

As slowly as it had appeared, the office faded and she found herself in this silent, moonlit bedroom. The rug against her bare feet felt luxuriously soft and she dug her toes into it. The windows allowed in enough light to illuminate the foot of the bed, but the head remained shrouded in darkness.

Where was she? Why was she here? She had no answers to these questions, though she felt herself drawn to the bed to see who was there.

Carefully, she stepped forward into a moonlit patch and heard a sharp intake of breath from across the room. Fabric rustled and she froze, hoping to remain unseen as before.

“Wer bist du?” a low, gravelly voice demanded from the darkness.

Her heart skipped a beat, and even though her mouth moved, no sound came out. She had no idea what had been said. Terror seized her as she stared at the dark shadow of the bed. More fabric rustled and she heard a thump as a tall figure stepped into the moonlight.

It was the younger of the two men she'd just seen arguing. His broad, muscular chest was bare and his hair stood out, wildly disarrayed. He rubbed his eyes and shook his head, as if trying to decide whether she was real or not. He took a step forward, then stopped and looked down. They seemed to both realize he was naked at the same time.

Her cheeks burned as she looked away, though the sight of a naked man was nothing new to her. She'd seen plenty of naked men since her parents...no, she didn't want to think about that.

She sensed, rather than heard, his approach a moment later and turned back to face him, thankful that he had put a pair of pants on. As he knelt in front of her, her breath caught in her throat. She'd seen him before. She'd dreamt of him many times since her parents had died, but he'd never interacted with her before. His gentle smile took away her fear and she found herself thinking that he was the most handsome man she had ever seen.

He looked at her curiously and stretched his hand out as if to touch her face, but pulled away before he touched her. "Wer bist du?" he repeated, this time in a softer, gentler voice. "Wie bist du hierhergekommen?"

She wanted to respond, but couldn't find her voice. Once again, her mouth moved, but no sound came out. All she could do was stare into his

kind and gentle eyes. Something about him made her feel safe, though why she needed to feel safe was beyond her comprehension. She had a wonderful guardian that cared for her every need.

She wanted to launch herself into his arms. She took a step forward and reached her hand out to him but froze when she heard movement in the bed. A female voice called out and the man turned his head away and responded in a hushed voice.

He turned back to her, eyes full of regret. Without knowing why, betrayal lynched her heart, and tears of sadness and frustration welled up in her eyes. They stared at each other for a long moment before the room began to fade.

She opened her eyes to look into the face of Devin.

Devin saw Anna's eyes fly open, their deep green nearly lost to the wide pupils as they darted wildly from side to side. The sixteen-year-old's dark hair spread out like a halo behind her head and her chest expanded and contracted quickly as she gasped for breath.

“Anna, what did you see?”

The delicate arch of her brows wrinkled in confusion, but she didn't answer.

“Anna!” Devin snapped and she jumped. His eyes narrowed. “What. Did. You. See?”

“I...,” she began, blinking back tears. Her body, which had relaxed during the vision, stiffened as she took in her surroundings. She lay next to him on the bed and clenched her fists, grabbing hold of the blanket on top of her.

“Anna! Look at me!” He grabbed her chin, turning her face towards his and she winced, but the movement accomplished what he desired. She looked up into his face, tears spilling over onto her cheeks. Devin frowned, temper rising. He didn’t like being ignored. Her lower lip trembled for a moment before answering him.

“I-I saw two men arguing,” she said in a soft voice. “A father and son, I think.” Her voice cracked as she continued. “They were very angry and were yelling at each other.” She winced. “Then I was in a huge bedroom and the younger one was there.”

“What were they arguing about?” Devin demanded, impatient to learn what he needed to know. She’d never made him angry before, but she’d seen it. No one in their right mind wanted his anger directed at them.

“I don’t know. I couldn’t understand what they were saying.” She blinked and more tears streamed down her cheeks.

“How could you not understand what they were saying?” Devin said with a growl, gritting his teeth. “Were they mumbling?” His words dripped with sarcasm.

“No, they were shouting. I couldn’t understand the words they were saying. They were...the words sounded very hard.”

“Maybe they were speaking a different language?” Devin murmured to himself. He paused at the possibility. A different language? Interesting. He hadn’t considered that his opposition might come from outside his own country, though it shouldn’t have surprised him; everything was international these days. But there were thousands of languages around the world. How was he supposed to figure out whom to watch for? “Do you remember any particular words?” he asked. If she remembered a few words, he would at least know where to start.

“They kept repeating a number,” Anna said softly. “The number nine.” Fear and pain filled her eyes and he could tell she was trying to be as helpful as possible.

His gaze softened as he looked down at her, trying to regain his patience. He’d waited almost twenty years; he could wait a few moments more. Especially if it meant obtaining information about any obstacles to his plans.

Anna was key to his plans. He needed her and her abilities so he could gain the control he needed. She was to be his prime asset, but he had to get control of her now before she realized the power contained inside her.

Devin savored his own power and had a plan to increase it. He could charm anyone; he had been accused of possessing supernatural powers of persuasion and manipulation. After all, true power was the ability to manipulate others into wanting to do what you wanted them to do. He was a well-respected member of the community and maintained close relationships with the powerful people in the spotlight; those he manipulated.

Men controlled the world...or so they thought. Devin knew that men, especially the type of men that crave power, have an incredibly high sex drive. All of Devin's powerful peers knew this and took advantage of it in one way or another, though most weren't as forceful as he was. Every country in the world has its own idiosyncrasies, but in America, the power-hungry go into politics. Devin knew he only had to keep those men sexually satisfied and they'd walk the path he lay before them. Put a beautiful, sexy woman in a man's arms and watch his ego soar...and his willpower fail.

Devin knew exactly what he wanted, and he would do anything and everything to accomplish his goals. Anything at any cost. Any cost. Patience was essential, though like any man, he had his limits. He'd been

slowly putting the pieces in place for years, picking up where his father had failed. Devin knew when to push things and when to let them be. Forcing things at the wrong time would bring everything crumbling down around his ears, and that was unacceptable. Devin Andersen did not allow the unacceptable.

Devin contemplated Anna's words: They kept repeating the number nine. What was he supposed to make of that? How could someone get upset about a number? "How did they say it?" he asked. Maybe more information could unravel the mystery.

Anna swallowed and looked up at him with wide eyes. "They were very angry. The older man would say something and then the younger man would say 'nine!' And then the younger man would say something, and the older man would say 'nine!' If I hadn't been so scared, I might have thought it was funny." She gave him a shy smile and searched his eyes for something; approval, Devin surmised.

He sighed and leaned down to kiss her cheek. "I'm sorry I snapped, Baby," he said in a soft voice. "This is just very important to me."

"I'm sorry, Devin. I'm trying."

"I know you are." He kissed her temple again and caressed her cheek with his fingers. He leaned forward to inhale the sweet fragrance of

her hair that fell down her back to her waist when she stood. So pretty. So young and naïve. Just as he liked her.

Devin had known Anna since the day she was born. He'd known her parents before they died four years ago, and her guardian, Jack Koslov, was one of his closest friends. Jack was Anna's guardian because of Devin. Her parents had died without assigning a guardian for her, or at least that's what the court had on record. Devin had used his political influence to ensure that the Perkins' family friend, Jack, gained custody of eleven-year-old Anna after the tragic accident that ended their lives that fateful winter night.

Devin looked up as Jack walked into the room and sat down across from him. Anna's eyes fluttered and closed, exhausted not only from the vision but also from Devin having taken what was left of her physical innocence.

Jack pulled the blanket up over Anna's shoulders as she fell asleep. "So now what?" Jack asked.

Devin was quiet and didn't respond to Jack's question. "German!" he exclaimed suddenly, looking pleased.

"German? What are you talking about?"

"German. Anna said that she couldn't understand the men in her vision, but they kept repeating the number nine. I'm guessing the reason Anna couldn't understand what they were saying was because they were

speaking German. Nein is German for 'no.' It would make sense. If the two men were arguing, saying no repeatedly would be likely.”

“Why Germany?”

“I have no idea. But I trust her vision, especially since she didn't know what she was talking about.” Devin paused thoughtfully. “I've had a few interactions with the Germans, but not many. They're rather stubborn,” he laughed. “Although I suppose I should give them some credit: they are the only thing holding the EU together. I suppose that says something for their leadership.” He paused again, eyes narrowed in thought, trying to decide the best course of action. It was, of course, necessary to figure out who these two men were. Was Anna's vision in the present? Or the past? Either was possible. Knowing what they looked like would be helpful. Perhaps his Russian acquaintance, Vitaly, could shed some light. He dealt with the Germans far more frequently than Devin did. Devin would make the call in the morning. In the meantime, there was work to be done.

“Would you please get Ian for me?”

Jack nodded and left the room, returning a few minutes later with a very tall, muscular man whose light brown hair was pulled back in a ponytail. His shoulders filled the doorframe. “Yes, Devin?”

“Let Doctor Ansen know that I'm ready for him to work on Anna.”

“All right. Do you want me to bring the shot in here?” Ian glanced down at the sleeping form next to Devin. “Knocked her out pretty good, huh?”

“As I wanted. Did you hear her?” Devin grinned at his friend.

“How could I not? She seemed to enjoy it...eventually.” Ian grinned back.

Ian, too, was a loyal follower of Devin’s. They’d known each other their entire lives and Devin held Ian in high regard and counted him as a friend. To most, Ian appeared as Devin’s personal assistant and occasional bodyguard. But they were as close as brothers, which they very well might have been. But that was a mystery long dead and, to Devin, unimportant.

“Yes, bring the shot here. I don’t want to risk waking her. She’ll awaken to reality soon enough, but for now let her sleep.”

When the doctor was finished with her, she’d be unable to get pregnant and be immune to any sexually transmitted disease she came in contact with. Devin was fairly certain that she had all these attributes already from her father, but he wasn’t taking any chances. Better safe than sorry.

Anna had strange dreams. Strange and uncomfortable dreams. Strange dreams weren’t unusual, but painful ones were. Her body was

poked and prodded and an occasional sharp sting slipped through her sleep. She'd felt the warmth of a bright light above her for a period of time. At one point, her chest felt like it was on fire and she struggled to breathe. A sharp poke in her arm and the pain in her chest subsided, allowing her to ease back to sleep.

When she awoke, her body ached as it had after her first day of intensive summer ballet classes years ago. She groaned as she stretched her arms above her head, opened her eyes to find herself in an unfamiliar room. It was pretty and ornate with gilded wooden carvings in the high ceiling. Not as high as the handsome man's room, she thought to herself and smiled.

She felt...different. Memories of what had happened with Devin returned and she wondered where he was. She felt...grown up. She trailed her right hand down her left arm and down to her body, remembering how he'd touched her. A stirring below her belly made her wonder if that happened every time you had sex. If so, no wonder people liked it so much, although she'd learned over the last few years that there were different ways to have sex; some of which looked very painful.

Tabitha and Zoe, who lived downstairs in Jack's house, had sex a lot and it looked painful, though they didn't seem to mind. Jack said they were from the Manor; that he was training them. They were a year older than Anna and men came to see them all the time.

Anna was glad Devin hadn't been like that. He loved her and wanted her to feel good. She wanted to make him feel good too, although she was certain there were other women in his life that could do a much better job than she could.

Devin's wife, for example. Anna was positive that Devin would never marry someone who didn't make him feel good. His wife was certainly a wonderful woman and so lucky to have married someone like him.

She sat up in bed, once again wondering where Jack and Devin were. Should she go look for them? She was naked and didn't like the thought of wandering around a strange house without clothes on, though she wasn't shy about being naked. She was naked most of the time in her own house.

Anna spotted a pair of double doors across the room from the foot of the bed. She stood, her legs a little wobbly, and walked carefully to the doors and opened them; it was a closet, but empty. She wandered around the room and finally discovered a bathroom with a robe inside. After taking a moment to pee, she put the robe on and approached the big doors that she guessed led outside the room. Where exactly they led, she had no idea, but her desire for Jack and Devin outweighed her fear of the unknown.

She reached out for the door handle to turn it, but it wouldn't turn. She tried again, this time harder, but it still wouldn't turn. She stared at the door for a moment, unsure of what to do next and was surprised when the door opened on its own. She took a step backwards, but not quickly enough. The door pushed against her and she lost her balance, falling to the floor on her rear.

A giant of a man looked down at her with a frown on his face. She smiled tentatively and stood, adjusting her robe. "Is Jack out there?" she asked hesitantly, hoping he'd stop glaring at her.

"I'll let him know you're awake," he growled.

Anna's eyes widened in surprise. No one had ever spoken to her like that, and she was hurt that a stranger would dislike her so much. He turned and pulled the door closed sharply behind him. She was alone again, but at least she knew that Jack would be with her soon.

She turned and walked to the window. Pushing the sheer curtain aside, she looked out onto a grassy lawn with a thick border of bushes a few hundred feet away. Her thoughts strayed to the dream she'd had about the handsome man in the dark bedroom. This dream had been different from other dreams she'd had of him. This time he saw her...talked to her, even though she had no idea what he'd said. *I wonder who he is.* Devin's reaction made her wonder if he might be a real person, not just part of a dream.

The door opened behind her and she turned to see Jack and Devin walk in the room. Her heart soared when she saw them and she ran across the room to hug Jack with all her might. It took her a moment to realize he wasn't hugging her back and she was confused. She took a step back and smiled into his face.

"Hi, Jack," she said brightly and turned to Devin. "Hi, Devin." She leaned forward to hug Devin and he took a step back, avoiding her embrace.

Tears sprang to her eyes as the unthinkable happened. They'd never rejected her embraces before. *Something must have happened and they're not sure how to tell me*, she thought to herself. What could have happened, she had no idea. Her parents were gone and they were the closest thing to family she had, so she couldn't imagine what could make them so distant.

She looked back at Jack. "Jack? What's wrong?" He simply looked at her. Was that disgust on his face? Why was he looking at her like he looked at Tabitha and Zoe?

She looked quickly at Devin. "Devin?" she said in a timid voice. "Did something happen?" His expression was similar to Jack's.

Anna's stomach knotted as she took a step back and stared at the two men she loved more than anything in the world. They'd never acted so coldly towards her.

Suddenly, Devin reached out and hit her across the left cheek. He hit her so hard that she stumbled to her knees, one hand on the floor preventing her from falling further and the other cradling her face. A cold wave of disbelief washed over her as she looked up to the faces of the men she loved.

She struggled to speak. “D-Devin, why-”

But she didn’t finish her sentence before he leaned forward and hit her on the other side of her face, this time sending her sprawling to the wooden floor.

“Don’t call me Devin,” he snarled. *Snarled.*

Incredulity flooded her as she looked up at him, jaw trembling. The tears that had stung her eyes moments before now cascaded down her cheeks, irritating the rapidly forming abrasions.

Anna didn’t know what to do. Neither of the two men had ever so much as raised their voice at her, and here she was, on the floor, having been hit in the face by her beloved Devin. Twice. Her mouth gaped wordlessly as she stared at them. Were these the same men with whom she had cuddled so recently?

Jack reached for her arms and pulled her to her knees, her rear resting on her heels. “You will sit like this with your hands like this,” he brought her palms together under her chin in a prayer-like position,

“whenever we are around. You will only stand if given permission. Do you understand me?” His voice was harsh. He’d never spoken to her like that. He spoke to...he spoke to Tabitha and Zoe like that, not to her.

“Do you understand me?” he repeated, his voice slightly louder and demanding.

“Y-y-yes....” Anna wasn’t sure what to call him. Devin had hit her when she addressed him as she always did. “Yes, Jack,” she said quickly and winced as she braced for another hit. And it came. A moment later she was on her hip again, this time having been hit by her beloved Jack. She stared up at him for a moment as he looked at her through narrowed eyes.

“You will call me Master, as all my trainees do.”

She continued to stare at him, trying to grasp what he’d said. Trainee? He must be joking. But one look in his eyes and she knew there was no humor in his words.

“You will refer to me as Master as well,” Devin instructed. “Do you understand?”

“Y-y-yes, Dev—” She stopped herself before the offending word escaped her mouth. “Yes, Master.” The term felt foreign and uncomfortable. Where was her loving Devin? Her heart was broken and she wanted to sob and scream at the same time, but something inside told her it would be better to remain silent. She bit her lip instead.

“Things will be different from now on,” Devin continued. “You will not look us in the eye unless given permission. Nor any other man. You will submit yourself to Jack’s authority, and mine, obeying without question everything we tell you to do. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Master,” she said in a shaky voice.

There was a pause and then Jack spoke. “You will continue to live with me, but your room is now the downstairs room, as it has been vacated by the other girls.” His voice was cold and frightening.

The downstairs room? Anna never stepped foot down there, but the cries and screams that had travelled upstairs made her never to want to go there. Now she would be living down there? Oh, what horrors awaited her down those stairs?

“You are finished with school. You’ve had plenty of education and won’t need any more to succeed in the future. You will continue to take your two ballet classes a week, however.”

Anna wondered at the concession of dancing. When her parents had died and she’d gone to live with Jack, he had cut back her dancing to just two classes per week and forbidden any performances. She’d not been able to talk to old friends, or anybody for that matter, and had been forced to change schools. But his loving manner had made up for it for the most part. He kept her mind and body busy with other things.

Without thinking, she looked up into his face and began to ask why when he reached down and hit her across the cheek again.

“Did I give you permission to look at me?” Jack shouted at her. She jumped at the harshness of his voice.

She quickly looked back down at the floor, tears now flowing freely though she remained silent. The tears fell onto her lap where they made dark spots on her white robe.

Jack continued. “As I said, you will continue to dance. Those classes are to keep you...shall we say, healthy? But you will be too busy for more than that. There are other skills that are more important for you than dancing.”

“Yes, Master.” She stared at the floor.

“You will not leave the house without my permission. Your life will revolve around Devin and myself. If, on the rare occasion you are out of the house and you see someone you know, you will ignore them. You will not speak to them or look at them. If they approach you, you will turn and walk away.”

“Yes, Master.”

What was left of the normal part of Anna’s life had just turned upside down. She didn’t know what to think, what to feel. She didn’t know what “lessons” Jack was talking about, but she had a feeling she wouldn’t

like them. She'd not seen the lessons that Tabitha and Zoe had taken, but she had heard many of them. She'd seen them bruised and hurting. She'd watched Jack yell and scream at them for the smallest thing.

Anna had gone to Devin after she'd lived with Jack for a few weeks, upset over the abuse Jack was inflicting on the girls, but Devin had said that the girls were being trained for something special and that they'd be okay. Somehow, he had made Anna believe what Jack was doing was okay... at least at the time. Anna had learned to ignore it as much as possible because it hurt her heart to see it.

Men came to Jack's place frequently to utilize the services of Tabitha and Zoe. Jack had Anna stay in his bedroom on those nights watching TV with the volume up high, though she could still hear sounds that frightened her. When he saw that she was upset, Jack, and sometimes Devin, would visit her in the bedroom, distracting her from the sounds by teaching her the pleasures of being touched by a man.

After about a year of being kept in the bedroom, she was allowed to be out in the living room when men visited. They were always very nice to her and sometimes Jack would let them touch her, with the promise that they wouldn't hurt her. They were rough with Tabitha and Zoe and made them cry or scream in pain.

More recently, though, Tabitha and Zoe presented themselves to Jack's friends and spent the evening quietly pleasing them. Anna was fascinated at what they could do with a man's body, obviously pleasing them and making them moan. The men were still rough sometimes, but the girls didn't seem to get as upset as they did before.

Devin contemplated Anna's tears as he stepped closer. His other girls, including the girls that Jack trained for him, were just property. They had no birth certificates or social security numbers. They had no need for a 401(k) and the government did not know they existed. At least not officially; plenty of elected officials knew his girls personally. Anyone born in the Manor was kept off the radar, and many generations of girls had been born and died in this place, unbeknownst to most of the city. Yes, they had names, and he knew them all, but they were just sexual objects to be used to keep the men happy and compliant.

Anna wasn't like that. She'd been born to loving parents, raised in a loving home until Devin decided it was time for her to become his. She was special. She had qualities only a handful of females in the entire world possessed, but she didn't need to know that. He had rights to her; it was not an issue of legality. The will of the Brotherhood was what counted, and no one would deny his right to her. She was born in his region and he claimed

her at her birth. But his plans for her were different from the others who kept similar women. His Brothers didn't need to know that, though. Not for now anyway. They'd find out eventually, but by then it would be too late.

Devin gave Jack a satisfied smile. Everything was coming together as expected. This was good. This was very good.

CHAPTER 1

Four Years Later

“Sit.”

I dropped into my submissive position without having to think about it. After years of sexual lessons from my Master Jack, there were many things I didn't have to think about anymore; I just did as I was told. It was less painful that way.

Sometimes.

“Good girl.”

I could hear him walking to the side of the room where he kept the whips, pause, and then walk back towards me.

He stopped behind me and trailed a black braided leather whip on the floor in a circle around me. I shuddered as he trailed it up my back and then slowly wrapped it around my neck once, twice, three times. I held my breath. I knew what he'd do next, just not when he would do it. The longer he waited, the harder it was to time my breathing.

He didn't move. I didn't move.

I could hear him breathing, slow and steady. I used to be able to anticipate his moves by listening to the changes in his breathing, but not

anymore. I think he must have realized what I had been doing and changed his tactics.

Abruptly, he pulled the whip up and back, yanking my body back onto the painted cement floor. Instinctively, I moved my hands up to my neck under the whip to keep it from choking me as he dragged my naked body across the floor to the archway where he disciplined me.

He yanked the whip upwards to make me stand.

“Up,” he commanded.

I obeyed, carefully keeping my eyes focused on the floor in front of me.

“Hands up.”

I put my hands above my head and he cuffed them into place. I was careful to keep my face impassive, but internally I shuddered. No matter how many times he'd whipped me, it always felt like the first time. Perhaps it was because my body always healed itself quickly, not allowing my skin to toughen up. Or perhaps it was just the nature of the whip.

Almost four years had passed since Master Devin took my virginity. Four lonely years since my beloved Devin and Jack became Master Devin and Master Jack. Four years since I'd been held in a manner that didn't involve sex. Four years since I'd heard the words, “I love you.”

I couldn't even begin to count the number of times I cried myself to sleep, wondering if I would ever wake up from this nightmare that my life had become. Why? Why did my guardian hate me so much? He used to love me. Master Devin, too. What did I do to make them despise me? Maybe if I were better, if I did everything the way Master Jack wanted me to, then he would stop hitting me. That if I was good enough, the Jack I knew as a child would return and love me again.

But no matter how much I strived to be good enough, I failed. As soon as I started getting better at something, Master Jack would change how it was supposed to be done so that I failed again. Then he would chain me to the archway and whip me until I passed out, which didn't take that long.

Despite all the cruelty in my life the last few years, I never got used to being hit; every time felt like the first time. For reasons unknown, I healed faster than normal people and calluses didn't grow anywhere on my body. They didn't grow on my heart, either, leaving it unprotected from the verbal abuse of my Master Jack and his friends. Oh, how their words stung, sometimes more than their fists.

A few months after my lessons began, I tried to kill myself by cutting open my wrists. I bled a lot and passed out. Master Jack saw what I'd done and was beyond furious. He wrapped my wrists and then took me to see Master Devin.

I didn't want to think about what Master Devin had done to me that night. But I never attempted suicide again. My body healed too quickly to succeed and I never, ever, wanted Master Devin to be that angry with me again.

I didn't see Master Devin very often; he was a busy, important man. Whenever he did come for a visit, he and Master Jack spoke of things I never completely understood. Like how a senator wasn't listening properly, or how the mayor was ignoring him. Master Devin did not like being ignored. He would look at me with his cold eyes and give me a cold smile, but didn't touch me. I wasn't sure if that was a good thing or a bad thing.

"Once she's trained, that won't be an issue anymore," Master Devin said one time after a discussion with Master Jack about the governor. "She'll be able to convince them."

Me? How could I convince the governor to do something that he didn't want to do? I never finished high school and knew very little of the political system.

But there had been a few times when I had accidentally convinced Master Jack's friends to stop doing something that was hurting me. Master Jack had left the room and I felt a peculiar sensation rush over me. I looked at the man and told him to stop and he did. I don't know if Master Jack noticed the slightly dazed look in the man's eyes afterwards.

Since the beginning of my training, Master Jack had brought out every possible physical sensation, good and bad, that my body possessed. I knew how to move my body during sex to give the man intense pleasure. I knew that my orgasm pushed his orgasm to a higher level, and I was punished if I didn't achieve climax. Master Jack trained me to orgasm during painful sex, to please my attacker. I could suck cock like nobody's business and take any size man down my throat.

I knew my art. I was confident I could please any man that crossed my path. It wasn't pride; it just was the truth.

"Do you know what tomorrow is?" Master Jack asked as he brought the whip down across my back.

I sucked in a breath at the stinging pain. "Monday?" I responded through clenched teeth.

"May 12th, Baby." He swung the whip again, harder this time. I let out a soft cry.

May 12th. My birthday. My twentieth birthday to be exact. I'd forgotten. My birthday had been virtually ignored since my training began and I certainly didn't see any reason to celebrate. Every year that passed, to me, was just another year of hell survived.

"My birthday," I confirmed as he whipped me again. Another cry escaped my mouth. Either he was progressing to the harder stuff faster or I

was extra sensitive today. It happened sometimes.

“Yes. Your birthday. Which means you will be passing into Master Devin’s ownership tomorrow.” He laughed.

Master Jack whipped me again. This time a loud cry spilled out of my mouth. “Oh Baby, did that hurt?” he asked, his voice dripping with sarcasm. “This is the last night I have you here. I’m going to make the most of it.” He smiled sadistically and proceeded to bring the whip across my back repeatedly, each snap harder than before. When he knew I was at my limit, he released my wrists from the cuffs and I fell to the ground, writhing in pain.

“Get up!” he snarled and dragged me to the bed. “I’m going to enjoy your last night here with me.” Another sadistic grin appeared as he dipped into his “treasure box” where he kept his most heinous instruments. I trembled with fear. This was going to be a long and painful night. I closed my eyes and braced myself for the worst.

CHAPTER 2

I awoke the next morning to Master Jack's shouts from upstairs. He often woke me that way, and I was expected to be out of bed and on my knees by the stairs when he came down. It could be within 30 seconds or as long as an hour before he arrived. He was unpredictable and he liked it that way. It gave him an excuse to hit me. I groaned as I scrambled out of bed, my skin tearing away from the sticky sheets. I looked down. Blood. The cuts would be mostly healed, as usual, but the aches and bruises would last a few days.

I didn't take the time to dredge up the memories from last night since I could hear Master Jack start down the stairs. I ran as fast as I could and skidded into my place just as his foot hit the stair where he could see me. My body ached as I waited and prayed that I'd gotten there in time. I could feel his disappointment and released a silent sigh of relief that I'd made it in time.

"You're a mess," he commented, stopping in front of me. I stared at his brown leather shoes and waited for what he would do next. "Take a shower, wash your hair and get dressed. You need to be presentable this

morning, so take some time to do it right. Just don't waste time." With those instructions, he turned on his heel and retreated up the stairs.

I didn't move. Take my time to do it right? That was different. He usually wanted me ready as soon as possible and didn't care how I looked. Confused, I stood slowly and headed towards the bathroom, glancing back once to make sure he hadn't tricked me into doing something just so he could punish me.

I did as he commanded, washing and conditioning my long hair and making sure I'd gotten all the dried blood off my back and legs. It took me a while and I became nervous that Master Jack would come in the bathroom and drag me out of the shower, but he didn't.

I turned off the water and ran a rough towel over my body before combing and braiding my long, dark hair. Master Jack liked it braided because it was easy to grab onto.

I went to my closet and pulled out the one outfit that I owned aside from my dance clothes: a pair of jeans and a blue sweater. When I was dressed, I went upstairs to present myself to Master Jack.

He looked me up and down and shrugged. "I probably should have bought you something better to wear, but it's too late now." He grinned. "I don't think Devin'll care much what you're wearing. Besides, you probably

won't be wearing it for long." He stood, took one last swig of coffee and picked up his car keys. "Let's go."

The drive to Devin's Manor was a long one. There were very few houses on the road that wound its way up a hill and ended at a set of tall iron gates that opened at our approach. Jack drove his black Porsche up another winding road through a dense grove of Monterey cypress. An enormous, gothic-style mansion built partially into a hill appeared at the end of the road. Master Jack stopped the car at the foot of the stairs that led up to the imposing entrance.

As I opened the car door and stepped out, the huge wooden doors opened and a man with long, light-brown hair appeared. Ian, Master Devin's personal assistant. He was very tall, well-built and very intimidating. He rarely smiled and enjoyed cruelty as much as Master Devin and Master Jack did. After my suicide attempt, Ian had helped Master Devin punish me and enjoyed it. He had towered over me with a sickening grin as I screamed in unbelievable pain from whatever instrument Master Devin had instructed him to torture me with. He was stronger than Master Devin and could do things with a riding crop or butt plug or dildo that no one else could. He also possessed his own personal instrument of pain: his enormous cock.

I waited for Master Jack to walk around the car and then followed him up the steps to where Ian awaited us.

I shook as I walked inside. Terror began to well up inside me as horrible memories crept into the forefront of my mind. The few punishment days that I'd spent here were filled with enough pain and fear to make me dread crossing this threshold.

"Good morning, my lord," I murmured, keeping my eyes focused on the stone floor in front of me. I stepped through the doorway and removed my shoes. Females were not allowed to wear shoes in the Manor.

We walked into the entrance hall, which was paneled in dark wood. The Manor had a warm feeling to it, despite the horrors I had endured there. I stood in silence, head down and hands at my side, as Master Jack and Ian exchanged greetings and small talk.

"Where's Devin?" Master Jack asked. "I'm surprised he's not out here yet. I thought he couldn't wait for this day." He and Ian chuckled and I could feel their gaze on me.

I didn't move. I barely dared to breathe.

"He's finishing up a phone call," Ian replied. "Apparently, Alex's father and brother came into town unexpectedly from Frankfurt, and he was letting Devin know. Devin's not too happy about it."

“Alex is that German playboy that moved here a few years ago, right?” There was a pause. “I thought he didn’t want anything to do with us.”

“I thought so, too. He rarely comes to anything. Not that he needs to.” They both chuckled at some private joke. “Devin’s kept him in the loop as a courtesy, but has enjoyed the fact that nothing formal came from it until now.”

“What’s so special about his father and brother?”

“His Father is an Elder.”

“Wilhelm is an Elder?” There was a long pause. “Did Devin know?” Master Jack sounded nervous.

“Yeah. Wilhelm lets Devin know when he’s in town, but never comes to any Gatherings. Since Alex never got involved, Devin never mentioned it to anyone. Devin’s a little touchy about the subject.”

Master Devin touchy? That wasn’t a good sign.

“He never mentioned it to me.” Master Jack sounded offended.

“Probably because of...” Ian’s voice trailed off.

There was another pause. “So, is Wilhelm...?” Master Jack trailed off as if he didn’t dare to finish the question aloud.

“Devin thinks one of them might be.” Ian sighed. “Wilhelm’s coming Friday night and Devin is suspicious of the timing. Why now all of

a sudden?”

Another pause.

“So, is it Wilhelm or Alex?” Master Jack asked. “Or his brother?”

“Not likely the brother. Kurt visits here a lot just to party with Alex.” A pause.

Jack laughed. “Well, Alex certainly makes his rounds. I can imagine his brother would do the same.” He paused. “Isn’t Alex married? I’ve never seen him with someone that looks like a wife, but he’d have to be, wouldn’t he?”

“Was, apparently. His wife died about six months before he moved here. I believe that’s why he moved here. And that’s why Devin didn’t give him much thought. But now...” Ian trailed off. “I don’t know. Devin’s not giving away much, but I can tell he’s concerned. He didn’t expect this. And you know how much Devin loves the unexpected.”

They both gave a nervous chuckle. No, Master Devin did not like the unexpected. Master Devin was a planner. He anticipated the results of every move he made a dozen steps in advance. Oh, he was not going to be happy. I sighed, afraid for what was to come today.

Master Jack’s hand snaked out and grabbed my chin, bringing my gaze to his. “Did you just make a sound without permission?” he snarled.

I winced. I hadn't realized I'd done it aloud. "I'm sorry, Master. I—I didn't mean to." I saw his hand pull back to hit me, but before he could do so, a stern voice echoed from across the stone room.

"Jack."

Master Jack flinched and looked across the vast room. I was surprised that he stopped. Master Devin had never stopped him from hitting me before. But the way Master Devin had said his name was different than I'd heard him any time before.

"I think the time for that has passed, Jack. She's twenty now."

Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Master Devin moving towards us. Out of instinct, my body tried to drop to its knees, but Master Jack's hand kept me upright. I struggled, fearful of what would happen if I didn't make it to the ground by the time Master Devin reached us.

"Let her go." Master Devin's voice was softer as he approached.

Master Jack released my chin and I dropped into position, relieved to be able to obey Master Devin properly.

"I informed you about what was going on?" Master Devin asked.

"He did," Master Jack replied. "Is this something to be concerned about?"

Master Devin didn't answer right away and I could feel him considering his answer. I could sense how he was feeling sometimes.

Useful, but sometimes scary. After a moment he spoke. “Concerned? Yes, I think a bit of concern is warranted, but nothing to worry about yet. I think we can utilize our new little asset here to find out what they know. Keep tabs on them, so to speak.”

“You think it’s safe, sending her into that family?”

“Even if they suspected anything they wouldn’t hurt her. They’re not the type. And I can’t imagine that they’d realize who she is. But I need to keep them close and I need to keep them appeased. I think the younger brother is the right approach. He’s safe, not involved in any way other than enjoying what’s put in front of him. Apparently he’s in a rather unfortunate marriage and would likely be interested in Anna’s, um, charms.”

Something about the conversation above me made my heartbeat increase its pace. A momentary memory of cobalt-blue eyes skidded into the front of my mind, but I automatically pushed it aside as I always did. Those blue eyes were just a dream from long ago. They didn’t exist in reality. Besides, what did they have to do with these men that Master Devin was concerned about? *Nothing*. Blue eyes just floated into my mind whenever I felt afraid.

I saw Master Devin’s expensive black leather shoes turn towards me. I stared at them as I felt him looking at me. His mood was calm,

although he always gave the impression of calm, even if he was seething beneath the surface. He maintained exquisite control over himself.

“Well, Anna, are you ready for your new life?”

His question startled me. A new life? The last time I had a ‘new life’ I disappeared from the world and spent four years being tortured. I suppose this new life couldn’t be any worse than my previous new life...could it?

I didn’t know how to answer him. He waited, but I couldn’t come up with a good answer. Master Devin demanded honesty. He knew when I was lying and he hated it. A few times after Master Jack began training me, I gave Master Devin unthinking, non-confrontational answers to his questions. I wasn’t trying to lie; I was trying to give him the answer that I thought he wanted. He would have nothing of it. And he painfully made sure that I remembered his intolerance of lying.

“I don’t know, Master Devin,” I answered after a pause. Honestly.

He knelt down in front of me and cupped my chin in his hand.

“Look at me, Anna.” I dragged my eyes up to his; I wasn’t used to looking him in the eyes. His nearly-black eyes studied mine intently beneath thick, dark brows. I blinked a few times, uncomfortable under his scrutinizing gaze. “Thank you for being honest.” He smiled gently. His neatly trimmed beard and mustache didn’t look as sinister when he smiled.

I gave him a timorous smile, half expecting that he might disapprove of it and hit me.

“You have been well trained, Anna. I am pleased.”

His words made my fear dissipate and my heart leapt for joy. I pleased him!

“As long as you remember your training, Anna,” he continued, “life will be more pleasant than it has been for a long time. There are rules you must follow. I will explain them to you. Rules for here in the Manor and rules for the outside world. They are different, but you are a smart girl and I’m sure you will master them quickly.”

“Yes, Master Devin.” My heart felt lighter than it had in years.

He stood and held out his hand. The diamonds on his pinky ring glittered in the warm light of the room. I stared at it, unsure of what to do. “I’m helping you to your feet, Anna,” he said, and reached down to put my right hand into his. He grasped it and gently pulled me to my feet, then turned to Master Jack. “Thank you, Jack. I’ll take it from here. You’re coming Friday, right?”

Master Jack nodded. “Of course. You have new girls for me?”

“Yes. Two, in fact. Did you want a few days off before you begin again?”

Master Jack smirked. “No. I’m ready for some new cunt.” He looked at me. “She’s definitely ready, though she might need some help in social refinement. That’s not my area of expertise, but I did the best I could. She knows how to hold a decent conversation with a man, but she’s still terribly shy.”

“I’m sure she’ll be fine.” Master Devin smiled at me and then looked at Ian. “You’ll take him to his new girls?”

“Yes, sir.” Ian replied.

“I think you’ll like these, Jack. Rare opportunity to have twins.”

Master Jack looked as if he’d just won a million dollars. “You’re giving me the twins?”

“I think you’ve earned them. Train them well.” Master Devin nodded at Ian. “He’ll take you down.”

With that, Master Devin led me away to begin my new life. Whatever that meant.

CHAPTER 3

After several minutes of traversing hallways and up staircases, Master Devin opened a door at the end of a long hallway. “These will be your chambers.” He stepped back to let me walk into the most beautiful bedroom I’d ever seen.

The room was large, but not enormous, and well lit by large windows and a glass door directly across from the entrance. The sheer curtains hanging over the windows and attached to the door were pink, with darker pink velvet curtains framing them. The walls were cream and the ceiling was high with a gilded grid pattern. An elaborate white oriental rug covered most of the light-grained wooden floor.

A white marble fireplace with a flat-panel TV above the mantle stood across the room from the large canopy bed. A small table and two chairs sat along the wall adjacent to me. There was a bookshelf filled with trinkets and books, and an easy chair with an ottoman next to the windows.

I glanced at Master Devin and his affectionate smile startled me. He motioned for me to go further in and I slowly walked through a doorway and into the bathroom. It was a huge, luxurious bathroom with a white

marble floor and a carved marble sink. Under the plate-glass window at the end of the room was an enormous marble bathtub.

I went back out into the bedroom and looked out the windows. Through the glass, I could see a small grass courtyard surrounded by very thick, very tall shrubs.

“You can go out,” Master Devin said in a quiet voice. “It’s your own private yard.”

I hesitated for a moment and then opened the door and walked out into the sunshine. It was warm compared to the coolness of the stone building. A small flower garden grew under the bathroom window and an iron and wood gate stood at the opposite end of the yard. I could see the back of a lock on the gate.

“How is there a yard here?” I asked softly. We had traversed several staircases to get up to this room.

“The Manor butts up against the hill behind it,” Master Devin explained. “All the rooms on this floor have private yards carved out of it.” I turned to look at Master Devin, but caught myself before I looked him in the face. I quickly looked at the ground. “It’s beautiful, Master Devin. Thank you. You are very kind to give me such a gift.” Four years ago I would have ran to him and wrapped my arms around his waist to show my

thanks. Now I just stood there with my hands at my side, uncertain of what to do next.

“I’ve been working to get the room right for you for quite a while,” he said in a tender voice. He closed the distance between us in a few steps and put his hands on my upper arms. “I wanted it to be perfect for you.”

I wanted to look up at him. I was dumbfounded. He wanted it to be perfect for me? Was this really my Master Devin? Master Devin wasn’t tender or gentle or...or was he? Memories of how he’d been before I turned sixteen flooded my mind. His smiles. His hugs. His kisses. Memories of him at my birthday parties and ballet recitals. He’d treated me like a princess. And then he changed. Literally overnight.

I blinked back tears, not knowing where they came from. Kindness towards me had been frowned upon for so long, by both Master Devin and Master Jack. The kindest thing they did to me was not make it hurt during sex.

I stood there, clenching and unclenching my hands. I didn’t know what to do. I shook my head slightly, trying to get a grasp on what was happening. Moving would likely earn me the backside of his hand against my cheek, but I was having a very difficult time controlling my body.

Master Devin pulled me towards him, wrapping his arms around me, and I could no longer hold back my tears. I began shaking and sobbing

uncontrollably. My legs collapsed beneath me and he caught me before I fell, gently guiding me to the ground. He sat on the ground with his arms around me. I wanted to grab onto him and hug him, but didn't dare move.

What is going on? Is this a trick? I shouldn't be moving; he'll punish me.

But he didn't punish me. He just held me and let me cry. I didn't understand. Why comfort me? There was certainly a visit to the dungeon in my near future for my behavior.

I sucked in gulps of air, struggling to gain control of my emotions and my body.

Stop crying, Anna! He hates it when you cry. Stop before things get worse!

But he didn't move. He stroked my hair and whispered in my ear, "Shhh, Baby. It's okay. It's all right. Shhh, Baby, I've got you. You're okay."

As hard as I tried, though, I couldn't calm down as quickly as I wanted to. Finally, though, after what seemed like an eternity, the streams of tears on my cheeks slowed to a trickle and I stopped shaking. I took a deep breath and let it out through pursed lips. I was calm.

Did I dare move? He held me tightly, but the comfort I felt disconcerted me. I tried to pull away, to assume my normal submissive

pose, but he tightened his arms around me. I froze, uncertain of what to do. *What do you do when someone who has been icy cold for years suddenly shows you affection?*

We sat there for a few moments in silence as my tears ceased. Master Devin kissed the top of my head and then stood and pulled me to my feet. *Now I will be punished.* As we walked back into my room, I took in a silent, shaky breath to prepare myself for whatever punishment he would pronounce. But instead of leading me out the door and to the dungeon, he led me to the easy chair next to the window. He sat on the ottoman and indicated for me to sit in the chair. I put my hands in my lap and stared at them, trying to look and be as submissive as possible.

“Anna, look at me.”

I looked up expecting to see anger, though his voice wasn't angry. His eyes were kind and he stroked my cheek. “When we are in here alone, you don't have to sit in your pose or avert your eyes from mine. When we are alone in here, I want you to be comfortable with me and not think of me as your Master.”

What? Not think of him as my Master? That's not possible. I'd been conditioned for too long to change that.

“Let's go over the rules for the Manor and then you can ask me any questions you might have, okay?” He paused and looked up at me with a

slight smile on his face.

“Yes, Master,” I said softly, looking back down at my hands.

“First of all, you no longer need call me Master unless I specifically tell you to.”

I furrowed my brow in confusion but didn't say anything.

“In the Manor, you will call me ‘my lord’ as you do the other men. In here, you may call me Devin.” He chuckled. “I think you're too old for ‘Uncle Devin’, don't you think?” I had called him Uncle Devin as a child. I'd called Master Jack ‘Uncle Jack’ as well.

I didn't respond, thinking he didn't require an answer. But he didn't continue and I glanced up at him.

“Don't you think?” he repeated with a warm smile.

“I...yes...Ma...Devin,” I stuttered. To be honest, I didn't know what I thought.

Devin frowned, “Don't lie to pacify me, Anna.”

I dropped my gaze to my hands again as cold fear filled me. “I'm sorry, Mas...Devin. I don't know if I'm too old to call you Uncle Devin.”

“I think the general population would frown upon my mistress calling me ‘Uncle’.”

“Mistress?” *What?*

“Yes, Anna. You are my mistress. You’re still technically a slave, but to the general populace of San Francisco, you will be my mistress.”

I blinked several times, confused. Again. Why would Devin need a mistress? He was happily married to a beautiful wife with three equally beautiful children.

“You’re frowning. What are you thinking?”

“I...,” I stammered. I shouldn’t question him, but he asked and I had to answer. I took a breath for courage. “Why do you need a mistress, Devin? You’re married. What purpose could I possibly have in your normal life?”

Devin laughed. “Oh, Anna. You’re so naïve. I love it.” He took my hands in his and kissed each palm. “Why shouldn’t I want to spend time with a beautiful young woman? You will be able to help me in so many ways, and I want you to be respected in the community. Being my mistress will ensure that. Besides, going out with my wife has become tedious. And the sex...mind-numbing. She needs to realize I don’t need her, but she needs me.” He frowned as if upset at some inner thought.

I couldn’t come up with a response to his statement. I knew many of Master Jack’s friends were married and they came to his house to use me. They didn’t speak very highly of their wives, but I never imagined Devin

feeling that way. But what did I know of marriage? It seemed an unfortunate requirement for men of a certain standing in the community.

“Shall we continue with the rules?”

“Yes, Devin.”

“This is your safe place, Anna,” he said, motioning with his hand around the room. “You needn’t observe the formalities of the Manor while you are in here. You may call me Devin. You may call Ian by his name and any other men you may desire to bring in here.”

Why would I want to bring men in here? I didn’t say anything so he continued with an amused expression, as if he could read my thoughts.

“As I said earlier, you will call the men in this place ‘my lord’ as you have been accustomed to. All men. There are men in and out of here all the time, so it’s probably safer if you stay in here when you’re not required elsewhere. I tried to make this room as comfortable as possible so it wouldn’t feel as if you were in a prison. Hence the courtyard.” He motioned towards the window.

I nodded.

“Whenever you are summoned into my, or certain other men’s, presence, you will enter the room, walk to stand a few feet in front of me, depending on the room, and bow in submission. Stand up. I’ll teach you how to do it properly.”

I stood and walked behind the ottoman. Devin turned to face me. “Take a few steps back. Yes, good. Now, assume your submissive pose, but instead of putting your palms together, lean your body forward with your arms out in front of you and put your nose on the ground.”

I did as he said. The rug was softer than I expected.

“Good girl. I didn’t think you’d have a problem with that. You stay in that position until you are told you may get up or sit up. Either command means you assume your submissive pose, though you may put your hands on your thighs instead of putting your hands together. Does that make sense?”

I nodded, my nose still on the ground. I hoped I could remember everything I was learning.

“You may return to your seat.” I did and he continued. “I want you to go shopping to get some clothing. I assume this is the best you have?” He motioned towards my jeans.

“Yes. I was undressed unless I was out at my ballet lessons.” He nodded with a thoughtful expression on his face. “I’ll have to figure out who to send you shopping with, but I’ll get you out there in the next few days. Maybe I’ll take you.” He grinned at me.

Devin wanted to take me shopping? This day was getting weirder and weirder.

“You will be attending various social events with me, and will be allowed out to do other things, if you so desire.” He shrugged. “But I’d prefer it if you didn’t go out alone. At least for a while. You’ve been sheltered for far too long and I’d hate for you to get lost or for something to happen to you. Unless he’s otherwise occupied, Ian will accompany you. He’ll make sure you’re safe.”

My heart sank into my stomach. Be alone with Ian? Devin had to be joking. Ian detested me. Who knew what he would do to me if he had me out and alone?

“Anna, Ian is a good guy.”

I snorted and then covered my mouth, horrified at what I’d done. Where were all these emotions coming from?

Devin laughed. “It’s okay, Anna. I know you’ve only had...painful interactions with him. But that’s because I needed it to be that way. He really is a nice guy and he will keep you safe. Once you get to know him, you might like him.” Devin paused. “He thinks you’re very pretty.”

“He does?” Why did that thought intrigue me?

“Yes. He’s also quite the lover. The girls all like it when he visits downstairs.” Devin looked amused. “You might like him in your bed.”

I shook my head in disbelief. “Why would I voluntarily want to take someone to bed with me?” I asked before I realized the words were coming

out of my mouth. This safe room was loosening my tongue. I feared it might be loosened too much.

Devin just laughed...again. Apparently, I was very entertaining today. Well, I guess that was better than him hitting me. *Yes, definitely better than hitting me.* Could I trust this change in him? I searched his eyes, but saw nothing that would indicate he was insincere.

“Oh, Baby. Just try to go a few days without sex. See how desperate you get for a hard cock in your pussy.”

I looked at him skeptically. “I doubt it.” The thought of being able to be away from a man for more than a few hours thrilled me. A bed to myself. A room to myself. It sounded heavenly.

“I like it that you feel comfortable enough in here to snort and express yourself. That pleases me immensely.” He leaned forward and kissed my cheek. “I want things to be different from now on. I want things to be good for you.” His voice was soft and tender. So unlike him. Perhaps he really had changed.

He pressed his lips to mine, pushing his tongue against my mouth to gain entry. I succumbed to the pressure and his tongue darted into my mouth, teasing and cajoling mine. I moaned and pressed my mouth to his as my body reacted as it had been trained to. My nipples hardened and I could feel my pussy moistening and swelling. I swirled my tongue around his,

pulling it into my mouth and sucking on it slightly. I heard him moan and he brought his hand behind my head, threading his fingers into my braid.

I knew he wanted me. I could tell by his breathing that he was aroused. I tentatively placed one hand on his knee and slid it up his thigh towards his cock. He groaned as my fingers brushed the bulge in his pants. I pressed my thumb against the base of his shaft and moved the pressure upwards.

“Oh, God, Anna,” he moaned into my mouth. I was pleasing him!

He suddenly pulled away from me and put his hand on mine to stop me from caressing his hard cock. “Oh, stop, Baby. Please,” he pleaded.

I blinked, confused. “Did I do something wrong? I thought you were enjoying it.”

Devin grimaced. “Yes, Baby, I was enjoying it. Very much so.” He took a deep breath. “I think I understand what Jack was talking about with your lack of social refinement.”

Social refinement? What did he mean? The only reason a man would bother to kiss me was because he wanted sex. That much I knew. If a man wanted to have sex with me, I was to do whatever I could to make sure he enjoyed himself. It was simple really. Why didn't Devin want me?

“Baby, sometimes a man just wants to kiss a woman. Without it leading to sex.” He took a deep breath.

I tilted my head, not understanding his words. “Why wouldn’t he want sex?”

He gave me a funny look and then his features softened once more. “Sometimes there just isn’t time to have sex and he just wants to touch her. Or tease her. Kissing can simply be a sign of affection.”

“Affection?” I echoed. The idea was not completely foreign to me; some vague memory of affection towards me skimmed the edge of my mind. Yes, when Devin used to hold me and kiss me on Jack’s couch. We didn’t have sex then but he held and kissed me all the time. That was affection. I remember now.

I looked up at him, tears in my eyes. “Do you feel affection for me again?” I whispered.

“I do.”

The look in his eyes filled me with warmth and I ran my hands up his thighs. He shook his head, smiling gently, and put my hands on my own thighs. “You don’t want to have sex with me?” I asked, hurt clenching my heart.

“Oh, yes, I do, Anna. Very much so.” He cupped my cheek. “But I was just kissing you because I wanted to show you affection.”

“Oh.” I still felt confused. “How do I tell the difference? I know you were aroused, so I did what I was supposed to do. If a man wants to have

sex with me, but he doesn't...." I sighed. I knew Devin wanted to have sex with me. He even said so. But then he told me to stop. "I don't understand," I groaned.

"Baby, don't get upset. It's all right." He sighed but didn't sound exasperated. "Maybe the best thing to do, until you're able to tell the difference, is to let the man take the lead. If he kisses you, kiss him back. If he starts pursuing more, then you can do more. At some point you'll learn the difference and be able to act accordingly." He paused. "Accept his kisses and his touch, but don't go further than he does unless he indicates that he wants you to. I know you can read men very well, but desiring sex and making the choice to have sex can be very different things."

I frowned. That made no sense.

"Anna, you could walk into a store this afternoon and sense that every man in there wanted to have sex with you. It's a likely scenario. Men are aroused visually and easily. But I don't want you to feel obligated to work your way through the men in the store. Does that make sense?"

I thought for a moment. "I guess a little. Just because a man wants to have sex doesn't mean he wants to?" It sounded convoluted, but I was beginning to understand.

"Yes, I suppose that's an accurate summary. I'll help you learn. Jack taught you about seduction, right?" I nodded. "Sometimes I'll ask you to go

have sex with a man. When I say that, I mean I want you to seduce him. I don't want you to walk up to him, grab his cock and shove it in your pussy. Seduction is an art and Jack told me you were very good at it. In general, the best way for a woman to work a man is through seduction. Aggressive women can be a turn off to a lot of us."

Okay. Seduction, not raw sex. Got it.

"Anna, there are men out there who will want to seduce you. Let them. Men want to be in charge. Let them think they are. If you need to seduce them, let them think they are the ones seducing you."

"So, I'm manipulating them into doing what I want them to do, and making them think that they came up with the idea?"

"Exactly! You are a smart girl, Anna." Devin's wide smile and sparkling eyes warmed me from head to toe.

I beamed, thrilled that I had caught on at last, though my head was starting to hurt from all the new ideas being crammed inside.

"But Anna," Devin added in a low voice, his smile disappearing in an instant. "Never, *ever* manipulate *me*. Do you understand?" The darkness in his eyes made me shiver. I knew that Devin well.

"Yes, Devin," I whispered. "I understand." I swallowed nervously.

Immediately his demeanor changed back into his new, pleasant self. "Good girl."

Devin proceeded to tell me about the Gatherings that occurred on Friday nights at the Manor; some were more formal than others were. Regardless of the formality, however, I would present myself to Devin at each one and then sit at his feet until he wanted me. These Gatherings more often than not resembled orgies rather than meetings, though quite a bit of business was conducted. Men were more open to suggestion just after a good orgasm, he explained.

“Come, I’ll show you the Great Hall.” Devin stood and I followed him out of the room. We wound our way through the massive building and down multiple staircases. I got lost after a few turns. Devin assured me that I wouldn’t have to find my way around alone; I’d always have a guide to take me wherever I needed to go.

While we walked, Devin explained how the Manor worked, including what he meant by “his girls.”

“They’re sex slaves,” he explained. “Generation after generation of girls have been born in this house to do the bidding of the current Master. Me being the current Master, my father before me, his father before him, et cetera. Some girls have certain specialized skills. I also have breeders; their sole job is to produce the next generation of girls.”

“What if they have boys?” I asked.

“That doesn’t happen very often. We have...ways...of leaning the odds in favor of female babies. Of course, I need males, but not as many. Ian was born to a breeder.”

Ian?

“Other girls specialize in hard play...masochism, if you will. Several are especially talented and they enjoy special privileges. All the girls are identified by their necklaces. The breeders wear a simple silver chain and they have their own special area of the Manor. Common girls wear a simple silver collar. Masochists wear a silver collar with a red design on it. That way the men know what they are getting. All of my girls are experts in the sexual arts. Otherwise, they wouldn’t be here. I’d find another job for them or eliminate them.”

“Eliminate them?”

“I’m sure you know what I mean, Anna. There is no benefit in keeping a useless slave. I have had to eliminate very few girls for that reason. I need cooks and maids, too.” He shrugged. “Everyone who works here was born here. Everyone who was born here is a slave. The men provide security and make sure the house is running properly. ”

“So Ian’s a slave?”

“Yes. My most trusted slave and I do consider him a friend; he is in charge of things when I am not here. But, yes, he is a slave. Slaves are

marked. Well, everyone involved in the Brotherhood is marked. Slaves are marked in a particular way. I'm even marked. As is Jack."

I frowned. I don't remember seeing a mark on my guardian's body.

"Haven't you ever wondered about that double ring that pierces the head of his cock?"

In truth, I'd never thought about it. It had always been there. It was on the top side and spanned the crown of the head of his cock. It consisted of two rings, about a centimeter in diameter connected by a thin metal bar. I knew not to catch my teeth on it.

"That is the mark of a Brother."

"Oh." Some of Jack's friends had them and others didn't. "I never thought much about it."

"I wouldn't expect you to, Anna. Common brothers are marked with the double ring. All slaves are marked with rings through both their nipples. Female slaves have a belly ring and a ring on their left outer pussy lip. Slaves that are extra special to their Masters have their clits pierced."

"Wow." I winced. It sounded painful.

We arrived at pair of large polished, wooden doors and he pushed them open. "This is the Great Hall." His voice echoed in the dark room. I heard a series of clicks and lights flickered on above me.

The Hall was enormous. Two levels of balconies circled the entire room. Closed doors were located intermittently around the room and in the balconies as well. A deep red carpet covered the floor except for a four-foot wide wooden border around the perimeter. Five massive crystal chandeliers hung down from the gilded ceiling. Clusters of chaise lounges and easy chairs were scattered throughout.

In the far corner of the room was a gigantic statue of a golden eagle, wings slightly open, whose head was as high as the top balcony. Its legs were separated and tall enough for a man to walk through without stooping. The talons jutted forth onto a wide, raised dais. An elaborate throne-like chair sat in the middle of the dais.

I felt a curious energy coursing through the room as I stood there. Something I could only describe as power. I closed my eyes and the force flowed through my body, melding with my own spirit. The room's spirit and my own shared a common source; I belonged here.

As I opened my eyes, I saw a flash of light in the corner of the room near the statue. Or, at least, I thought I did. It looked like...a glowing man disappearing? No, that wasn't possible, was it?

I glanced up to see Devin watching me with keen interest.

"Are you all right?" he asked.

For a moment, I would have sworn that he wanted to devour me, but I blinked several times and the look was gone.

I glanced back at the corner. It was dark and empty. Had I imagined the man? I looked up at Devin. "I..." My mind must have been going into overload. Men didn't disappear into thin air. And they certainly didn't glow. "Yes, Devin."

"Generally when we are out of your room, you should act, speak and stand in a submissive manner," Devin warned. "Especially in this room."

"I'm sorry, my lord," I said softly, lowering my head.

Devin pulled me close and kissed me. "It's all right. You didn't know. Besides, there's no one here right now, so it's not much of an issue. I just wanted to warn you. Disobedience is punished, and punished harshly." He trailed kisses down to my jaw and ran his tongue down my neck to my collarbone. I took in a sharp breath and tilted my head back. "Good girl," he murmured into my neck, biting gently. "Let me lead."

"Oh!" My body tingled from his kisses. I wrapped my arms around his chest and sighed. He responded with another nip at my collarbone.

"Like that?"

"Mmm," was all I could muster as he ran his hands up my ribs. He moved under my sweater and caressed the sides of my breasts. I inhaled

sharply as his thumbs brushed my nipples. They hardened instantly and I arched my back into his hands, wanting more.

He pulled away abruptly and I stumbled from the sudden lack of support. “We should go back to your room,” he said, his voice slightly husky. “Remember your demeanor, Anna.” He flicked off the lights and opened the door.

CHAPTER 4

The moment the door closed behind us in my room, Devin pressed himself against my back, wrapped one arm around my waist, and kissed the side of my neck with a hunger that I could feel. He tugged at my braid until it loosened and he ran his fingers through my hair to comb out the twisted strands. I could smell my shampoo as he swept my damp hair over my shoulder and kissed the back of my neck, sucking the skin and making me gasp. His hands slid down my ribs and then up under my sweater to my breasts.

“I like that you’re not wearing a bra.” He caressed my breasts gently and then took my nipples between his fingers and pinched them. Enough to cause pain, but the pain felt good and I gasped.

“Like that?”

“Yes,” I sighed.

He pinched again and then rolled them between his fingertips. I rolled my head back to rest on his shoulder and he began sucking on my neck again. “I love how responsive you are, Baby,” he whispered in my ear, pinching my nipples again. “I love how you put aside the years of hurt and melt into my arms. You are such a good girl.”

My body tingled all over, from his words and from his touch. No one had said such nice things to me in as long as I could remember. The best I ever got was “Yeah baby, I love fucking you,” or “You are such a good fuck,” or “Damn, you’ve got great tits/ass/pussy.”

I soaked up the praise, feeling loved for the first time in years. I turned to face him and kissed him on the lips, trying to demonstrate how I felt. Tears welled up in my eyes as I tried to form coherent words to express my feelings.

“What is it, Baby? Why the tears?” He stroked my cheek with his thumb and looked deeply into my eyes.

“I...I...” I began, but was fearful to say what I wanted to. The last time I’d tried to show affection towards him, when I was sixteen, he responded by backhanding me. I shook my head and tried to step away.

He held me so I couldn’t move away. “Anna, tell me, please,” he said in a gentle voice.

The adoration I’d had for him as a child welled up inside of me. I looked at him, desperate for him to understand. “I...I love you, Devin.”

Devin gazed down at me in a way I hadn’t seen in four years. He looked at me like he did before...before everything changed. My heart soared.

“I love you too, Anna,” he said in a hoarse voice. He appeared overcome with emotion—a situation unheard of with him. He continued speaking, softly, as if afraid to hear his own words. “I’m so sorry for what I put you through, my love. If there had been any other way...” His voice trailed off. “Every scream that came out of your mouth broke my heart. Every bruise, every tear. I hated doing it. That’s why I didn’t visit often. I couldn’t bear to see it. But it had to be that way, Anna. You had to be prepared. You had to be toughened up. Otherwise they’d devour you before you knew what was happening.” He sucked in a ragged breath. “I’m so, so sorry, Baby. But it had to be that way.”

The tears spilled over onto my cheeks, my heart aching for him. Knowing that in a way he’d suffered along with me made me love him more.

He pulled my head to his chest and held me tightly. “I do love you, Anna. I love you so much. And I’m so proud of you. You are so strong and so brave. You have become everything I’d hoped for. More than I’d hoped for.” He pulled back and looked me in the eyes. I struggled against my instincts to look away. “I want to make it up to you, Baby. For the lost years. Is there anything in particular you can think of that I can do?”

Images flitted through my mind of happier times. Ballet classes as a child; performing in The Nutcracker Ballet with my parents on their last

night alive. I swallowed and took a deep breath. "Ballet," I said after a moment. "Could I take a few more classes and... maybe perform again?"

He tilted his head, his gaze not leaving mine.

"Or," I added, "I don't have to perform, but maybe, I dunno, one more class a week or something? I just want to dance more. I don't care where. Maybe even just a room here that I could use and a CD player with some music and I could dance on my own." I looked down at his chest, scarcely daring to breathe, hoping against all hope that he would let me.

My two ballet classes had been my only anchor to reality the last few years. Dancing reminded me of my parents and the happy times I had growing up. The last year I hadn't put much effort into it, though. What was the point? But now...was it possible that there might be a chance to perform again? The idea of being on stage, of losing myself in the characters...I felt like a drowning person, seeing the surface of the water an inch above their face. To me, dancing was life.

Devin didn't say anything for a moment. I looked up warily into his face. He stared off into space, as if lost in some memory. I didn't move, not wanting to anger him and lose all possibility of my dream.

After a few minutes, he still hadn't spoken. I blinked away tears and prepared myself for his disapproval. My heart ached in my chest. How

could I have even dared to make such an audacious request? I should have taken more time to consider-

“Yes, Baby. I think I would like to see you perform again, if the Ballet Master thinks you’re able.” His smiled. “I’ll give him a call next week and see what I can find out.”

My heart soared. “Oh, thank you, Devin! Thank you!” I stood on tiptoe and kissed him hard on his mouth. I could hardly contain myself. He looked pleased and kissed me back. Hard.

Instantly the mood changed. He pulled his fingers through my hair and forced his tongue into my mouth. I opened my lips willingly, wanting to please him with my best sexual techniques, but remembering his advice about following the man’s lead. I kissed him back, our tongues dancing around each other’s. I could feel the heat of his passion radiating out from his body. He reached for the bottom of my sweater and pulled it over my head in one swift motion. I felt his erection press against my belly as he pulled me against him once more. I leaned into him, wrapping my arms around his neck.

He picked me up and carried me towards the bed. I wrapped my legs around his waist, kissing him passionately. We fell onto the bed, his body pressed above mine. My desire for him made it difficult to breath.

His lips trailed down my chin and down to my neck. I lifted my chin and he continued the downward trail, veering to the side to kiss my breast. He trailed little kisses around the circumference of one breast and then did the same to the other. I wanted his mouth on my nipples but he seemed to kiss my breasts everywhere except there. I squirmed and he sucked on the lower edge of one breast. I pressed my hips into his, moaning desperately. He chuckled, and then slowly, agonizingly, trailed his tongue up to my nipple and took the hardened bud into his mouth. An electric current shot straight down to my clit.

“Yes, Devin, please...,” I begged. He sucked hard and then brought his teeth together to bite, almost to the point of pain. I pressed my head back into the mattress, mouth open in ecstasy. He repeated the teasing on the other side as I wiggled beneath him.

My body was going crazy. My pussy ached for touch. I wrapped my arms around his neck and ran my fingers through his thick black hair. In the back of my mind I expected him to get angry at my touch, but the anger never materialized. He continued teasing and cajoling my breasts until he began a slow path down to my belly, licking and kissing the whole way down. When he reached the waistband of my jeans, he undid the button and zipper, but didn't remove them. Instead, he pulled it apart and kissed my hip just above the hipbone. My hips jerked at his touch.

I moaned loudly and clenched my stomach muscles as he nuzzled the skin. He lay on my legs so I couldn't move, making his touch even more enticing. He trailed kisses across my lower belly to my other hip and sucked on the skin above my hipbone, once again drawing an involuntary flex towards his face.

Devin chuckled and looked up at me with dark, impassioned eyes. "You've always liked it when I kissed you there. Even when you were little. Do you remember?"

I remembered lying on Jack's couch and Devin kissing me in the same spot. "Yes," I hissed, wanting more. More of everything.

Suddenly his weight was gone. I opened my eyes to find him standing next to the bed looking down at me, eyes full of passion and pants bulging.

"Undress me."

I scrambled off the bed and began eagerly undoing the buttons on his blue dress shirt. I made quick work of them and pushed the shirt off his shoulders.

"Don't throw the shirt on the floor, I need it later," he said in a husky voice. I carefully placed the shirt on the back of a chair and returned to him.

He was lean and fit. The muscles were firm and distinct, but he clearly wasn't interested in bulking up. A scattering of dark hair covered his chest. I ran my fingers through it and smiled, enjoying the coarseness of it. I'd laid my head on his bare chest countless times as a child, but never appreciated it fully until now. My fingers trailed down his chest to the dark line of hair that led down into his black dress pants.

I knelt before him to remove his shoes and socks and then reached for his belt, licking my lips. As I unzipped his pants, I suddenly realized I'd never seen his cock before. I'd felt it through his pants before I began training, but never with my bare hands. He'd only been fully undressed in front of me twice; once when he was punishing me for attempting suicide, and the other when he took my virginity. Both times, I'd been too out of it to pay attention to what he looked like.

My heartbeat quickened at this realization and I worked quickly, eager to see him in all his glory. I carried the pants over to the chair where I'd laid his shirt and quickly returned to stand before him. I glanced up and gave him an eager smile before I reached out to remove his black boxer-briefs. Before I could touch him, he snaked his hand out and grabbed my wrist.

I flinched and tried to pull my hand away. What had I done?

“Anna, before you...proceed, I need to tell you something so you don’t get scared.”

My eyes widened as a million thoughts ran through my head. Was he crooked? Was he covered in tattoos?

“Baby, remember when I told you I was marked too?” I nodded, still staring into his face, fearful of what he was going to say. “I am a leader in the Brotherhood; I’m what’s called an Elder. I am one of seven Elders in this country. We...control the country, shall we say. All Brotherhood markings are done with piercings. We also wear rings to identify ourselves on our right little finger.” He raised his finger, showing me the large diamond ring that I’d played with on countless occasions as a child. I didn’t know that there was a significance to it before now. “Elders wear diamonds. The common Brothers wear sapphires. Deacons, those who help me do what I need to do, wear emeralds.”

I nodded. What did this have to do with his cock?

“Elders also have their cocks pierced. Multiple times.”

I winced at the thought. “Why?”

“Oh, many reasons. To distinguish us from the masses. To show that we are willing to do what needs to be done, despite the discomfort it may cause us. Also for sexual pleasure.”

“Sexual pleasure? It feels good to you?”

“No, for the woman.”

My brows arched. Why would he care if a woman enjoyed sex with him?

“Pleasing a woman is an art form. The piercings are placed in certain areas and are of a type that has the potential for extreme pleasure for a woman. Sexual potency is an important quality for powerful men.” His eyes glittered and a hint of a smile appeared on his lips. “Also, in the extreme case of an unwilling subject, seducing his wife in front of him and making her scream in pleasure is a most effective motivator. Certain piercings can also be used for punishment, but not all Elders go through the trouble of getting those.”

“Okay.” I glanced down at the bulge in his underwear. Did his cock look like a pincushion?

“Ready?” he asked.

“Yes.” I wanted to see him. I wanted him inside my wet pussy. Curiosity overcame my fear and I once again reached out for him. I paused and looked up at him as my fingers made contact with the soft cotton. He nodded and I pulled at the fabric until his beautiful cock spilled out in front of me.

It was large, thick and long, dotted with metal balls that I now understood to be the marks of an Elder. I looked closer and could see that in

addition to the double rings like Jack had, there were four barbells on the top resulting in two lines of four metal balls that spread along the length of his cock. On the bottom side were two more barbells that made two rows of two balls each, similar to what was on the top. Seven piercings.

In addition to the barbells, a thin band of metal about a centimeter wide spanned the top half of his cock. It sat right behind the head, with several tiny dots running the length.

“What’s this?” I asked caressing the band.

“That, my love, is for punishment.” I looked up at him, not understanding how it could be painful. He closed his eyes, appearing to concentrate for a moment, and then opened them again. “Look.”

I sucked in a sharp breath as I looked down. Six small spikes, about a centimeter long, had appeared where the dots had been. They looked very sharp. “How did you do that?”

They retracted back into the metal band. “It’s connected to some nerves that can be trained to control the spikes. Do you remember when you were brought here after you tried to kill yourself?” I nodded, not really wanting to think about it. “Do you remember when I raped you and you said it felt like I was ripping your insides to shreds?”

How could I forget? It was excruciatingly painful.

“That’s what I used. It’s a rather effective punishment because you don’t see it coming. And it’s effective for both men and women. Done right, I can kill a man.”

His eyes glittered and I blinked and stepped back in alarm. How could he talk so flippantly about killing people? He could use those anytime on me and hurt me again. I trembled as I stared at his chest.

“Anna, I have extreme control over these. Since I learned to control them, many years ago, I’ve never had them go off accidentally. I have to really concentrate to activate them.” I knew he wasn’t lying, but it did little to remove my apprehension.

“You’re scary,” I said softly.

He sighed and I glanced up at him. He had a pained expression on his face. “I don’t want to scare you anymore, Anna. It was necessary for a time, but I hope you’ve learned all you need to know and that I don’t have to be scary anymore.”

I didn’t want to be scared of him either. I loved him. I wanted to please him.

I took two small steps forward and knelt on the ground before him. I reached for his throbbing cock and wrapped my fingers around the base of the shaft, trying to figure out how to best please him without disturbing any of the metal. His skin was hot to the touch and he became harder at my

touch. I kissed the tip softly and then licked away the precum that had appeared.

“You won’t hurt me?” I asked, looking up at him.

He smiled down at me, hunger in his eyes. “No, Baby. I won’t hurt you.”

I opened my mouth and slowly sucked him into my mouth, squeezing the shaft with my hand. He inhaled sharply and then let out a moan as I took more and more of him into my mouth. “Oh, Anna...,” he groaned. He put his hands on the back of my head, pushing himself deeper into my mouth. I let him guide my mouth over him, taking a deep breath as he approached the back of my throat. He was big and he blocked my windpipe as he dipped into the back of my throat. I swallowed, and heard a deep moan above me. I sucked on him as I backed away slightly before thrusting forwards again. I reached up beneath him to caress his balls. I tugged gently and heard another moan, this time louder.

I kept sucking and moving him in and out of my mouth, my tongue circling around the head and stroking the smooth metal. I held him firmly with one hand and caressed his balls with my other. His breathing was shallow and ragged, his moans deepened as he grabbed fistfuls of my hair. He pulled hard, but it felt good. I liked him controlling me. I could tell he

was getting close when he yanked himself out of my mouth and pulled me up by my hair to stand in front of him.

“Oh, Baby. You have been taught well.” Devin kissed me hard on the mouth and then pulled back. “But I want your body. I want to bury myself deep in your tight wet pussy and send you soaring into the stars.”

He gently pushed me back onto the bed, pulled my jeans off and crawled up after me. He spread my legs apart and bent my knees up to my chest. The cool air on my wet pussy made me squirm. “Beautiful,” he murmured, leaning down to kiss the bare skin. “I love how smooth your skin is, Baby.” He straightened. “Oh, I can hardly stand it. I need you so much. My cock is aching for you.” He guided his cock to the entrance of my body and pressed forward in one swift movement.

I tried to ignore the pain as his thickness penetrated my body faster than it could adjust. He was bigger than Jack and most of Jack’s friends. I blinked several times to hide the tears that sprang forth. I wouldn’t show him that it hurt. Instead, I wrapped my legs around his hips and pulled him towards me, making him grin.

He leaned down and nuzzled my neck. “You are a little sex kitten aren’t you?” he whispered in my ear.

“Is that a bad thing?” I asked, concerned.

“Not at all, Baby.” He thrust deeper and I gasped in surprise. “You feel incredible. Just like our first time together.”

I smiled up at him as he began to move in and out of me. The pain had dissipated and his cock inside me felt incredible. I could feel the metal balls rubbing against the top of my sensitive channel. I thrust with him and a rhythm developed. I tightened and relaxed my vaginal muscles as he moved in and out, the resulting moan evidence of his appreciation. He kissed me as his movements increased.

“Baby, I want to cum with you. Do you think you can do that for me?” His lips pressed to my neck and I could feel his ragged breath against my skin. I wrapped my arms around his chest, hugging him to me.

“Yes,” I moaned. “Oh, yes, Devin. Please.”

He increased his pace even more and I flexed my hips to maximize the friction against my upper channel. The fire built quickly and I ground my hips against his to bring forth my release. The pressure built and I exploded the next moment. I clung to Devin and cried out his name over and over again.

I slumped back into the bed, breathing heavily. Devin’s skin was wet from the exertion and he panted against my neck. I hugged him and kissed his ear, which was the only part of his body my lips could reach. After a moment, he stirred and I unwrapped myself from around him.

He rolled onto the bed next to me. “You are amazing, Baby. More than I’d hoped for.” He used his finger to trail lazy circles between and around my breasts for a moment before he fell back onto the bed, looking up at the ceiling.

“I have half a mind to take you home with me. I haven’t had sex like that in ages.” He ran his fingers through his dark hair and turned his face to grin at me once more. “Not sure how I’d explain that to the kids though. Well, Tyler would understand, but the girls wouldn’t.”

I gave him a small smile, trying to imagine him as a father.

“What time is it?” he mumbled and then glanced at his watch. “Fuck, it’s noon already? Damn it. I’m sorry, Baby. I have to leave. I have a meeting this afternoon that I can’t avoid and work to catch up on.”

I pressed my lips together and nodded, masking my disappointment. After what just happened, I had hoped we’d spend the day together.

“I’ll be back tomorrow to visit you, Baby.” He stroked my cheek and gave me a seductive smile before getting out of bed. “You are sexy as hell, Anna. So worth the wait.” He leaned down to kiss me before walking over to the table to retrieve his shirt and pants.

“Rest, Anna,” he said, dressing quickly. “I know Jack’s been rough on you. There’ll be no more of that sort of stuff. You’re safe here.” He motioned around the room.

I gave him a shy smile. “Okay.” I liked the sound of that.

He kissed me on the top of my head as he buttoned the top button on his shirt. “I will have lunch sent up here to you and you can do as you please. No one will bother you or hurt you while you’re in here.”

“Thank you, Devin.” I sat up and kissed him on the cheek.

“Happy Birthday, Baby. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

With that, he turned and walked towards the door, glancing back once to give me an affectionate smile.

I stared up at the gilded ceiling as I lay on the bed, spent and happy from lovemaking. Devin had changed back to the person I knew as a child. He loved me! The thought spread over me like warm honey.

Devin’s confession had amazed me. My harsh training had been a necessary evil. He didn’t like to see it. He let Jack take care of it so he didn’t have to. To prepare me for what was next.... Whatever that meant.

I smiled and looked out the window. The sky was blue above the high hedges with a few fluffy white clouds. I couldn’t remember the last time I’d been this happy. My heart wanted to leap out of my chest and dance around in the sunshine.

A knock at the door yanked me out of my quiet revelry and I jumped. I pulled on my clothes and went to open the door but the knob

wouldn't turn. I tried again, turning harder and the knock sounded again.

"Mistress?" came a female voice from the other side.

"I can't open the door." I pulled again but there was no change.

"It's all right, Mistress. I can open it. Step back so I don't hit you."

I took a step back and the door opened. A girl about my age stepped through the opening with a tray of food. She was a few inches taller than I was, with long blond hair and brown eyes. A long, flowing purple dress fluttered gracefully as she moved across the room. She wore a plain silver collar around her neck.

She put the tray on the table and turned to greet me with a bowed head and slight curtsy. "My name is Maggie, Mistress. It is a pleasure to meet you. I look forward to serving you." She gave me a cheerful smile, though her eyes betrayed a tinge of fear.

"Hi, Maggie," I said shyly, bowing my head as she did. "It's nice to meet you, too." I stood awkwardly for a moment, not knowing what to do.

She must have sensed my discomfort because she motioned towards the table. "I've brought you some lunch, if you're hungry."

My stomach growled, reminding me that I hadn't had breakfast. "I'm very hungry. Thank you."

"Please sit," she said and lifted the covers off the plates.

Steam rose from the plate and my mouth watered at the aroma of chicken and vegetables. I hadn't seen a meal like this in years; Jack wasn't much of a cook and I had lived on frozen meals and cereal. It looked and smelled delicious. "Oh, this looks so good!"

"Is there anything else you require, Mistress?"

"Um, no," I said, not sure if there was something else I was expected to need. "Not that I can think of."

Maggie smiled. "I will return later to collect your tray." She gave a small curtsy, went to the door, and knocked. She turned to me as it opened. "The door is locked for your protection, Mistress. Wandering around the Manor alone is not wise." She glided through the door and it closed behind her.

I was too hungry to consider her words and proceeded to devour my lunch. It was as good as it smelled, but too soon it was gone. Then again, if I had eaten any more, I probably would have gotten sick.

I picked up my iced tea and explored my room a little more thoroughly. Two closets filled the space between the fireplace and windows. One was empty but the other held several dresses, similar in style to what Maggie wore. Several were sheer and white.

I wandered over to the bookshelf, sipping my tea as I scanned the leather-bound books. Classics: the complete works of Jane Austen, my

favorite author; *Sherlock Holmes*; *Alice in Wonderland*; *Little Women*; *Wuthering Heights*, several Charles Dickens novels; *Cranford*; *Middlemarch*; *Les Misérables*, and others.

Oh, I couldn't believe all these books were here. I had been an avid reader as a child, devouring book after book any time I had the chance. Jack hadn't brought any of my books when I moved in with him. He had promised to buy me new ones, but never did. Instead, he distracted me with sexual touch every time I asked.

But now I had two shelves full of them! This truly was the best birthday I'd had in years. What more could I ask for than a kind Master, precious books and the permission to dance more? I didn't dare hope for anything else.

I pulled down the crisp, unused copy of *Pride and Prejudice* and lay down on my bed. It crackled as I opened it and I smiled. I quickly lost myself in the story and almost didn't hear the knock on the door a while later.

"Come in," I said, sitting up and pulling the ribbon bookmark into place.

Maggie walked into the room. "I've come to retrieve your tray, Mistress. Is there anything else you need?"

"No, thank you."

“There are toiletries and all sorts of bath oils and soaps in the cabinet in the bathroom. The tub is very nice to relax in.” She smiled. “If you desire companionship tonight, you may request someone using the phone there.” She indicated the nightstand next to my bed.

“Companionship?”

“A man...or a woman if you prefer. Our men here are very good lovers.”

“Thank you. I think I’ll be okay on my own.” The idea of sleeping alone and unhurt was a delicious thought.

“As you wish, Mistress. I will bring your dinner around six. Would you like a snack between now and then?”

“No, thank you.” I shook my head. “I’m not used to eating so much,” I added.

“I will see you at dinnertime.” She curtsied and left the room.

I had a whole day all to myself. No men. No being hurt. Quiet. I could read or watch TV as I pleased. I hardly knew what to do with myself. After wandering around the room for a few minutes, I picked up my book and went outside. Once again, I lost myself in the story and didn’t come up for air until dinnertime. I hadn’t even realized it was getting cool.

CHAPTER 5

I'd never seen this room before in my dreams. It looked like a study of some sort. The sheer curtains filtered the morning sunlight, making the room appear foggy. Dark wooden bookshelves lined the walls on either side of me. A dark wood desk stood right in front of me. A tall man with blond hair and broad shoulders blocked the view from the window. I knew him. I knew if he turned around, I would see kind, cobalt-blue eyes.

I had dreamed of him many times since my parents died. His were the eyes I visualized on my worst days. My dreams of him brought me comfort. Was he a real person? I had no idea, but I wished he were. He seemed so strong, so capable. If anyone could save me, he could. I never told anyone about him, save the one dream I shared with Devin. He stayed with me, hidden away in my heart.

One time, more recently, I saw him kneeling on the floor of his bedroom. He'd been crying. It had shocked me to see a grown man cry. He'd looked up and our eyes met. I wanted to weep at the misery in his eyes. He'd spoken in a broken voice, in a language I didn't understand, and reached out for me. But as soon as he touched me, the room vanished from my sight. That had been my last dream of him.

Until now.

He turned and looked at me. He had matured since the last time I'd seen him. His eyes widened and he spoke earnestly, his deep voice melodious in whatever language he was using. My heart fluttered in my chest. He knew I was there with him. I nervously stepped forward, yearning to be close to him, to immerse myself in his comforting presence.

He stepped forward with a soft smile, gazing at me with eyes full of affection. He reached out towards me and I leaned forward, eager for his touch. I felt his gentle hand on my cheek and looked into his eyes for a moment longer before the room vanished like it always did.

I sat up in bed and touched my cheek. I could still feel the heat from his hand. *Anna, that's silly. He's not real.*

I shook my head, trying to shake away the vision of him. In my dreams, I felt such comfort from his presence. When I woke, my longing for him was unbearable.

CHAPTER 6

The days passed by quicker than I expected and I decided I liked being in Devin's Manor. No one hurt me. No one yelled at me. It was relatively quiet. Devin had visited me several times throughout the course of the week, each time showering me with love and devotion. Wednesday night he even stayed with me the whole night.

Ian drove me to my ballet classes on Tuesday and Thursday, and I danced better than I had in a long time. Even my teacher seemed impressed. I spent my free in my little yard reading. Could life get better than this?

Friday afternoon, Maggie and another girl came to my room to help me get ready for my first Gathering. The other girl was a few years older than me, with bright blue eyes and light brown hair tied back with a purple ribbon at the nape of her neck. The color purple seemed significant.

"Mistress, this is Sarah. She will also be serving you."

Sarah bowed her head and curtsied as Maggie had before. "It is a pleasure to meet you, Mistress. I look forward to serving you." Her voice was as soft and sweet as Maggie's was, though her eyes had the same edge of fear in them. She smiled a sweet smile and I liked her instantly, as I had Maggie.

I bowed my head in greeting. “Hi, Sarah. It’s nice to meet you as well.”

“Did you enjoy your lunch, Mistress?” Maggie asked, walking towards the table. She picked up the tray, walked to the door and knocked.

“Yes, it was delicious. Thank you.”

The door opened and Maggie handed the tray to someone unseen in the hallway. The door closed and she turned back to me. “Shall we begin?”

“Begin what?”

“Pampering you.” Sarah walked into the bathroom and a moment later I heard water running.

The words took a moment to register. Pamper me? I remembered Devin saying something about it the previous day but it hadn’t sunk in.

Maggie led me into the bathroom and I wondered, for the hundredth time, why it wasn’t cold. I asked Maggie about it.

“The floor is heated,” Maggie explained. “Nothing worse than stepping onto a cold floor in the middle of the night when you have to relieve yourself.” She giggled and so did I.

A wave of unrecognized tension flew out of my body as I allowed myself the luxury of a giggle. How long had it been since I had giggled with another girl? *Years*. Tears sprang to my eyes as I realized how something so simple felt so good.

“Are you all right, Mistress?”

“Yes. I...” How could I explain how I felt? Would she understand? Had she gone through the training as I had? “It’s been a long time since I’ve been around other girls and...laughed.” I shrugged, embarrassed.

Maggie reached for my hands. “It can be a difficult transition, moving from training back into everyday life in the Manor. I can imagine it’s even more difficult for you because you weren’t raised here.” She squeezed my hands and looked at me tenderly. “It will be okay, Mistress.”

I sniffed and held back my tears. “Thank you, Maggie. You’re so nice. I’m not used to ‘nice’ anymore.”

“It’s my pleasure, Mistress.”

“Can you call me Anna? Mistress is so...strange.”

She looked up, horrified, as if I’d asked her to strangle a kitten. “Oh, no, Mistress. Your status in the Manor is much higher than my own. That would be highly inappropriate! And Master would get very angry.”

I certainly didn’t want her or Sarah to get in trouble. “Okay. I understand...I think.”

“The conventions of this place will become natural to you in time, Mistress. We will help you.”

“Thank you, Maggie.” A thought occurred to me. “Is it okay for me to call you by your name?”

“Oh, yes, Mistress. That is allowed. We call each other as ‘Sister’ if not by our names. But the other girls should not address you so informally. We are not your equals. I believe everyone knows of your arrival by now and should know how to address you. Even the men should address you as ‘Mistress.’ Except Master. He can do as he pleases.”

I sighed. “There’s a lot to learn, isn’t there?”

“Yes, but Master says you are very bright and will learn quickly.”

“The bath is ready, Maggie,” Sarah said from beside the bathtub.

Steam rose up from the tub and along with it, a scent that I’d not smelled before. It was musky and flowery and fresh, all at the same time. Like making love outside in the sunshine. It was almost arousing.

Sarah held out her hand and helped me step into the tub. I gasped at the very hot water.

“The water needs to be this temperature to allow your pores to open. Your body will adjust in a moment.”

I sat down carefully and settled against the back of the tub where a soft cushion sat for comfort. After a few minutes, I felt my muscles relax.

Oh my, this is nice!

Sarah made sure I was soaking up to my ears and then massaged good-smelling oil into my face. It felt so good I fell asleep, and they woke me when the water had cooled.

Sarah refilled the tub with hot water and Maggie washed my hair with a lavender-scented shampoo. After she rinsed my hair, Maggie spent twenty minutes working some kind of oil into it.

She ran her fingers through my hair after rinsing it with warm water. “Perfect,” she said. “Like silk.”

I ran my own fingers through my hair and grinned. The gleaming strands really did feel like silk. My hair had never been so soft before. Maggie gently pulled my head back onto the cushion and I felt her play with my hair. “I must braid it before it dries or the braids won’t stay in.”

Sarah manicured my fingers and toes while Maggie braided my hair. When they were finished, I stepped out into an awaiting pink plush robe.

Maggie pulled me in front of the mirror. “What do you think?” She grinned.

I looked up and barely recognized the face that stared back at me. My skin was flawless and glowing with health. Most of my hair hung loosely down my back, with the top part worked into many tiny braids. Maggie had pulled the braids back away from my face to meet high up on the back of my head and then drawn them into a multi-strand thin braid that ran down my back.

“After your hair dries I’ll brush the loose strands and apply some oil so it’s extra soft and touchable,” Maggie explained. “You’ll have a circlet

that sits on top here after you dress.” She pointed to the top of my head.

“And I’ll pull some gold threads through the braids as well.”

“It all sounds so elegant,” I said in a hushed voice.

“Master is eager to show you off, Mistress.” Maggie smiled. “The other girls will be envious of the attention you garner, but Master won’t let just any man have you. They’ll have to ask his permission. That is an honorable position for any girl. Normally, any man can use us at any time. If we say no we are severely punished.” A pained look came into her eyes and disappeared quickly. “You are fortunate to have gained Master’s favor.”

“What do the men do to us?” I asked as we walked into the bedroom. I swallowed, trying to push away the nauseated feeling that had just swept over me. Would tonight be like being back at Jack’s house?

“Sometimes they are content to have you just sit on their laps. More often than not, they want oral sex. They like it when we sit between their legs and suck on their cocks. I think it makes them feel powerful.” She paused. “Sometimes the men just want sex and other times they want something harder.” She shuddered. “But if they want something harder, they have to use the Red Girls. Not that that stops them from being forceful with us common girls. They just can’t take us into the Red Room.”

“What’s the Red Room?” It didn’t sound like a good place.

She sighed. “The easiest way to explain it is to have you think back to your training.”

I grimaced, not wanting those horrible memories to return.

“That is what the Red Room is like. Going back to training, but not with a trainer. Just for the pleasure of the man. But the Red Girls have special privileges. And, unless they are forced into it out of punishment, most of them get off on the pain. I don’t understand it, but I guess I don’t have to.”

I looked at her, horrified. Why would anyone want to go back to training? But then again, Jack had shown me plenty of pornography movies with women enjoying going through what I had gone through on a daily basis. I shuddered and tried to push the pictures out of my mind. I searched my mind desperately for another topic. “What are the Gatherings like?”

Maggie seemed glad to move off the Red topic as well.

Sarah came out of the bathroom. “I will return later,” she said. She curtsied and went to the door to be let out.

“Are you allowed to sit?” I asked, motioning to the easy chair and ottoman.

“I am,” Maggie said and settled herself on the ottoman, back straight and hands in her lap.

I sat down on my bed and drew my knees up to my chest.

“The Gatherings happen every Friday night, and it is where the men come to relax or do business. We are there to please them in whatever way they want to be pleased. Sometimes there are rituals performed, such as the initiation of a new member. In that case, we wait and watch on the balconies and the men assemble on the bottom floor. When the rituals are done, we join the men downstairs. Did I hear correctly that Master took you to the Hall?”

I nodded. “It’s huge.”

“It is. Many men come to the gatherings, so it needs to be so. The formal occasions are more crowded than the informal ones. Tonight is informal.” She adjusted the folds of her dress. “We sit along the edge of the room and wait for a man to come get us.” She shrugged. “It’s not very exciting, but we are necessary.”

“Does Dev- I mean, does Master ever ‘have’ one of you?” For some reason, the thought of Devin being with someone else bothered me.

“Oh yes. Several of us during the course of the night. We consider ourselves fortunate if Master chooses us; it is an honor. Sometimes he will pick a certain girl for a certain man. He knows what the men desire and knows our skills. If he is trying to conduct business he will match up the girls with the right man to help ‘ease his way’ as he puts it.”

“Do you ever leave the Manor?”

Maggie shook her head. “We have a large yard to go out into, but we never leave the property. Well, except for the Big Gatherings. Then we get on a bus and go to the site of the Gatherings so the men can use us there. There are two Big Gatherings a year. Master is in charge of the summer one, so we go there. The other one is somewhere else and another Elder provides the girls.”

I still wasn't sure what my purpose was in all of this. Devin had told me that I would leave Manor at times. I knew I would go to social events with Devin to help him in some way. I felt comforted, knowing that men had to ask permission to 'have' me. Maybe this wouldn't be like Jack's house. “I suppose Master will tell me what he wants me to do?”

“I'm certain he will, Mistress. I know he has been looking forward to having you here.”

The door opened and Sarah poked her head in. “Maggie, could you help me with something?”

“Sure, Sarah.” Maggie stood and looked at the clock on the wall. It was almost four. “Dinner will be ready in a few hours. Why don't you rest until then? It will likely be a long night. After you eat, we'll dress you for tonight. The Gathering begins at nine o'clock.”

After dinner, Maggie and Sarah returned to help me dress. Maggie took me into the bathroom and sprayed me all over with an oil that smelled like the one that had been in my bath. She handed me my robe and after I put it on, she worked more oil through my hair before brushing it with a silver-handled brush for several minutes.

She stepped back and admired her work. "Perfect."

I stood and looked in the mirror. The hair that was still loose glimmered in the light. It was so soft and silky I could barely stop running my hands through it. "I never knew my hair could feel like this."

Maggie giggled. "That's the idea, Mistress; to make it irresistible to men. Men love soft hair they can run their fingers through."

If that were true then I might not have any hair left at the end of the night.

We went back into the bedroom and Sarah helped me into a white dress with a lace-up back. The skirt draped to my ankles and there was a slit on the right side that went all the way up to my hip. I could just see my knees through the fabric.

Before I had a chance to examine any more of the dress, Maggie and Sarah pulled me over to the bed where various pieces of sparkling jewelry lay on the comforter.

Each of my wrists were enveloped in a double row of what I assumed were crystals with three crystal strands that joined to a ring on my middle finger. The anklets had three evenly spaced crystal strands leading from the middle and sides of my ankle to a ring on my second toe. Maggie pinned the circlet on my head. The chains that hung down over my hair and ears tickled.

“They’re so pretty. They sparkle!” I remarked, moving my hands in the light.

Sarah smiled. “Diamonds do that.”

“Diamonds?” I exclaimed. “I thought they were crystals.”

“Master would never allow you to appear in mere crystals.”

I grinned, unable to contain myself. “I feel so pretty.”

“Would you like to see?”

“Yes, please.”

Maggie opened up the closet door where a full-length mirror hung. I stared, not believing my reflection. That beautiful woman was me?

The diamond-studded circlet had delicate chains that dropped down to interweave in my hair and returned to the circlet. A teardrop-shaped diamond hung down into the middle of my forehead.

Earlier in the week, Devin had given me a diamond necklace to wear. He said it was my ‘mark.’ The pendant consisted of a large diamond

solitaire surrounded by two concentric circles of smaller stones.

My dress was as beautiful as I'd imagined, but more transparent than I expected. The neckline plunged very low, stopping just shy of my nipples, which I could just see through the gathered fabric. Sheer straps sat just off my shoulders. The bodice was of a thicker silk that ended just above my hips. The skirt was of the same material that covered my breasts, but gathered in such a way that I could see the outline of my legs, but not much detail.

I was relieved that my pussy was not obvious through the material. Perhaps it might have been, if I'd had curls like some of the women in the porn videos. But none ever grew for me. I had asked Jack about it when I was younger and he said that I was special and would never have any. It bothered me then, but I didn't mind now. Devin had said several times this week how much he liked my naked pussy lips.

I smiled as I imagined Devin's pleasure at seeing me tonight. My nipples tightened at the thought.

I turned to look at Maggie and Sarah. "Thank you," I said, smiling brightly. "I look...I've never looked like this before. I feel like a princess."

They both beamed.

Maggie glanced at the clock. "It's almost time to go." She reached into the closet and pulled out a long cloak made from white crushed velvet.

She wrapped it around me and clasped the cloak at my shoulder. I fumbled my hands in the fabric. I couldn't get my hands free.

“You are completely wrapped. You can't stick your hands out without pushing the cloak apart from your shoulders.”

“I have to go down stairs. How will I keep my balance?”

“Ian will help you.”

Ian. His very name made me tremble. I had barely seen him all week and was glad of that fact. The thought of him helping me down a flight of stairs was laughable. He would be more likely to push me down the stairs than to help me walk down them.

A loud knock on the door made me jump. *Ian.* I didn't want to let him in.

“Shall I answer, Mistress?” Maggie asked.

I knew I had no choice. I nodded, unable to find my voice over the lump of fear in my throat.

“Come in.”

CHAPTER 7

The door opened and Ian stood there, towering in the doorway. He wore loose-fitting black pants, a black tunic, and leather sandals. He wore his long hair tied back in a low ponytail. His goatee was neatly trimmed.

I'd never noticed how handsome he was before. His hazel eyes met mine and I swallowed and looked down at the ground.

Sarah and Maggie both pressed their palms together and greeted him in unison. "Good evening, my lord Ian."

He wouldn't see it if I moved my hands, so I just bowed my head and stammered the same greeting.

Sarah and Maggie hurried out of the room and left me alone with the intimidating man. I stood unmoving, staring at the floor. I could feel him looking at me. "Good evening, Mistress," he said, his voice deep and... *sexy?*

How could I think his voice was sexy? The man terrified me!

He stepped forward and gently pulled my hood up over my hair. I waited for him to hurt me, but he simply stepped back after he finished.

"Are you ready?"

I nodded and then followed it with a soft, “Yes, my lord,” in case he couldn’t see my nod in the hood of my cloak.

He took my elbow and gently guided me out of the room. “Make sure you look up enough so you don’t trip on anything. The hood can block your view.”

He was being kind. That was...*weird*. “Thank you, my lord.” I couldn’t think of anything else to say. I lifted my head slightly and could see more than just my feet below me.

I followed him silently down the empty hallway. When we arrived at the various staircases, he took my elbow and guided me down the stairs, making sure I didn’t trip. I didn’t know what to do with this kindness, but I thanked him each time. When we arrived at the entrance to the Hall, Ian instructed me to stay where I was as he slipped through the doors and disappeared.

I stood alone in the silent hallway. What awaited me beyond these doors? I could hear low muffled voices coming from inside. Who were these men that Devin said I would seduce? My mind raced and my heart pounded. Would this be better or worse than Jack’s house?

Ian came out of the room and stood beside me. “He’s almost ready for you. When we go in, you will walk directly across the room and stop at the edge of the platform. Devin will indicate when he is ready and I will

remove your cloak. At that point, step up onto the platform, place yourself a few feet in front of him and bow as he taught you. He will let you know what to do next.”

“Yes, my lord,” I said in a shaky voice. I wanted to run away and hide, but my submissive self wouldn’t let me. I had to obey.

Suddenly, both doors opened and I could look into the Hall from the hooded safety of my cloak. We stood there for a moment and I took advantage of the situation and looked around surreptitiously.

About a hundred men were scattered throughout the room. Girls knelt around the edges of the room. Some were naked, though most of them wore some sort of blue garment. A few girls in short red garments were scattered throughout the room. The men were dressed similarly to Ian, but in different dark colors. Many girls knelt in front of seated men, heads bobbing up and down as they sucked on their cocks. A few straddled laps.

It wasn’t overly loud, but there was a definite din to the room, with an occasional cry of ecstasy. The noise lessened as Ian and I walked toward the raised dais where Devin sat easily on his throne-like chair.

He wore a white tunic and pants, the color making a sharp contrast to his tanned skin and dark hair. His dark, precisely trimmed beard and mustache made a sharp outline around his jaw and mouth where white teeth showed when he smiled. Or grimaced.

As Ian and I stopped in front of the dais, the room became silent. My heart pounded in my chest as I waited. I focused my eyes on the floor and breathed deeply to calm my nerves. After a long moment, Ian moved behind me and pulled back my hood. He unclasped my cloak, letting it fall from my shoulders, and caught it before it fell to the floor.

I took a deep breath and, remembering his instructions, stepped up onto the low platform. My right knee slipped through the slit in the dress to expose my entire leg. I heard appreciative murmurs as I walked towards Devin's throne. After another deep breath, I dropped to my knees and bowed low, pressing my forehead to the ground and stretching out my arms in front of me.

After a moment, he spoke softly. "You may sit up, Mistress." I obeyed and put my hands on my thighs, keeping my head bowed.

He stood and reached his hand toward me. I put my hand in his and he pulled me to a standing position. He cupped my chin, raising my face to his. I looked fearfully into his eyes but, seeing the pleasure in them, relaxed a bit.

"You look beautiful, Anna," he murmured and kissed the backs of the fingers on my right hand. "Keep your head up and focus your eyes on the back of the room." He turned me away from him, keeping his hands on my upper arms. I did as he said and he began to speak loudly, addressing

the assembled men. “I’d like to introduce you to my newest and most precious girl, Anna.”

A murmur arose around the room as the men took in his announcement. I could feel a hundred pairs of eyes scrutinizing me. Their desire made me a dizzy.

Devin kissed the side of my neck and I inhaled deeply. I closed my eyes and tilted my head slightly as his tongue trailed up my neck to my earlobe, which he bit gently. My nipples hardened in response. The thought of being watched at this moment made my cheeks warm. When I lived with Jack, he would put me on display in front of his friends, but it had been a much smaller audience.

Devin wrapped his arm around my body just below my breasts and addressed the room again. “She’s not available for general use, but I won’t be selfish with her.” The men chuckled. Devin brushed my nipple with his thumb and a jolt of electricity shot down my body to my clit. I gasped slightly. His hard cock pressed against the small of my back. “That is all. Continue as you were.”

Devin turned me around to lead me to his chair and the volume of the room rose to its previous din. He pulled me into his lap and kissed me, pressing his tongue against my lips. His tongue forcefully entered my mouth, swirling and dancing around. I moaned softly.

He pulled down the top of my dress, exposing my breasts. I inhaled sharply into his mouth as he pinched my nipples, and I felt him smile against my lips.

“Like that, Baby?”

My mind whirled at the sensation and I didn't respond.

He pinched my nipples harder and I whimpered. “Answer me.”

“Y-yes, my lord,” I squeaked.

“Good girl.”

He rolled my nipples between his knuckles and kissed me again, his tongue darting in and out of my mouth. My pussy was swollen and wet and I desperately wanted his cock inside me. I trailed my hand down his chest and caressed his cock. He inhaled sharply and moaned.

“God, I want you, Anna,” he said between clenched teeth. “I want to fuck you so hard you feel my cock in your throat.”

I felt another jolt shoot to my clit. “Please, my lord,” I begged.

He grasped my jaw and kissed me hard. “Not right now, Baby. But I would love to feel my cock in your mouth.”

I smiled brightly. “May I, my lord?” I reached under his tunic and pulled at the waist of his pants.

“Yes, Baby. You may.”

I scrambled out of his lap and knelt between his feet. Pulling at the waistband, I realized that it wasn't elastic, but tied at the front. I yanked the strings loose and pulled the material down, rewarded by his magnificent cock spilling forward towards me. I wrapped my hand at the base of his shaft.

I ran my thumb up the base of his cock and then followed it with my tongue. I heard a moan from above and repeated the motion several times before bringing his head to my mouth. I pressed my lips to the tip and slowly sucked him into my mouth. I didn't stop until he was fully in, filling my throat with his glorious thickness. He moaned loudly and put his hands on the back of my head. I swallowed, tightening my throat around the head of his cock and he moaned again. I knew I was pleasing him and beamed inside.

I pulled back enough so I could get a breath and then swallowed him down my throat again.

“Oh, Baby,” he rasped. “God, you suck me so fucking good.”

I repeated the swallowing several times and then wrapped my hand around his shaft and began pushing him in and out of my mouth to simulate fucking. I sucked him in and released on the way out, just as I'd been taught.

“Oh, fuck, Baby,” he moaned. “That feels incredible.”

I tugged on his balls gently with my other hand. His moaning deepened and I could feel his balls trying to tighten up against his body, but I held on to them, keeping a gentle, steady pressure downwards.

I increased my head movements and he began to tremble.

“Yes, Baby, like that,” he commanded with a groan. I increased the pace even more and I heard a moan begin deep in his chest. It grew louder until it erupted into a primal scream as his cum rushed into my mouth. I eagerly swallowed every bit.

His hands still cradled my head and I knew not to move until he released me, so I continued to suck gently on his cock. The tremors running through his body subsided and his cock softened. I looked up to see the front of his tunic damp from sweat. His eyes were closed and his head leaned back against the chair. After a few minutes, I ran my tongue around and into the slit at the tip of his cock, which seemed to jolt him back to reality.

He grasped my upper arms and pulled me up into his lap. “God, that was more incredible than the other day, Anna. Did Jack teach you that?”

I nodded against his chest. Jack had taught me everything.

“Fuck,” he said, running his fingers through his hair. “That guy deserves a fucking medal.”

I smiled as I leaned my head against his shoulder. He was happy with me and I was content. I skimmed my fingers over the exposed skin between the slit of the neckline of his shirt.

He played with my hair as we sat there. “Your hair is addictive, Baby. It’s so soft I can’t let go.”

I leaned up and kissed his neck. “Thank you, my lord.” I returned my head to his shoulder and I closed my eyes, enjoying the feel of his hand in my hair. I was so content.

Slowly, the noise of the room filled my ears again and I remembered that we were in a populated room. Had they watched us? I buried my face in Devin’s shoulder.

“What’s wrong, Baby?” He pulled on my hair to bring my head up.

“I forgot where we were.”

Devin chuckled. “Mmm. And they enjoyed the show. You just made every man in the room incredibly jealous of me.”

“Really?” Was he being serious?

“Yes. No one makes me scream like that.” He looked deep into my eyes. “No one.”

My stomach clenched. “Did I do it wrong, my lord?”

“Oh, Baby. You did it all right. I meant what I said as a compliment, not as a criticism.”

“Oh,” I said with a sigh of relief. Punishment was the last thing I wanted tonight.

“You made me totally lose control. I don’t lose control. Ever. These men know who I am. What you did to me spoke louder than any words I could have used to describe how extraordinary you are.”

My cheeks warmed at the compliment. “Thank you, my lord.”

Devin looked up towards the edge of the platform and gestured for someone to come over. “Ah, Jack.”

I looked up sharply and my heart began to pound. No, not Jack. *Don’t ruin my day, Devin!* I pleaded with him silently and lowered my head, staring at my hands in my lap.

Devin wrapped his arms around me; claiming me, I think. “Jack, I was just telling Anna you deserve a fucking medal for what you taught her. I’m impressed once again with your skills.”

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Jack give a mock bow. “Thank you, my lord.” He grinned. “I worked very hard on this one.”

“I can tell. It paid off immensely.”

“Did you fuck her yet?”

“Of course. Several times. Almost missed a meeting on Monday because of it. Sit please.”

Jack pulled one of the side chairs up next to Devin's chair and plopped down in it with a grin. "Did I do too good of a job? It's not like you to scream over a blowjob. Or miss a meeting."

"I don't think it's possible to do too good of a job. And I didn't miss the meeting," he snapped. "I made it just in time. I think it made a strong point to everyone here. Besides, when a blowjob blows your mind, you don't complain."

They both laughed. I remained silent.

"You talk to the Germans yet?" Jack asked.

"Yes, I greeted them when they came and made some choice selections for them. Alex didn't come, as usual. His father and brother are here though. I hope the poor girls don't choke on them."

Choke? Why would they choke?

Jack laughed. "What are they like?"

"Wilhelm, er *Vilhelm*-fucking German language-is definitely an Elder. It's written all over him. I suspect he knows something but I don't know how much. He's been watching her like a hawk ever since her cloak came off."

"Maybe he likes brunettes."

"Maybe. But he's not watching her like that. It's more like...like he's trying to get a read off her."

“Do you think it’s him?”

“Possible. But unlikely. He’s older than I am.”

“What about the brother? Kurt?”

“Yes, Kurt.” Devin chuckled. “He’s barely been able to keep his eyes off her, and in the normal way, not like his father. I think he’s the right choice. No power, but definitely interested in Anna enough to hold on to her for a while.”

Hold on to me? What were they talking about? I had a feeling it had something to do with the conversation I’d heard Monday morning.

CHAPTER 8

There was a lull in the conversation and then Devin spoke softly. “I think it’s time to introduce them.”

Devin cupped my chin and brought my face up. “Anna, I’m going to introduce you to two men. The older man is an Elder. You will greet him the same way you greet me. Do you understand?”

I nodded.

“The men are from Germany, though they speak English well. It is a father with the younger of his two sons. Both sons have a reputation for liking women. Many women. The oldest son moved here a few years ago. The younger lives in Germany.”

I listened closely, trying to anticipate what he wanted from me and nodded.

“I need to keep close tabs on these men, so I want you to give them your full attention. Particularly the younger son. He’s barely taken his eyes off you since you came in. Make sure you please him well. Make him want more of you.”

“Kurt?” I asked, remembering his name.

Devin smiled. “You were listening. Good girl.” He caressed my chin with his thumb. “When you are with them I want you to listen closely to their conversations and remember them. Then tell me about them later.”

“Yes, my lord.”

“I don’t want you to fuck him just yet. But you can please him with your mouth, if he so desires.”

“Yes, my lord.” Not fuck him...yet? Did that mean I’d see him again after tonight? Was he a cruel man? *Does it matter?*

Devin kissed my neck and collarbone, and then pushed me away so he could stand. “I’ll catch up with you later, Jack.” He took my hand and led me off the platform and around several groups of men. Many of them were utilizing the skills of the girls. Very few of the girls were along the outskirts of the room now.

He guided me to a cluster of plush easy chairs and a loveseat. As we approached, I saw a group of men lounging comfortably and talking. We stopped at the edge of the circle and I had a second to get my bearings. An older blond man with a mustache, probably in his late forties, sat directly across from where I stood.

“Gentlemen,” Devin said, “I’d like to introduce you to Anna.”

Devin put his arm around me, squeezing my upper arm slightly harder than was warranted and I winced. I took it as a warning to behave.

“Don’t stand there like an idiot,” Devin hissed in my ear after a moment. “Go greet Wilhelm.” He pushed me towards the older man.

I stumbled slightly and then, trembling, I took two steps forward and dropped to my knees in a low bow. Nothing happened at first, but then I felt a gentle hand on the back of my head. It circled around under my chin and pulled up slightly. I looked up into a handsome, angular face with pair of sympathetic blue eyes. Something about them seemed familiar.

His eyes exuded a warmth that came from deep within him. “It is wonderful to meet you, Anna.” He spoke softly, voice deep and accent thick. *German*. His vowels were pure and he pronounced *wonderful* as “voonderful.” My name was “ahnna.” I’d never met a foreigner before. It was very...exotic.

Devin cleared his throat behind me. I could feel his impatience.

“G-good evening, my lord.” I brought my hands together and tried to bow my head, but his hand prevented me. Wilhelm held my chin in place, studying my face. He leaned forward until I could hear him breathing. I stared at his lower face, not moving. The corners of his mouth turned up in a slight smile.

“Look at me,” he commanded softly, caressing my cheek with his thumb. I looked up to meet his gaze once more and he stared intently into

my eyes as if to read my mind. “So pretty,” he said at last. He released my chin and sat back in his chair.

I returned my gaze to the floor and smiled ever so slightly. Why did the pleasure of a stranger fill me with such warmth? I liked that he called me pretty.

I heard Devin move and sit in an empty chair behind me. “I noticed Kurt take an interest and thought he might enjoy some time with her.”

“Perhaps,” Wilhelm said slowly. I saw his arm move and imagined him stroking his chin as he spoke. “Kurt?”

“*Ja, Vati?*” came an accented voice behind me and to my right. I’d never imagined German to be a sexy language.

“Do you want her?” Wilhelm asked.

There was a pause. “*Ich?*” Did Kurt know how to speak English?

“English please, Kurt. It’s rude to speak German here.” His rebuke was benign.

“Sorry, *Vati*. I wasn’t thinking.” Kurt’s accent was as thick as his father’s but his voice wasn’t quite as deep. Still, it was a nice voice. “I’d love to,” came the response.

My heart pounded in my chest. What would he want from me? Would he hurt me? Was he as handsome as his father was? *Where did that come from, Anna? Why does it matter if he’s handsome or not?*

Wilhelm stood and held out his hand to me, and I allowed him to help me to my feet. He led me to the seat next to where Devin had settled himself.

I glanced at Devin as I walked by. His eyes were firm and he raised his eyebrows at me, repeating the unspoken warning from before.

I looked back at the ground and a moment later, a pair of long legs clothed in black linen pants appeared in front of me. His sandals were similar to the ones Ian wore.

“Anna, this is my son, Kurt.”

“Greetings, my lord.” I pressed my shaking hands together in the proper greeting. I didn’t look up at his face.

“*Hallo*, Anna. It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance.” His voice was sexy and smoldering and made my legs tremble. He took my hand and pulled me into his lap so I was sitting sideways, facing Devin.

Kurt stroked my cheek and jaw and I glanced up at him. He sucked in a breath as our eyes met. He was in his mid-twenties, with thick, yellow-blond hair that fell across his forehead in a youthful manner. He was definitely his father’s son; the similarities were undeniable. But his scruffy goatee and mischief-filled grey eyes made me think he took life much less seriously than his father.

I gave him a timid smile, suddenly feeling shy. Men had never affected me as these two Germans did, though the father differently than the son.

The other men returned to their conversations around us and I concentrated so I could read Kurt and know what he wanted. But before I had a chance to read him, he dragged his thumb across my lower lip and my body awakened. I inhaled sharply and my breath caught in my throat.

He slid his hand behind my head and pulled my face towards him. *Oh, God. He's going to kiss me!* Butterflies filled my stomach and my body tingled with anticipation. *What are you doing, Anna? You've kissed tons of men.*

He nuzzled my lips and then pressed his mouth softly to mine.

Oh!

He sucked at my lower lip until my mouth opened, which, I admit, didn't take long. His tongue slipped past my teeth and swirled around mine.

My mind whirled. My body felt a shock like a stun gun unleashing against my skin. What the heck was going on? I'd kissed many, many men. Why was he different? What was it about his lips that made me feel like I'd go crazy if he kept kissing me...or worse, if he stopped?

His hands caressed the back of my neck and my hand moved to his neck and jaw. *Was that okay? I was supposed to let the man lead, right?*

Was it okay to touch him? I couldn't remember the last time I had been so uncertain with a man. I wanted to look at Devin to make sure I was doing it right, but knew I wouldn't be able to see him without breaking the kiss. And I didn't want to do that.

Well, I was supposed to please him, so I tried to concentrate again on reading his desires. It was difficult to concentrate on anything but his tongue in my mouth. I brought my hand around to the back of his head and ran my fingers through his soft hair. I massaged the nape of his neck and pressed my lips to his.

I heard him moan softly...*or was that me? Stay in control, Anna, or he'll devour you.* Somehow, the thought of being devoured by Kurt didn't seem so bad.

I trailed my fingers down the side of his neck, along the tendon, and rubbed my thumb just behind his earlobe. Kurt's fingers trailed down my neck and onto my collarbone, caressing the skin. My nipples tightened and I pressed my breasts against his chest.

His fingers continued their trail down the neckline of my dress and along the edge of the gathered material. He slipped his finger under the material, grazing my nipple, and I moaned softly. His cock was hard against the side of my thigh.

He cupped my breast over the material and squeezed my nipple gently. I gasped, breaking our kiss.

I looked into Kurt's eyes and saw passion and desire. But it was different desire than I'd seen in other men's eyes. More tender. It was almost...awe? No, that couldn't be right. Men lusted and took. They weren't tender. They didn't give. Even Devin, who loved me, still had an animalistic hunger in his eyes when he made love to me.

I saw none of that in Kurt. It frightened me because I didn't know what to expect. He was difficult to read as well, which made me nervous. *How will I know how to please him if I can't read him? Devin wants me to please him especially. He will be so angry if I fail!*

I must have looked startled because he leaned forward and whispered in my ear. "Are you all right, *Engel?*" He nuzzled my ear and goose bumps popped up on my arms.

"Yes, my lord." I decided to do what I knew to do. I took a breath, looked him in the eyes and asked, "How may I please you, my lord?" in the soft voice that Jack had taught me to use.

I felt his cock jump at my words, which sent another shock wave through my body. *Stay in control, Anna! You're here for him, not the other way around.*

“Oh, *Engel*. You are pleasing me by just being near me.” He nibbled on my earlobe and trailed kisses down my neck.

I leaned my head away from him, giving him more access to my neck and sighed. Through my half-closed eyes, I caught a glimpse of Devin frowning at me; I was enjoying myself too much. I swallowed and nodded slightly at Devin. *Control, Anna. You're here to please Kurt, not for your own enjoyment. Do you want your ass whipped tonight?*

I turned to Kurt, becoming bolder. “Please, my lord, tell me how I may please you. I am very good at giving oral pleasure.”

I felt his cock jump again and imagined taking it into my mouth.
Mmm.

I leaned closer to his face. “Please, my lord. Let me bring you pleasure.” My voice was husky as I gazed into his eyes. He frowned slightly and looked confused, but gave a short nod. I slid off his lap and settled between his feet.

I ran my thumbs up his inner thighs feeling the hard muscles beneath. As my hands approached his cock, he inhaled deeply. I avoided the bulge and ran my thumbs beside it and up to his waist. He barely breathed as I reached for the linen strings. I was surprised at his reaction to me. From the conversation I overheard about him, I was certain he knew the pleasure a skilled woman could bring him.

I pulled at the strings of his pants and a beautifully sculpted cock emerged. I took in a deep breath, my eyes widening in surprise. He was big, bigger than Devin, about the size of Ian. He had no piercings though. *I wonder why. I thought all Brothers were pierced.*

I ran my thumbs up the bottom of his shaft, stopping just below the crest and repeated the motion several times. Kurt moved his hands to the arms of the chair and I saw his knuckles whiten. *Maybe I am that good.* The thought made me grin...inside of course. I didn't want to anger Devin; I was already walking on thin ice with him.

I held the top of his cock with my hand and ran my tongue along the same path my thumbs had taken, bringing my other hand beneath his balls. Squeezing gently, I raised myself higher on my knees and took his head into my mouth. I heard a sharp intake of breath as I pushed him into my mouth, sucking hard.

Can I take him down my throat? I'd never tried with Ian, who preferred ripping into my ass rather than my throat. I continued to suck as I raised my body higher and pushed his cock deeper and deeper into my mouth. I glanced up at his face as best as I could and watched his eyes close. His jaw clenched and he held his breath.

As the tip of his cock touched the back of my throat, I felt confident I'd be able to swallow him. I took a deep breath and pushed him down my

throat, swallowing him down.

He jumped and exclaimed something in German. I recoiled, his cock ripping out of my throat as I fell backwards onto my ass.

Devin's rage was palpable from where he sat and I braced myself for the blow.

"*Nein, nein*, Devin, I'm all right," Kurt said, reaching out his hands as if to protect me.

"Did she hurt you?" Devin demanded, glaring at me.

I trembled under his glare. What would he do to me for hurting one of his honored guests.

"*Nein*. Quite the contrary. The pleasure was so overwhelming I could not keep still." Kurt glanced at me with kind eyes. He looked back at Devin and they stared at each other for a long moment.

"Don't try and cover for her, Kurt. If she caused you pain, she needs to be corrected." The rage seethed from Devin's body like hot magma oozing down the side of a mountain.

I scrambled into my submissive pose, hoping somehow to appease the raging beast inside Devin. It would likely not do any good, but at least he couldn't be angry with me for not sitting as I should.

My throat burned. I had been mid-swallow when Kurt had jumped. I wanted to reach up and rub my neck, but didn't dare move.

“I assure you, Devin, she did not hurt me. It surprised me. I have never such a sensation before. It was quite powerful.”

Silence extended between the two of them once more. I could tell Devin was trying to decide whether to believe him or not. I trembled, awaiting my fate.

Kurt reached out and pulled me to him. “I would be devastated if you took her away from me now. The earlier display was...inspiring. I am beginning to understand your reaction.”

Devin relaxed, giving the appearance of calm once more, though his anger simmered just under the surface. He reached out and petted my hair. “Yes, she is quite talented.”

He pulled my hair to force me to look at him. His eyes were hard and filled with warning.

I nodded once and then resettled between Kurt’s feet. I lifted up onto my knees and returned to my work. My throat still burned.

“Please, my lord,” I whispered as I caressed Kurt’s cock with shaking hands. “Was what I did uncomfortable for you?” I looked up at him fearfully.

Kurt looked down at me and cradled my cheek. He swept a thumb across my temple, jostling my circlet. The movement of the center stone tickled my forehead. I wrinkled my forehead to ease the sensation, and he

smiled and ran his thumb under the stone, easing the tickle. I smiled a thank you.

“*Nein, Engel.*” Kurt spoke in a soft voice and glanced at Devin, who had thankfully returned to his previous conversation. “What I told Devin was true. I have never experienced anything like that before. It, ah, caught me off guard. I have never had a woman take me in like that before.”

I blushed in response to the...compliment? Yeah, I’d call that a compliment.

Kurt smiled again. “I enjoyed it.” He leaned over and kissed me, his lips lingering, sucking on my lower lip.

I sighed and gazed up lazily at him. *I could get used to this.* I shook my head to clear my mind. *I have work to do. Must please him.*

I smiled up at him once more and then returned my attention to his cock. He was as hard as before and, after a few licks, I returned him to my mouth, repeating the motions from earlier. The pain in my throat intensified as I began to swallow him down. I desperately wanted to please him and so suppressed a groan of pain. Tears sprang to my eyes as I swallowed twice more and then pulled back.

I sucked on the head, running my tongue around the crest, and tried to figure out what to do. I knew my discomfort mattered little, especially to

the man I was trying to please, so I decided to please him as he liked and do my best to ignore the pain.

I swallowed him down again as laughter erupted around the circle. I knew it wasn't from what I was doing, and took the opportunity to let the groan out. No one would hear me over the noise. Sometimes it just helped to have a verbal release.

Kurt put his hands on the side of my head and pulled me up to kiss me.

What is he doing?

"What's wrong, *Engel*?" he whispered into my ear. "Why did you groan?" He nibbled on my ear; I think to mask the question.

He was too perceptive for my comfort. "I'm fine, my lord," I said with a smile, but my voice cracked over the last word.

"I don't believe you, *Engel*. You sound like you're in pain." He nibbled again and I gasped, and then choked as the cool air swept over my sore throat. "I am right, am I not?"

I nodded slowly. "But really, my lord, I'm—"

"Did I hurt you when I jumped? Did it hurt your throat?"

Don't admit it, Anna. Never admit they've hurt you. But I couldn't lie to him. I nodded, closing my eyes and awaiting his glee. But he just kissed me on the neck.

“Is it just your throat, or your mouth too?”

“Just my throat, my lord. But really-”

“Don’t take me so deep anymore, *Engel*. I don’t want you to be in pain. Your mouth is magnificent without you hurting yourself on my account. If Devin were not sitting right next to me, I would not allow you to continue. But I have a feeling that if I stopped you, the pain in your throat would be of little concern to you later.”

Tears burned my eyes again, but from gratefulness this time. He was so considerate. Did men like this really exist?

“No, my lord. Really, I’m fine. I want to please you.”

“Do not argue with me. If you swallow me again I will be very displeased.” He pulled back and gave me a mock frown. He wasn’t angry; he was trying to protect me. Now, more than ever, I wanted to bring him pleasure.

“Yes, my lord.” I took him into my mouth once more and gave him the best blowjob I could muster without using my throat. I caressed and tugged his balls and sucked his shaft as hard as I could. His head rolled back and he moaned appreciatively. As I brought him to climax, he cried out and flexed his hips. I tugged his balls once more, slightly harder and his cum sprayed into my mouth. I stroked his cock and lapped up everything he gave me. It stung my throat on the way down, but I didn’t care.

He brought his hands to my hair and petted me absentmindedly as his body relaxed. I sat still, my head resting on his thigh. *I could stay like this forever.* Closing my eyes, I basked in his presence.

CHAPTER 9

Kurt pulled me up into his lap and wrapped his arms around me. He played with my loose tresses and I rested my head on his chest. His heartbeat was soothing and I felt myself lulled to sleep. I tried to keep my eyes open, but they soon fluttered close.

“Did you enjoy her, Kurt?”

Kurt and I both jumped at Devin’s voice.

Kurt shifted and sat up straighter. “*Ja. Danke*, Devin. More than I had hoped to.” I beamed on the inside.

“Good, I’m glad.”

Kurt asked a question in German, and he and Wilhelm conversed in the foreign language for a few minutes.

“Devin,” Wilhelm said, sitting back casually in his chair. “My sons and I have a box for the evening performance of *The Sleeping Beauty* Ballet tomorrow night. Kurt was wondering if he could take Anna as his companion.”

The ballet! I kept my face impassive, hiding my pounding heart. Would Devin say yes?

Devin rubbed his chin, considering the request. “What time is the performance?”

“Seven. If you would be willing, we would like to take her to dinner with us beforehand and perhaps stay with us afterwards.”

Devin arched an eyebrow and looked amused. My heart beat faster at the thought of spending more time with Kurt. My throat would be better tomorrow and I could please him fully.

“She doesn’t have the proper wardrobe for an evening like that.”

My heart sank. Of course, I would need something to wear. The dresses in my closet were not appropriate for wear outside the Manor.

Wilhelm waved his hand in the air. “That is not a problem. We are more than willing to get her anything she needs.”

Devin sighed. *I thought he wanted me to stay close to them and listen to their conversations.* Of course, I realized now that most of their conversations would be in German. I didn’t know how much I would be able to help Devin. Maybe he realized that too.

A few moments later Devin appeared to have come to a decision. “Well, Anna. How would you like to go to the ballet tomorrow night with these gentlemen?”

I clasped my hands together in sheer joy. “Oh, Dev-” I stopped myself and clasped my hands over my mouth when Devin glared at me.

Well, glare was an understatement. I looked down at my hands. “Yes, my lord. I would like that very much.” I spoke calmly, anxious that I had ruined my chance. I looked back up with pleading eyes.

Devin smiled, but his eyes betrayed the fury inside. “Anna is very fond of the ballet. Aren’t you?”

I nodded.

“She danced when she was a child and was quite good,” Devin added.

“How long have you known her?” Wilhelm asked.

“I’ve known Anna since she was born. I went to high school with her guardian and knew her parents, before they died.”

Wilhelm appeared to consider Devin’s response and then nodded. “So, will you allow us to take her to the ballet, Devin? It seems she would enjoy it.”

“I think I could let her out for an evening.” Devin smiled at me warmly, though it still didn’t reach his eyes.

Devin and Wilhelm discussed the plans for tomorrow. Wilhelm would pick me up after lunch so that there would be plenty of time for shopping and getting ready. He would bring me back Sunday afternoon.

“You will keep her safe, won’t you?” Devin asked. “She’s rather precious to me.”

“Of course, Devin. I can see how much she means to you.” Wilhelm smiled benevolently.

Devin looked at him curiously for a moment, then smiled and then asked Wilhelm about his flight to San Francisco.

Kurt kissed my neck. “I get you again tomorrow, *Engel*. I will have to return the favor you bestowed on me when I get you alone.” He nipped at my collarbone and I shivered. “Oh yes, I want to see you do much more than shiver tomorrow night.”

My heart leapt inside my chest in fear. What did he want to do to me? Kurt didn't seem like the abusive type, but I knew that appearances could be deceiving; Jack certainly didn't look the type. *I thought he was different. I was wrong.* I took a deep breath to hold back the tears of disappointment. *Oh, well. It was nice while it lasted.*

I turned my head and kissed Kurt's neck to hide the tears forming. I continued licking and kissing his neck until I regained control of my emotions.

Wilhelm and Devin were engaged in conversation with the other men in the circle. Kurt spoke up occasionally, but began trailing his fingers along my neckline as soon as I stopped kissing his neck. His middle finger dipped into the fabric and pulled the gathers down under my right breast.

A low rumble sounded in Kurt's throat as he skimmed his fingers around my areola. "Your skin is so soft. And you smell so good." He ran his fingers around and around my nipple, getting close, but never touching it. My nipples were so hard they began to ache. He pulled the fabric down below my other breast. "*Wunderschön.*" I didn't know what it meant, but it was clear it was a good thing. He pressed his hand into my back so that I raised my chest to where he could take my breast into his mouth.

"Oh!" I gasped. My thighs clenched together as he sucked on my nipple, his tongue swirling around and around. "Oh, God!" I sighed. My fingernails dug into his knee and shoulder and my head fell back against his shoulder. He continued to swirl his tongue around my nipple while he squeezed the other one between his fingers. Each squeeze sent a jolt down to my throbbing clit.

He continued his erotic assault on my breasts for several minutes before trailing his hand down to my stomach and across to the slit in my dress. My right leg was completely exposed and swept his fingers up my thigh. He slid his hand back down to my knee and then back up, this time on my inner thigh. About halfway up, he exchanged his fingers for the firm pressure of his thumb. Like I had.

I moaned softly. He had pulled his head back from my breast and I could feel him watching me.

He continued slowly up my inner thigh with his thumb and then lightly swept his fingers across my pussy lips. I gasped for air and opened my legs as he caressed them gently, slowly working his finger inside my wet folds.

“Does that feel good, *Engel*?”

“Yes,” I said breathlessly.

“*Gut.*” He caressed the opening of my pussy. “You are so aroused.” He began moving his fingers again and slipped one inside.

I moaned, probably louder than I should have. His fingers were big...like him.

I closed my eyes, but I could feel him watching me as he slowly moved his finger in and out of me. Each thrust sent waves of heat through my body. I moaned again. I felt another finger join his first and I took a sharp breath. *I wonder what his cock would feel like.* “Oh, that feels so good,” I whispered, hoping Devin didn’t hear. *He’d be so angry.* But I’d pleased Kurt first. He started it. Didn’t Devin say I was supposed to follow the man’s lead? I felt deliciously selfish, enjoying myself as I was.

Kurt continued thrusting his fingers in and out, when his thumb brushed my clit. “Oh, God!” I could feel the pressure building inside me and warning bells went off in my head. I didn’t know if Devin would

approve of me having an orgasm in here. I was here to please Kurt, not the other way around.

“Stop, please, my lord,” I begged softly.

He looked at me in surprise. “Does it not feel good anymore, *Engel?*” He stilled his fingers, but didn’t remove them.

“No. I mean, yes. I mean. It still feels good. *Really* good. But I don’t know if my Master would approve of an orgasm for myself.”

Kurt frowned. “Why would he disapprove? It would please me if I could satisfy you.” He kissed me, nuzzling my lower lip. Shocks zinged through my body again. “Is it not your purpose to please me?” His eyes glinted with mischief and he grinned.

I melted at his look. “Yes,” I said softly.

I was ready to succumb to his desire to please me when Devin spoke from behind the chair he’d been sitting in. “Anna, I need you.” His eyes were cold and I felt the blood drain from my face.

“Yes, my lord.” *Devin’s going to punish me.* I looked back at Kurt as I extracted myself from his arms. “It was a pleasure meeting you, my lord,” I said in a soft voice, kissing him on the cheek. “I will see you tomorrow.”

Kurt kissed my hand as I stood. “I look forward to it, *Engel.*”

I gave him a last smile and followed Devin back to the platform, my heart sinking as I walked.

Devin pulled me into his lap, straddling him. He lifted my chin and smiled at me. It wasn't a very kind smile. He ran his hands up my ribs and to my breasts. My nipples hardened instantly. My body ached from not climaxing with Kurt. I pressed my breasts into his hands and he kneaded them none-too-gently. He pulled the fabric down away from my breasts, took a nipple, and rolled it between his fingers. My pussy swelled. My engorged clit throbbed with every heartbeat.

He pulled me towards him using my nipples. "Don't worry, Anna. That cunt of yours is going to get filled tonight. Many times."

I looked at him with fearful tears in my eyes, but his words excited me. At least my body felt excitement. I closed my eyes. "Please, Master, I want that," I begged. My body ached with desire.

He chuckled. "Fuck me, Anna. Impale yourself on my cock and ride me hard."

I immediately untied his pants and pulled his cock into view. I adjusted my dress and slid down on him in one swift movement. I was so tight it hurt, but I needed him. His piercings hit all the right spots. My muscles clenched around him, clinging desperately to his hard shaft. My clit hit his pelvic bone and I cried out in pleasure. My eyes widened in surprise as I felt the tingles of my orgasm.

Devin gave me a not-very-nice-smile. “Already? You are a little whore, aren’t you?”

I didn’t answer but whimpered at his question. He put his hands on my hips and ground me against his hip. I rode him hard, my ass bouncing up and down on his thighs as I filled myself with his cock again and again. I rocketed up into the sky and cried out as I came. Devin held on to my hips and pushed me up and down on himself hard. Somewhere in my subconscious I heard him groan and throb inside me.

My body slowly relaxed and I dropped my forehead on Devin’s damp shoulder. Both of our chests heaved as we caught our breath. His hands still clasped my hips, which felt bruised where he held me.

My mind slowly cleared and I sat up and looked at him, afraid of his anger. He pulled me towards him and sucked on my neck. “Good girl,” he murmured. “Now you can concentrate on pleasing my Brothers, correct?”

I nodded. Was he still angry with me? I couldn’t tell. “Yes, Master. I will please your Brothers.”

“You will please each of the men up here with me. You will greet them. Then you will ask them how they want to be pleased. And then you will do it. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Master.”

He lifted me off his cock and moisture ran down my inner thigh. He pushed me in the direction of a grey-haired man who looked up at me as I approached

“Good evening, my lord.” I said, palms pressed together.

He looked me up and down and smiled at my exposed breasts. “Hello, beautiful.” He pulled me down to straddle his lap and began to caress my breasts. My clit throbbed again.

“How may I please you, my lord?”

“Ride me, sweetheart.”

I obliged him and then moved onto the next man. I sucked cocks. I rode cocks. One man wanted me on my knees on the chair in front of him. I climaxed over and over again and pleased the men. As I turned to the last man, my heart dropped into my stomach. *Jack.*

I took a deep breath and greeted him, my voice strained. “Good evening, my lord.”

He sneered. “Good evening, Baby. Come to spread your legs for me?”

I swallowed nervously. “How may I please you, my lord?”

He stood in front of me. “You can spread your ass for me, you little whore.”

He motioned to the chair and I kneeled on it, facing away from him. I braced myself for my guardian's cock in my ass. The muscles clenched involuntarily.

“No, no, Baby. I said spread your ass. Reach behind you and spread your cheeks for me.”

I leaned my chest on the back of the chair and did as he said.

“Jack, lube up first,” Devin said in a stern voice. “She has more to do tonight and I don't want her tearing.”

Jack swore under his breath. “You got lube?”

“She's got a pussy. Use that.”

He unceremoniously shoved his cock in my now well-used pussy and thrust a few times then pulled out. He put his hand on my shoulder and leaned forward to my ear. “Damn. I was looking forward to seeing your ass bleed.”

I didn't say anything but was grateful to Devin for his intervention. Even if it had nothing to do with my comfort.

Jack positioned himself at my opening and thrust the whole way in with one movement. I gasped at the burning and cried out in pain. He laughed. I heard some of the other men laugh as well.

Tears stung my eyes. He wasn't gentle; it hurt. I tried to keep quiet, but had little success. I clung to the back of the plush chair as he gripped

my hips and fucked me hard. His balls slapped against me repeatedly. I buried my face in the back of the chair and cried. It hurt so badly.

I heard him start to moan. “Oh, Baby. Yeah. Take it. Take it like the bitch you are.” He slowed his pace but slammed himself into me harder. I sobbed. “Take it. Take it bitch.” With one last slam, he grunted in release, his short thrusts causing stabs of pain.

He pulled out as fast as he had gone in. The back of the chair muffled my scream. I started to lower my hips but Jack stopped me. “Oh no, Baby. I want everyone to see what a little ass-whore you are.” His fingers ran over the tender skin of my hole. I heard him laugh. “Look at that gaping hole dripping with cum. It’s gonna drip into her cunt.”

I buried my face in the chair, wishing I were anywhere but here. I imagined the disgust that Wilhelm and Kurt must be feeling right now. *Will they change their minds about taking me tomorrow? Or will they want me more now so they can do the same things?*

I continued kneeling on the chair, my ass and pussy exposed to the men on the platform. The men were talking but I didn’t pay any attention. My body ached from being fucked so hard.

I felt a hand on my back. I started to sit up but it pushed me back down. Something hot and hard entered my pussy. Another cock. He slapped

my ass as he fucked me. After a while, I heard him groan, felt him tense up and then he was gone.

Jack came around the back of the chair and bent down to look in my face. “Devin’s lining them up for you. Remind you of home?” He laughed and I looked away. He grabbed my hair to bring my face back to his. “Stay in position unless told to change. You’ve got a lot of cock to take, Baby.”

He was right. I don’t know how long I stayed in that position but wouldn’t have been surprised if every man in the room had fucked me by the end of the night. By the time Devin said I could go, my ass and pussy felt like they were on fire from use.

Ian led me back to my room and I collapsed onto the bed. I was asleep in seconds.

CHAPTER 10

The next morning I awoke stiff and achy. I hadn't moved since I fell into bed and it was almost one o'clock in the afternoon. If Kurt was still coming, he would be here soon, so I went into the bathroom to undress and shower. I felt gross.

The hot water massaged my skin, and I closed my eyes and sighed. The muscles in my back and legs relaxed in the heat as I washed.

When I was finished washing, I leaned my forehead against the marble wall. Tears mingled with the water on my face as I thought about the previous night. An unfamiliar emotion squeezed my heart. Shame. Shame and humiliation over what Kurt and Wilhelm had seen me do last night.

Where did that come from? When did I start feeling ashamed about anything I do? It's not as if Kurt's going to carry me away for a happily-ever-after. I was going to the ballet with him as his companion, we'd have sex, and then he'd bring me back tomorrow and go on with his life. Did it really matter what he thought about me, aside from whether or not I pleased him sexually?

I let out a long breath through pursed lips. Devin wanted me to please him, and I would do so. At least Kurt seemed kind...but he said that

he wanted to hear me do more than moan. Would he hurt me like every other man I've known? Many men appeared kind, but were really monsters when alone.

But did it matter whether or not Kurt was kind? No. Devin had told me what he wanted me to do; that was what mattered. Nothing else.

Maggie brought my lunch as I was drying my hair. "Thanks, Maggie."

She smiled. "I will bring you clothes to wear when the duke arrives."

"The duke?" *What?*

"Duke Wilhelm Kunze von Hesse. He is coming to pick you up this afternoon, correct?"

I blinked a few times. "I didn't know he was a duke."

"That is what Master told me." She smiled and then left the room.

A duke? What do I do with that? Does that mean Kurt is a duke too?

As I finished my lunch, Maggie returned with a khaki skirt and pink sweater, as well as shoes and undergarments. I dressed quickly and braided my hair, realizing it was the only hairstyle I knew.

Later that afternoon, Devin took me down to the entrance where Kurt and Wilhelm were waiting for me. I carried my shoes and followed

him through the hallways.

“You did well last night, Anna,” Devin said in a pleasant tone, though I could sense something was amiss.

“Thank you, my lord,” I replied meekly, watching his shoes as I walked a few steps behind him.

“Treat them well, Anna. Make them want more of you. If you do well, I will reward you. If you don’t...”

“Yes, my lord. I will do my best.”

“Kurt likes you, Anna. I can tell. I need to be able to know this family and you are how I will do it. Don’t fuck it up.”

He’s angry with me. “Yes, my lord.”

We arrived at the entrance where Wilhelm and Kurt waited. “Good afternoon, my lords,” I said bowing low to Wilhelm.

“You’ll bring her back tomorrow afternoon?” Devin asked as I stared at the stone beneath my nose.

“*Ja*, Devin,” Wilhelm said in his low accented voice. “We will take good care of her.”

“I have no doubt. Use her as you wish, I only ask you don’t do any permanent damage to her.”

“Of course, Devin.” Wilhelm sounded a little startled at the request.

I heard footsteps fading and then there was a large hand on the back of my head. “Anna, you may stand now,” Wilhelm said in a gentle voice from above.

I stood quickly and kept my eyes downcast.

“Are you ready, *Liebling*?” Wilhelm’s voice was high above my head. *How tall is he?*

“Yes, my lord.”

He turned and walked to the door with Kurt beside him. I stopped at the door to put my sandals on and then followed them outside, squinting in the bright sunlight. As I stepped from the last stair, I was able to see that Kurt was about Devin’s height, around six feet tall, and Wilhelm was a few inches taller than Kurt.

A black limousine waited on the graveled driveway. The uniformed chauffeur held the door open, through which I saw two bench seats facing each other, with plenty of room in between for tall men’s legs. After a moment’s hesitation, I crawled in and sat in the front-facing seat. Wilhelm and Kurt got in after me and the door closed. We drove off a moment later.

I stared at my hands, unsure of what I should do. The only people I’d interacted with for years had been Jack and his friends, and occasionally Devin. I didn’t know *these* men, but I knew men. When would they start to hurt me?

“How are you doing today, Anna?” Kurt asked, sitting across from me. His khaki cargo shorts and leather sandals allowed me to see muscular legs covered with blond hairs.

“Fine, thank you, my lord,” I said in a soft voice, staring at his knee. My palms were clammy and I subtly tried to wipe them on my skirt.

Wilhelm, sitting next to me, put his hand on mine. “Anna, you need not fear us. We will not hurt you. We are looking forward to spending time with you today and tomorrow. I hope you will enjoy yourself.”

“Thank you, my lord. I’m sure I will.” I continued to stare at my hands.

There was a moment of silence. “Anna, look at me please,” Wilhelm said.

I slowly turned to look at him, and he gave me a kind smile. “Please, call me Wilhelm. Call Kurt by his name. There is no need for formalities. We’re not in the *Schloss*. You are not a slave. You are our guest, and I want you to be able to relax and have fun.”

I bit my lip. *Is he tricking me into misbehaving so he can punish me later?* But he gave me instructions, so I took a deep breath and gave him a timid smile.

“Good girl,” he said, looking pleased. “Now, what do you like to do for fun?”

“Fun?” I looked back at my hands. Fun was not something Jack allowed me to pursue. “I don’t know...I like to read.”

Kurt chuckled. “You like to read?”

I felt my cheeks burn and nodded. Is it okay for someone like me to read?

“Like Alex,” he said with another chuckle.

Alex. “Your brother?”

Kurt looked at me and tilted his head. “How did you know?”

I blushed again. “I overheard Devin speaking of your family.”

“Oh?” Wilhelm looked curious.

I’ve said too much. Devin will be angry. I bit my lip and didn’t say anything else.

I felt Wilhelm turn contemplative for a moment and I glanced up at Kurt shyly. He gave me a bright smile and patted the seat next to him, so I moved to the seat across from where I had been.

He put his arm around me and nuzzled my ear. “I was thinking about you all night. This morning was so long.” He brought his hand up and cradled my cheek as he nibbled on my earlobe. I closed my eyes as his lips caressed the skin and then tugged the lobe with his teeth, making me gasp. He drew my earlobe between his lips and sucked on it for a moment before moving lower, trailing kisses down my neck to my collarbone.

“Are you okay from last night? Did they hurt you?”

My cheeks burned. “You saw that?” I asked, already knowing the answer. Shame clenched my heart again.

“*Ja*, Anna. We did. *Vati* was...quite upset that Devin treated you like that.” He leaned back and looked into my eyes, his hand still cradling my cheek. “As was I. Are you all right?”

I bit my lip and nodded, giving a half-smile. “I’ve been through worse.”

Kurt frowned and I closed my eyes and bent my head. *I keep saying the wrong thing.*

Wilhelm asked Kurt something in German and Kurt responded.

“I’m sorry, Kurt,” I said softly, afraid he was upset. “Jack said I lacked social refinement. I haven’t been...out much...aside from dance classes...since I was sixteen. I’m not very good around people.” I twisted my fingers in my lap. “I don’t want to embarrass you.”

“Anna, you have nothing to worry about. I do not embarrass easily. If you have questions, do not be afraid to ask. We will not laugh or think poorly of you.” Kurt stroked my cheek then lifted my face to kiss my lips. “I am going to enjoy every second with you until I have to take you back.”

I gave him a shy smile. “Is there anything I can do for you?”

He grinned. “*Ja*, but not right now.” He nuzzled my ear. “Later,” he whispered. “Later we will make each other feel very, very good.” He nipped my neck.

I shivered in anticipation.

“Have you had lunch, Anna?” Wilhelm asked and I nodded. “*Gut*. We will have dinner before we go to the Opera House.”

We drove into downtown towards a high-end department store. “Ilsa said that this store has a nice selection of dresses that would be ready to wear tonight. She said she would call ahead and let them know we were coming.”

I nodded. “Who is Ilsa?”

Wilhelm smiled. “My lovely wife,” he said with sincerity and tender eyes. “She is an expert shopper. She travels here with me frequently but was unable to come this time.” He tilted his head. “You did not bring an overnight bag.”

My eyes widened and my cheeks burned with shame. Again. I should have brought...something. I shook my head. “I don’t...really own...anything. I’m sorry.” *Will they take me back to the Manor?* Now that I was out, I had no desire to return to the Manor early. But Devin hadn’t said anything about an overnight bag. How was I supposed to have known? *I should have known...somehow.*

Wilhelm tilted his head and gave me an affectionate look. “Anna, it will be our pleasure to buy you anything you need.”

I stared at him for a moment, blinking back tears. “Thank you, Wilhelm. You’re very kind.” I didn’t understand the kindness, but I was thankful for it.

The driver pulled up to a large square building and opened the door for us. Wilhelm helped me out and the three of us walked into the huge store. A woman stood just inside the door and approached us. She introduced herself as Karen.

“It is a pleasure to meet you, Karen,” Wilhelm said, shaking her hand. “This is Anna. She is coming to the ballet with us this evening and she needs a proper dress. And an outfit for tomorrow as well as any necessary accoutrements.”

“It will be my honor to help you, Duke von Hesse,” Karen said with a friendly smile. “Come with me, please.” She led us up an escalator and to an area of the store full of beautiful formal dresses of all styles, colors and materials.

I spent the next hour and a half trying on dress after dress until Kurt and Wilhelm settled on a fitted emerald-green strapless dress made out of silk taffeta. The back of the dress laced up like a corset. I grinned at myself in the mirror, feeling like a princess again.

As we left the store, Wilhelm paused, looking thoughtful. “Kurt, I believe *Mutti* usually has her hair done before we go out while travelling, correct?”

Mutti? Vati clearly meant Dad or Father, so did *Mutti* mean mother?

Kurt thought for a moment. “*Ja*, I think she does. Or at least, she disappears for a few hours and comes back almost ready to go.” They laughed and I allowed myself a small smile. They both spoke of this woman with such respect and love it made my heart ache.

Kurt and Wilhelm made me feel comfortable around them. They were so kind and encouraging; they made me feel like a person instead of a sexual object.

Wilhelm narrowed his eyes in thought. “Let me call her.” He smiled at me. “I want you to have a good time and have everything you need for tonight. But I am not a woman and I do not know what all that entails. Excuse me a moment.” He walked a few steps away and made a phone call.

Kurt and I walked to the limo and he handed the driver my shopping bags. He leaned back against the car and pulled me against himself, kissing me and sliding his hands around my hips. “Are you having a good time, Anna?”

I smiled at him. “Yes, Kurt. I’ve never experienced anything like this.” I motioned to the store behind me. “It’s a bit overwhelming, but it was

fun.” I gave him a shy smile.

“You’ve never gone shopping before?” He looked at me with disbelief. “I thought it was a rite of passage for womanhood.”

I shrugged. “Maybe. But my parents died when I was eleven and I lived with Jack. Taking me shopping was not high on his to-do list.”

“So what did you do when you went out with your friends? According to my sisters, getting dressed is half the event of the evening.”

I shook my head. “I never went out with friends. Jack would never have allowed me to do such things.” I paused. “Jack had friends over a lot, for parties and stuff, but they were his friends and they weren’t much fun.”

“Why did he keep you so isolated?”

“Jack thought I had more important things to do than waste time with friends. He had ‘lessons’ for me.”

“Lessons?”

“To learn how to please a man.” *Should I have said that? It’s not like they don’t know what I am.*

Kurt muttered something in German. “Anna, how old are you?”

“I just turned twenty on Monday.”

Kurt stared at me in disbelief and I bit my lip nervously. Did he think I was younger? Jack always said men like younger women and that

twenty was the beginning of the end. “Did I do something to displease you, my lord?” I asked softly.

“*Nein*, Anna. What you said just...surprised me.” Kurt smiled at me. “We must celebrate your birthday tonight. Did Devin and Jack do something special for your birthday?”

I shook my head. “No, but I didn’t mind. It was one of the best days I’d had in a very long time,” I added quickly. I didn’t want him to think poorly of Devin. “I had the whole afternoon and evening and night to myself, and I read an entire book without being interrupted. It was wonderful.”

Kurt looked sad. “I am so sorry Anna. That is a horrible way to grow up. It is so...wrong. No one should be treated like that.”

“How else was I supposed to learn what I needed to learn? Jack said my purpose in life was to please men.” I gave him a tentative smile. “I think I do a pretty good job.”

“I would agree with that, Anna.” He gave me a lopsided grin. “But, you...you should not be...you are not a *Dirne*. You should not be locked up in a house waiting for men to come use you.”

“What’s a *Deernuh*?”

Kurt smiled. “A *Dirne*. A sex slave.”

“Oh.” I frowned at him. “Well, of course I am, Kurt. Why else would I be here with you? Why else would I be at the Manor?”

“I thought you were Devin’s mistress.”

I bit my lip. Maybe I shouldn’t have said...*crap*. I said too much again. Devin said that in public I was to be known as his Mistress.

I took a step away from Kurt and twisted my fingers together. “Of course I’m Devin’s mistress,” I said softly, staring at his chest.

“Anna...” Kurt reached out for me and pulled me back to him. “Anna, you are not a *Dirne*. You are not marked as a slave. I certainly do not think of you as a slave. I think your guardian is wrong.”

I looked up at him in confusion. Jack was never wrong.

“I think you are a very pretty young woman that I want to spend time with...” He kissed me gently, “...and get to know much better.” He gave me a tender look and kissed me again, this time nibbling on my lip.

“Kurt,” Wilhelm said in a low voice. “Please do not act that way on the street.”

Kurt winked at me and straightened. “I cannot help it, *Vati*.”

Wilhelm frowned at him then looked at me, smiling. “Ilsa is arranging for someone to come to Alex’s house and help you get ready. They will arrive in an hour so we need to go.”

“Alex’s house?” I asked as we got into the limo.

“We stay with Alex when *Mutti* doesn’t come,” Kurt said with a grin. “It is more fun than a hotel.”

The limo pulled away from the curb and headed north out of downtown. I sat next to Kurt and proceeded to forget about anything that wasn’t him. He pressed his lips to mine and caressed my breasts. I slid my fingers into his hair and kissed him back eagerly.

I moaned as his fingers slid under my panties, gliding his hands over the swollen folds.

“You are all wet,” Kurt said nuzzling my neck with his lips. “I want to taste you.” He slid his fingers under my panties and into my pussy. I gasped and closed my eyes as he thrust them in and out slowly several times.

“Oh, Kurt,” I whispered, grasping his hair with my fingers.

He removed his fingers and brought them to his mouth, sucking on them as he watched me. I bit my lip and he smiled. “Delicious. I think I need another taste.” He looked up out the window and wrinkled his nose. “But later. We are here.”

I looked out the window as we pulled up to an elegant, three-story white-brick house. I glanced back at Wilhelm as we exited, wondering what he’d thought of my make-out session with his son, and he gave me an amused smile.

The front door opened as we approached and an older woman wearing a black dress and white apron stood there with a smile on her face.

Wilhelm greeted her in German as we entered the house. He motioned to me. "Frau Gersten, this is Anna. She will be staying with Kurt tonight."

Frau Gersten gave me a polite smile and nodded in greeting. "*Guten Abend, Herr Kurt. Guten Abend, Fräulein.*"

We walked further into the house and my mouth gaped open as I looked around. A huge wooden staircase dominated the large mahogany-paneled foyer. Beyond the hall in one direction was a dining room paneled in dark wood with a glass-topped table. On the opposite side of the foyer was a large, brightly lit living room with three large windows facing the street.

The driver had brought up my shopping bags and given them to Frau Gersten. Wilhelm instructed her to put them in Kurt's room. Kurt grinned and squeezed my hand. "*Kommen Sie*, let me take you to my room." He pulled my hand and started leading me up the stairs.

"Kurt, the Kosmetikerin will be here in a half hour. I would recommend staying out of her," Wilhelm said, looking up at us with the same amused expression he gave me when we exited the limo. "If you see your brother, tell him I would like to speak with him."

“*Ja, Vati,*” Kurt muttered as we walked up the maroon- and gold-carpeted stairs. “Alex is probably in the media room. We’ll find him and then....” He smiled at me with that mischievous look in his eyes.

CHAPTER 11

The ceiling above the stairs was painted like the sky and there was a huge stained glass picture window ahead of me. The walls looked like they were upholstered in...*is that white silk?* We walked up another curved staircase to the third floor and walked into a room from which emerged sounds of shouting and a crash. Three men were sitting around the large room watching something on an enormous flat panel TV. They were very large men: fit, muscular, and scary-looking.

The man sitting in the leather recliner closest to the door looked like Kurt, though more powerfully built. *Is this his brother?* I stared, unable to look away.

I guessed him to be in his late-twenties. He wore dark blue jeans and his long legs were crossed at his ankles. His feet were bare and hung off the edge of the footrest. A white t-shirt stretched across muscular shoulders and chest while one arm rested behind his head, his flexed bicep distorting the fabric of the sleeve. His hair was thick and blond like Kurt's, though it was shorter and looked a little unkempt, as if he ran his fingers through it frequently. He was clean-shaven, but I could see golden stubble under his high cheekbones and on his cleft chin. His skin was flawless save for a thin

scar on the left side of his forehead near his hairline. Under thick brows, his deep-set eyes were hidden behind long blond lashes. I wondered what color they were.

He is the handsomest man I've ever seen.

The thought drew ice around my heart. I'd had that thought before: my Dream Man. *Is he...? No, it's not possible.* Dream Man wasn't a real person. He was just something my mind made up for some semblance of comfort. I tore my eyes away from him and shook my head to clear it.

"See what you missed out on by staying home last night?" Kurt said in a loud voice, putting his arm around my waist.

I heard a sharp intake of breath from the big blond man and looked back at him. Cobalt-blue eyes met mine and my breath caught in my throat. *Those eyes.* I coughed and backed away into Kurt. *It is him! The man from my dreams.* His eyes widened and his sculpted lips parted slightly, revealing even, white teeth.

"Do not let my big brother scare you." Kurt chuckled, putting his hands on my upper arms and kissing my cheek. "He will not hurt you." He wrapped his arm around my waist and pulled me against him, my back to his front. "Alex, this is Anna. Anna, this is my big brother Alex."

Alex and I hadn't broken eye contact since he'd looked up. I hadn't even blinked. He stared at me for a moment more, then blinked and looked

away.

He stood up. He was a giant of a man, just like in my dreams. He looked exactly as he had in my dream from the other night. I looked up at him as he turned to me and gave me a warm smile. “Hello, Anna. It’s wonderful to meet you.” His voice was low like his father’s, but his accent was much less pronounced. It washed over me like honey.

I blinked and moved my mouth, but no sound came out. I gave him a timid smile.

Alex glanced at his brother. “Where did you two meet?”

“At the *Schloss*. Devin introduced us.”

Alex’s eyes widened. “The Manor? She was at the Manor?”

“*Ja*, Alex. Of course. Why? Do you know her?”

Alex looked back at me, his eyes inscrutable. He frowned. “*Nein*.” The way he said it was dismissive and he turned away.

Pain stabbed my heart. *Anna, they were dreams. Of course he doesn’t know you.* I dreamed of real people occasionally, but that didn’t mean that they knew me. I stared at the ground and rubbed my hands together. The nerves were tingling terribly.

“She is coming with us tonight,” Kurt said, leaning down and kissing my cheek.

Alex wheeled around and said something in German. Kurt answered in kind and they continued talking in German.

“Hello, Anna. I’m Seth.” The other two men walked over to where I stood, watching Kurt and Alex talk. Alex looked upset. Seth took my hand to pull me away from Kurt and Alex. I looked back at the brothers. “Don’t worry about them. They’ll be a while.”

Seth, who sounded surprisingly American, smiled at me when I looked back at him. His chocolate-brown puppy-dog eyes and boyish aura, especially his smile, made him look kind, despite being as tall as Kurt. His medium brown hair was cut very short.

I smiled timidly “Hello, Seth,” I said in a soft voice.

“And this is Tony.” Tony was not as tall as the other two, but much broader. His closely-shaved black hair and dark eyes made him look Italian. The mischievous glint in his eyes reminded me of Kurt.

“Hi, Tony,” I said, nodding in greeting.

Tony sat on the edge of the couch and gave me a seductive smile. “I didn’t think Devin let his girls out of the Manor. Has he changed his policies? It’d make it a helluva lot easier on us if he did,” he added with a laugh. He sounded American like Seth. “Wouldn’t have to face the bastard every time we wanted some company.”

I looked at the two men and took in a shuddering breath. I was in a houseful of men with sexual appetites. Very large sexual appetites, if I read them correctly. I trembled under their gaze.

“She’s not a *Dirne*.”

I spun around to see Alex frowning at me. He stood with his arms across his broad chest, his chin held high and his eyes cool. He and his father were very similar; his mere presence demanded respect.

“You should go get ready for tonight,” he said in a sharp voice and I swallowed back unwanted tears. He gave a look to the men standing behind me as I quickly exited the room with Kurt.

I followed Kurt down the hall to a bedroom. A king-sized bed with a navy blue duvet dominated the room. Tall windows allowed in the golden light from the setting sun. A dark wooden wardrobe stood partially open next to the fireplace where I could see Frau Gersten had hung my clothes.

Kurt kissed the back of my neck as he closed the bedroom door behind him with his foot. “I am going to make love to you in that bed tonight.” He brought his hands around to my stomach and up to cup my breasts and caress them. “It was a very big, empty bed last night. I am glad it will not be so tonight.”

I leaned my head back on his shoulder and sighed as he played with my breasts, pushing out any distressing thoughts of his brother. He nipped the side of my neck and I inhaled sharply. I pressed my hips back against his and could feel his erection against my ass. I turned and kissed him, sliding my hands down his chest to his cock. I stroked him over his shorts and he groaned something in German.

“May I please you, my lord?” I whispered, pressing my hand hard against him.

“*Mein Gott*, Anna. You are a very tempting woman.” He kissed me and pushed me backwards, edging me towards the bed. The backs of my knees hit the mattress and I fell backwards with Kurt on top of me.

I smiled and kissed his neck, running my hands through his hair. I sucked on his collarbone and stroked his cock again. “I want to taste you, Kurt.”

He groaned against my neck. “I wish we had time, *Engel*, but the woman to help you get ready will be here in a little bit.” He nuzzled my neck. “And I need to take a shower.” He lifted himself off me and sat up, grinning at me. “I am so glad you are here with me, Anna. I have had a very good time with you today.” He stroked my cheek and looked at me tenderly. “I wish....” He shook his head. “I am going to go shower. The remote is on the nightstand if you want to watch something.” He kissed me again and

went through a door in the corner of the room, which I could see led to a bathroom.

I stood and walked over to the window. The buildings of downtown San Francisco were not that far away. *What a beautiful view.* Jack lived only a few miles away. Although I knew this view well, it seemed different today. Not so...out of reach. After all, I was going downtown tonight to see a ballet performance! I clapped my hands with glee.

Not only had Jack forbidden me from performing after my parents died, I couldn't attend any performances either. I heard about them from my childhood best friend, Jenna, when we were able to have hushed conversations in the bathroom at the studio, but that was as close as I got. She was in the corps of the San Francisco Ballet Company. Maybe I'd see her dance tonight. *Oh, wouldn't it be wonderful to see her dance!*

Jenna Tompkins had been my best friend for as long as I could remember. My mother had gone to school with her dad, Luke, and Jack. We took the same dance classes and went to school together. My parents would drop me off at her house on school mornings and her parents would take us to school and to the dance studio after.

My parents had been principals with the San Francisco Ballet Company before they died. When they had performances, Jack and Luke would take Jenna and I to the opera house to watch. Jenna and I would

sneak backstage sometimes before the performances to see the “big dancers.” Normally students weren’t allowed back there, but we could get away with it because of my parents.

After my parents died, Jack wouldn’t let me see Jenna, or any of my friends anymore, so Jenna and I had to sneak conversations in the studio bathroom when I was there. Not seeing her made my parents’ death even harder on me; I lost them both from that car accident. I saw Luke on a regular basis, though, when he came to Jack’s house during my training. I hope Luke never told Jenna what I did.

Maybe if I’m allowed to go out, and take more classes, maybe Jenna and I can be real friends again. Maybe she could help me learn to be a normal person again. I could ask Devin if she could help me with “social refinement.” She always knew how to behave in social situations.

A knock on the door interrupted my thoughts. The water was still running in the bathroom so I answered the door. Wilhelm smiled at me and introduced me to a short, thin woman with fashionably styled red hair.

“Anna, this is Tiffany McCombs,” Wilhelm said. “Ilsa spoke to her and made all the arrangements.” He turned to Tiffany. “Will this room suffice? There are other rooms in the house that are available.”

Tiffany looked around and smiled cheerfully. “This will be wonderful, Duke von Hesse. There is good light in here. That’s what I need

to work well.” She gave him a megawatt smile then looked at me. “It looks like I have a good canvas to work with, too. That’s half the battle.” She stepped into the room. “I will return her to you looking like a princess.”

He looked at me, warmth in his eyes. “She already does.” He nodded and left.

“I’ll let Kurt know you’re here,” I said as Tiffany walked into the room. I walked into the bathroom where Kurt was turning the water off. The shower door was clear glass and I could see him in all his masculine glory. *Oh, my....*

He grinned as I stared at him. “I would ask you to join me....”

I smiled. “I wanted to let you know that the lady who’s helping me get ready, Tiffany, she’s here.”

He nodded. “*Danke*. I will make sure I am covered before I go out there.”

I looked at him one last time then walked back into the bedroom.

“Boyfriend?” Tiffany asked as she was pulling things out of her bag.

“Huh? Oh...um...something like that,” I mumbled.

She looked at me with an amused expression. “Well, now. Let me take a look at you.” She had me turn around several times and I showed her my dress. “Oh, what a wonderful color for you. You have excellent taste.”

“Oh, I didn’t really pick it out.... Wilhelm and Kurt know more about this sort of thing than I do.”

Kurt walked out of the bathroom at that moment with a navy blue towel wrapped low around his hips. “*Guten Abend*...Tiffany, correct?” Kurt said with a smile.

Tiffany nodded, wide eyed, and then shook her head as if clearing it. “Tiffany McCombs.” She regained her professional demeanor and extended her hand. “You must be Kurt?”

He nodded and shook her hand. “*Ja*. I will get my clothes and dress downstairs to give you ladies space.”

Tiffany and I both watched as he walked over to the wardrobe, removed a dark suit, and left the room. Our eyes met as she turned around and we both giggled.

“Damn! You’re a lucky girl,” she said with a grin. “You two will make quite the couple tonight.”

“He’s very handsome,” I agreed.

I glanced at myself in the mirror one last time before heading downstairs to find Kurt. Tiffany had made me look like a grown-up princess and I felt like one too.

I made my way downstairs and saw Kurt and Wilhelm sitting by the fireplace in the foyer. They stood when they saw me coming down the last few steps.

Both men looked extremely handsome in their tuxedos. Kurt murmured something German to Wilhelm. I think it was a good thing, because they both smiled at me. I smiled back shyly.

Kurt hurried over to me and put his hands on my upper arms. “You look absolutely beautiful, Anna.” He kissed me gently on the lips. “You may distract me from watching the performance.”

“Thank you, Kurt,” I said softly.

Wilhelm kissed me on the cheek. “You really do look beautiful, Anna.”

“I have something for you.” Kurt held out a velvet box containing a diamond and emerald necklace with matching earrings.

“Oh, Kurt,” I exclaimed. “They’re beautiful!”

He gave me a seductive smile and I tried not to melt. He nodded towards my neck. “Can you take that one off?”

I reached up to feel the necklace around my neck. I’d forgotten about it. My mark. “I was told I wasn’t allowed to.” I looked at the necklace he held wistfully. “I’m sorry, Kurt.”

Kurt walked around behind me and examined the clasp of the necklace. “*Vati?* Can you remove it?”

I felt Wilhelm play with the clasp for a moment. “Devin gave this to you, correct?”

“Yes.”

Wilhelm disappeared and returned a few minutes later with a pair of wire cutters. “This will break the clasp, but I will tell Devin I did it. You should be able to remove your necklace, Anna. You should be able to wear other ones when the time is appropriate.”

I heard a click and the necklace came loose. I caught it and Wilhelm took it from me. “I will speak to Devin about it tomorrow.”

I smiled weakly and nodded. Would Devin be angry with me for letting Wilhelm remove it?

Kurt fastened diamond necklace around my neck and then handed me the earrings, one at a time. “*Wunderschön,*” he said when I finished.

“Shall we?” Wilhelm asked. “Alex will meet us at the restaurant.”

Kurt muttered something in German, but offered me his arm and we walked together out the door and into the limo. I sat next to Kurt, as I had earlier, and watched the buildings pass by. He put his arm around me and stroked the skin on my neck as I leaned my head against his shoulder.

“Anna’s twentieth birthday was Monday, *Vati*,” Kurt said as we drove through the city.

“Was it really?” Wilhelm said. Emotion flickered in his eyes, but quickly replaced it with a smile. “Congratulations, Anna. What did you do to celebrate?”

I looked at him, twisting my hands together. “Nothing really. Jack took me to the Manor. I had a nice quiet evening to myself. It was nice.”

Wilhelm frowned. “Jack didn’t do anything special for you?”

I shook my head. “I haven’t celebrated my birthday in a few years.” Since I turned sixteen, I added silently to myself. I turned away and blinked back tears, remembering how Jack turned from my loving guardian into a monster.

I could feel Wilhelm looking at me, and when I felt in control of my emotions, I glanced at him. He studied me silently for a few minutes. It felt like he was trying to read my mind through my eyes. I had a feeling I shouldn’t look away.

“It is truly heartbreaking to hear that, Anna.” He gave me a sympathetic smile. “I propose that we consider tonight your birthday celebration. How does that sound?”

“Thank you, Wilhelm, but that’s not necessary. It’s not really a big deal.”

“I would consider the day of your birth to be worth celebrating.”

Wilhelm smiled at me with affection. “I am sure Kurt agrees with me.”

Kurt nodded in agreement.

Why? They hardly know me. Why all this fuss over me? I’m just a sex slave. But Devin wanted me here with them and I needed to stay in their good graces. “Thank you, Wilhelm. That’s very kind of you.”

I leaned my head back on Kurt’s shoulder and looked back out the window. Kurt intertwined his fingers with mine and kissed them.

After a while, I began to catch glimpses of water and shortly thereafter, the limo stopped in front of a dark gray building.

Kurt held my hand as we walked inside. I stood just inside the dimly-lit restaurant for a moment, looking around and absorbing the ambiance. Elegant figures dined at tables covered in white tablecloths and my nose was seduced by delicious smells.

Wilhelm had walked forward to greet Alex, who waited near the hostess’ podium. Alex greeted Kurt as we approached, then turned to me.

Our eyes met and my breath caught in my throat. He was also dressed in a tuxedo, his tall frame enveloped in black woolen sophistication.

Somehow, in the last few hours, I’d forgotten how handsome he was. His blue eyes sparkled as he looked at me. I could sense...something from him. *Adoration? Affection?* I couldn’t put a name to it but it was

intense, though I didn't understand why. My knees threatened to wobble and I shifted on my feet to prevent myself from falling.

Alex leaned down to kiss me on the cheek. His lips were hot against my skin. I wouldn't have been surprised if he'd left a burn mark where he touched me. "You look stunning, Anna," he whispered, his breath tickling my ear.

I felt myself melting into a puddle of goo.

A female voice called his name and he pulled away from me so quickly I felt the cold air rush back in between us. He cleared his throat and turned.

A tall, thin, red-haired woman stood behind him, eyes narrowed as she glanced between us. She looked like a model in her pale-blue satin gown. She arched her brow at me then back at Alex with her bottom lip stuck out in a pout. "I couldn't see you when I came out of the restroom. I thought you'd left."

Alex walked over to her and kissed her on the lips. "I wouldn't do that to you, Kirsty." She smiled up at him and took his hand, then looked back at and me with an arrogant smile.

I felt like I'd been punched in the stomach. I blinked a couple of times and stared at the ground. Kurt tucked his arm around my waist and I leaned against him.

Why should I be surprised or disappointed that a handsome man like Alex was with a woman? Just because I dreamed about him didn't make me anything special to him. He didn't know me. He didn't know that I'd dreamed about him when I felt especially afraid. Or that the memory of his eyes comforted me when.... I shook my head. *Enough, Anna. Get a grip.*

"Anna, this is my girlfriend, Kirsty Hawthorne." He was smiling, but it didn't seem completely sincere. He appeared...uncomfortable? Why would he be uncomfortable with his girlfriend? "Kirsty, this is Anna, Kurt's date."

I forced a smile on my face. "It's nice to meet you, Kirsty."

"It's nice to meet you as well, Anna," she replied. She wrapped her arm around Alex's waist and leaned her head on his chest, smirking slightly at me, and then turned to give Kurt a seductive smile. "Nice to see you again, Kurt."

"Hello, Kirsty," Kurt said without emotion. He squeezed me closer to him. "Are you alright, Anna?" he asked softly.

I nodded. I am here for Kurt's pleasure.

I stood on my tiptoes as if to say something into his ear. I didn't say anything but I breathed into his ear and ever-so-slightly licked his earlobe. He jumped and let out a little moan.

He turned me towards him and embraced me, lowering his head to mine. He whispered in my ear in a low seductive voice, “Be careful, or I will drag you into the bathroom and make love to you on the floor.” He nipped my earlobe and I jumped. His hand slid down to my hip and pressed me towards him. I could feel his hard cock against my stomach. My nipples tingled under my dress and I sighed.

The hostess called Alex’s name and Kurt pulled away, but only slightly. I glanced up at Alex and saw that his jaw was clenched as he looked at us. Kurt nibbled my neck for a second and then guided me through the restaurant behind Alex and Kirsty. Wilhelm walked behind us.

We sat around a large round table. I sat in between Kurt and Wilhelm and Kirsty sat between Kurt and Alex.

The hostess handed me a menu and I stared at it for a moment. I hadn’t eaten in a restaurant since before my parents died. I opened it and sighed, feeling out of place. It was full of things I’d never heard of.

“What’s wrong, *Engel*?” Kurt asked quietly.

I didn’t want to be a bother, but I didn’t want to embarrass him, either, by ordering something I shouldn’t. “I don’t know what to do. I don’t remember the last time I was in a restaurant.”

“Do not be ashamed, Anna. I will help you out with ordering.” He explained the different sections of the menu and then helped me make a

decision. “Do you want me to order for you?”

“Is that okay?”

“Yes, it is actually very courteous for a man to order for his date.”

He grinned at me. “It would be my pleasure.”

I smiled. “Thank you, Kurt. I would appreciate it.”

The waiter came and took our order. He returned a few minutes later with a bottle of wine. After letting Wilhelm sample it, the waiter began pouring the wine into everyone’s wine glasses.

He began mine and I quickly stopped him. “No, thank you.” The entire table looked at me and I felt my cheeks burn. “I’m sorry,” I said softly. “I’m only twenty.”

Everyone smiled except Kirsty.

“I am sorry, Anna,” Wilhelm said. “I had forgotten. In Germany the drinking age is sixteen.” He smiled warmly at me. “What would you like to drink?”

I glanced at Kurt, not sure what to do. He asked what I usually drank. “Water. I had some iced tea yesterday. It was good.”

Kurt smiled and squeezed my knee. “She’ll have iced tea.”

Kirsty raised her eyebrow, looking at me strangely.

The others conversed easily around me as we waited for dinner. Kurt kept his arm around me, kissing me frequently. I learned that Kirsty

was indeed a model and traveled a great deal. She was leaving tonight to go to Australia for two weeks.

Dinner arrived and everyone concentrated on eating. I'd decided on the salmon. It practically melted in my mouth and I sighed after my first bite.

"Like it?" Kurt asked. "You look post-orgasmic."

"This is heavenly." I took another bite. "I've never had such good food."

"Don't get out much, Anna?" Kirsty asked in a sarcastic tone.

"No." I suddenly felt stupid. I was surrounded by sophisticated people. *I am not sophisticated.* Kirsty shook her head and gave me a look filled with contempt.

Kurt leaned over and nibbled on my ear. "Do not worry about her, *Engel*. She is a *Miststück*...a bitch. I do not see what Alex sees in her...except in bed. And even there I am not convinced."

I looked at him, confused. "You're not convinced?" I repeated.

He grinned. "*Ja*. We have shared her."

"Shared her? Did she want that?"

He grinned at me with that mischievous look I was becoming familiar with. "You have not been shared before?"

“Yes.” I kept my face impassive. I’d been shared by many men. It was not pleasant. “Do you dislike her that much?” It was obvious that Kurt disliked Kirsty, but enough to hurt her? Would he hurt me later?

“What?”

“Why would she want that?” Was she tricked into it?

“I can show you sometime if you would like.” He gave me a seductive smile.

I swallowed and blinked several times. He wanted to hurt me? “I...” *I am here to please Kurt.* I took a deep breath. “If that would please you,” I said softly, clasping my hands in my lap and looking down at them.

“I imagine you would like it.” He trailed his finger down my neck.

I shivered, not entirely with pleasure.

Just then, a piece of cake with a single candle in it was placed in front of me. I looked around the table in surprise. No one else had one.

“What is this?” I looked at Kurt.

He grinned and kissed me. “Happy Birthday, Anna.”

Wilhelm leaned over and kissed me on the cheek. “Happy Birthday, *Liebling.*”

Why...?

I looked at Wilhelm and then Kurt. Nothing in their eyes indicated anything but sincerity of affection for me. Even Alex smiled warmly at me.

I took a deep breath to calm myself. Maybe they were a different type of men?

I looked back at the elegant chocolate dessert with the white candle burning brightly in the center. *I remember how this goes.* I smiled slightly and blew out the candle.

They applauded and I blushed. I offered to share my dessert, but they declined. Well, Kurt took a few sensual bites off my fork.

When I'd finished my dessert, we left the restaurant and rode in the limo to the Opera House. Alex and Kirsty followed in what I supposed was Alex's silver sports car.

CHAPTER 12

As the limo pulled up to the enormous arched- and columned-opera house, butterflies filled my stomach. I sighed and looked out the window at the brightly-lit building. Long buried memories of dancing floated to the surface.

The last time I'd been was here was my last ballet performance. It had been the ballet school's spring performance, just after I turned twelve. I had danced the first act of *Giselle* with one of the graduating students and then Jack dragged me away immediately after I finished performing. He never let me go to another performance.

Kurt helped me from the limo and we walked up the steps to one of the five arched doorways and inside to my favorite place to be as a child.

I released a breath I didn't realize I was holding as we entered the vast lobby. It was just as I remembered it. The tall Corinthian columns still towered over me, making me feel just as small as they had when I was eleven. The carved golden flowers in the arched ceiling still made me smile.

I smiled as I remembered Jenna and I, as young children, snaking our way through the crowd, pretending we were in the jungle eluding capture from some giant monster. Other times, we would weave our way

through the people, seeing how far across we could make it without touching anyone. Jack would chide us to behave, but never told on us to our parents. Sometimes he had even played the role of the safe tower we were running to.

I blinked back tears. Once upon a time, I had considered Jack my champion. My hero. I bent my head and closed my eyes as pain stabbed my heart.

After I regained my composure, I looked around at all the sights of the lobby as I stood next to Kurt. A bronze statue between two of the columns caught my eye. My hand slipped out of Kurt's and I slowly walked towards it, half-afraid. I recognized that pose. Those faces.

I walked closer to see the bronze, life-sized sculpture of my parents: my mother in *arabesque*, my father posed behind her, hand on her waist.

I looked up into the faces of my parents; they were so beautiful. Pictures hung on the wall behind them of some of their many performances together. A plaque announced their names, their accomplishments, and a brief story of their death. I stood there for an eternity, gazing into the faces of people who no longer existed.

My back became pleasantly warm as someone walked up behind me. "Beautiful, isn't it?" Alex. His voice was low and gentle. "I've heard amazing stories about them. I wish I had been here to see them dance."

Loneliness stung my heart as I stared up at my mother's face.

Beloved and long gone.

“Anna, are you...why are you crying?” Alex turned me around by my shoulders. He looked at me, looked at the statue, then back at me. His face paled slightly. “Anna, you look...”

“Those were my parents,” I said, turning back to the statue. “They died when I was eleven.” I wiped a tear away. “I'd forgotten this was here. I've never seen it.” My voice had dropped into a whisper. Jenna had told me about it.

“As I understand it, it was put in on the first anniversary of their death.” He paused. “Didn't your guardian bring you to the ceremony?”

“No.” I looked up at him. “How did you know when it was put in?”

“I'm on the Board of Trustees.”

“You are?”

He nodded staring at the statue. “For some reason I've always had an interest in Ballet. A good friend of mine back in Frankfurt was a principal dancer there. My best friend here is a principal.” He looked at me. “You look exactly like your mother.”

“Thank you.” I looked back at the statue wistfully. “I loved watching them dance.”

Alex opened his mouth, as if to say something, but Kirsty walked up to us and he closed, and took a step back away from me.

“Hey, sexy,” she said, kissing him fully on the mouth.

He stiffened, but returned the kiss.

I turned away and walked back to where Wilhelm and Kurt were talking. Kurt put his arm around my waist and kissed me.

“Are you having a good time?” Wilhelm asked me.

I nodded, pushing aside the nostalgia that the statue had stirred up inside me. “Yes, this has been a wonderful day. The best I can remember in a really long time.”

“*Gut*. I’m glad.”

Alex and Kirsty walked up to us. “Shall we go in?” Alex asked.

Kurt held my hand as we followed the others to the end of the lobby and up a marble staircase.

“*Vati*, we will follow in a moment,” Kurt said. He pulled me through a pair of doors that led to another set of stairs, though it wasn’t as nice as the steps we’d just climbed.

He pulled me into his arms and kissed me. “No one uses these stairs,” he murmured against my mouth. I kissed him back, parting my lips for his tongue to slip through. He thrust sensually in and out of my mouth,

making me think of sucking his cock the night before. I moaned and pressed my body to his. I felt him hard against my stomach.

“Have you been hard this whole time?” I asked and nipped his bottom lip.

I felt him smile. “Mmm. Mostly. All day, anticipating tonight.”

He trailed kisses down my neck and to the tops of my breasts. I leaned my head back and moaned again. He pulled at the top of my dress, exposing my breast to the cool air. I gasped as he took a nipple into his mouth and sucked.

“If your dress was not so long I would push you up against the wall and fuck you right here.”

I could feel my body respond with dampness between my legs. “I’d like that,” I said hoarsely.

“Are you wet for me, *Engel*?” he whispered.

“*Ja*,” I replied, trying out some German.

He groaned into my breast. “I like you speaking German.” He sucked my nipple again, biting gently.

“Oh, Kurt,” I moaned. I could feel my pussy swelling, ready to take him inside me. He pushed me against the wall and began pulling up my skirt. *Oh God. He’s going to fuck me right here.* “Oh, please,” I moaned again.

Suddenly, the door beside us opened. Kurt leaned forward, sheltering me partially from the door, and we both looked over to see Alex standing in the doorway, frowning. "It's about to start."

"Do not look at me that way, *Brüderlein*." Kurt glared at him. "You have used this area, too."

Alex growled something in German.

Kurt looked a little startled and helped me fix my dress. He kissed my cheek and winked. "We will continue later."

Alex snapped something else in German and Kurt dragged me out of the stairwell. I gave Alex an apologetic look as we passed him. He shook his head and frowned as he closed the door behind us. Kurt led me to one of the center boxes and into the first row of seats next to Wilhelm. Kirsty was sitting in the row behind and Alex sat next to her.

I looked around, enraptured. The gigantic, round chandelier that hung in the middle of the sky-blue ceiling had always reminded me of the sun. The carvings around the stage were the same gilded horses and warriors that Jenna and I had made up stories about when we were younger and waiting for the performance to begin.

The lights faded, the music began, and the golden curtain went up, transporting me into the story. The dancers were beautiful. The music was beautiful. I felt alive for the first time in years. There was no one here but

me. My heart danced alongside Princess Aurora and the fairies. I felt my body straining to be free. Free to dance. Free to fly.

Too quickly, the first act ended. The curtain slowly closed and the music faded away. The lights came back up and I blinked, trying to gather my senses.

“Intermission, *Engel*.” A voice and the sensation of someone touching my arm invaded my hazy thoughts. I looked to my left and blinked, the face slowly coming into focus. Kurt was staring at me with an amused expression on his face. “Are you back on Earth, *Engel*?”

I blushed and nodded.

He held out his hand and we stood. “You enjoyed that, *ja*?”

“I did,” I said softly. My heart was dancing in the clouds. “It was amazing.”

Kurt smiled. “Let us get something to drink.” I followed him into the mezzanine where drinks were available. Wilhelm was sipping a glass of wine and talking with a couple near the stairs.

We walked by Alex surrounded by a small group of women, including Kirsty. He gave them all a brilliant smile and said something, and they all giggled. Alex seemed very at ease around the opposite sex. Something told me he had charmed countless women over the years.

Kurt handed me a glass of iced tea and got a glass of wine for himself. One of the women standing with Alex glanced over and waved at Kurt. He smiled and raised his glass in greeting.

“Do you want to go over there, Kurt? I don’t mind.” I didn’t want to keep him from socializing.

“*Nein*, Anna. It would be unwise to leave you alone. Someone might steal you away.” He grinned and took a sip of wine. “I am glad you are enjoying yourself. Devin said that you danced when you were younger?”

I nodded looked at the floor nervously. “Yes. I mean, I still do. I take a couple classes a week, but nothing like I used to.”

“Jack let you take dance classes? Interesting.”

I nodded. “But he wouldn’t let me perform. I was just thankful he didn’t completely cut me off from dancing.” I gave him a half smile.

“Devin told me that he’d let me take more classes during the week and, if I was good enough, start performing again.”

“Are you any good?” he asked teasingly.

I blushed. “I used to be. My parents are-” I stopped before I said they were the statues downstairs. “My parents both danced and were very good. People used to say I danced like them.”

“They danced professionally?”

I nodded.

“Where?”

“Here.” I motioned in the general direction of the stage. “They were principals here...before they died.”

Kurt nodded thoughtfully.

“Excuse me, Miss.” A man in a blue and gold uniform approached me. “Are you Anna Perkins?”

I took a nervous step back and nodded slowly.

He handed me a folded piece of paper, gave a little bow, turned, and left.

I glanced at Kurt, then frowned down at the paper before slowly opening it. Who could have possibly sent me a note?

Anna!

I saw you sitting in Alex’s box. You’re out in public!

Without Jack!

Come backstage after the performance! Please!!!! I miss you!!!!

Love, Jenna.

“Who is Jenna?” Kurt asked.

I folded the note and pressed it to my lips. “My best friend. She’s a dancer here. We’ve not spent more than a few minutes together here and there since my parents died. I haven’t talked to her in a few months...” I

trailed off. We only were able to talk when we happened to meet somewhere in the studio. Usually the bathroom because I didn't have to worry about being seen. Jack's spies were everywhere. But Jack didn't own me anymore; at least that's how I understood it. Devin owned me.

“Do you want to go see her after the show?”

“Oh, Kurt. No. I don't want to inconvenience you-”

“Nonsense, Anna. If she has taken the time to write you that note with all those exclamation points...” He laughed. “You should see her while we are here.”

I looked up at him and smiled gratefully. “I would like to see her.”

“I will ask Alex if he can help us get back there after the performance. He knows the mazes back there. I have been back a few times...” He shrugged, mischief in his eyes again.

“I used to know my way around back there, but it might have changed.” I smiled at the memories. “Thank you, Kurt. You're wonderful.” I leaned up and kissed him.

We finished our drinks and the lights flickered. Wilhelm walked with us as we made our way back to our seats. He and Kurt were talking about something but I stopped paying attention once I walked back into the theater. I was lost in the beauty of it again, happy memories filling my heart like they hadn't in years.

“Alex,” Kurt said, sitting in his seat and turning to his brother. “Can you help Anna and I get backstage after the show? A friend of hers sent her a note asking her to see her afterwards. I do not remember how to get back there.”

Alex looked at me and smiled warmly. “Of course. I’d love to.”

“Alex, I have to get to the airport after the show.” Kirsty pouted at him.

Alex frowned at her. “This will only take a few minutes. I’ll make sure you’re not late.”

She narrowed her eyes at me and then looked away as the lights dimmed.

I gave Alex a grateful smile. “Thank you.”

I tried to contain myself as the music began anew and the lights dimmed, but within a few minutes, I was soaring in rapture yet again.

Prince Désiré walked out on stage and I leaned forward in my seat and stared. *He looks so familiar...* I quickly opened my program to see the name of the dancer. *Aaron Schroeder*. I knew him. I danced with him in my last performance. Once he got over the fact that he was dancing with an eleven-year-old at his graduation performance, he was kind to me. I liked him a lot.

“What is wrong?” Kurt whispered in my ear.

“I know him. The prince.”

Kurt cocked his brow with amusement in his eyes. “Really?”

I nodded and looked back at the stage with affection. Aaron had always been an amazing dancer. Eight years of maturity had made him even better. As he danced, I could almost imagine being on stage with him again. I sat with my chin in my hands and watched him dance with his partner, enraptured by his grace and amazing agility. *Lucky Princess Aurora*.

When the performance was over, I clapped as hard as I could and stood with the rest of the audience when Aaron came out. It was a wonderful performance.

CHAPTER 13

While we waited for the theater to clear a bit, Kurt stood behind me and wrapped his arms around my waist. He swept my hair over my shoulder and nuzzled my ear. “Oh, Anna, I cannot wait to take you home and make love to you,” he whispered.

I smiled and tilted my head. He nibbled the back of my neck and I let out a little sigh while pressing my hips into his. I could feel his erection against my rear.

He groaned and pressed back. “That is what you do to me, *Engel*.”

I giggled.

“*Mein Gott*, Kurt. Can’t you keep your hands off her for one second?” Alex stood with his hands on his hips frowning at his brother.

“Why should I?”

Alex growled.

“I think he might be jealous,” Kurt said in a loud whisper.

Alex snapped something in German. Kurt did likewise. I looked at Wilhelm, afraid, as they began to argue. They kept their voices soft, but very intense. Their words were harsh in their native language.

“Alex! Kurt!” Wilhelm exclaimed softly.

The two brothers instantly stopped arguing, but continued to glare at each other.

“Just because few people understand you, does not give you the right to act that way in public,” Wilhelm whispered sharply. “*Mein Gott*, are you children again?” He shook his head in disbelief. “I apologize, Anna and Kirsty. I do not know what has gotten into my sons tonight.”

Alex cleared his throat and lifted his chin. “Shall we make our way backstage?”

We used the staircase Kurt and I had kissed in to go down to the lower level of the opera house. Kurt winked at me as we walked by the spot where he'd pushed me against the wall. I blushed. As we walked down a long, dimly-lit hallway, Alex and Kirsty were talking in soft voices, though it sounded like they were arguing. A door at the end of the hallway opened up into another hallway, this one brightly lit. *The dressing rooms.*

I squinted as we walked, trying to adjust my eyes to the light. I still couldn't see when I heard someone squeal my name right before I was trapped in a tight embrace that knocked me back a step. I stood there, frozen, not knowing what was going on. I deducted that the person hugging me was female, but other than that, I had no idea.

She leaned back and looked at me. “That’s no way to greet your best friend,” she chided.

“Jenna?” I hardly recognized her in her stage makeup. Her dark blond hair was pulled back into a tight bun and her blue eyes sparkled with excitement.

“Of course, silly.” She nodded excitedly. “I’m so glad to see you!” She hugged me again. I hugged her back timidly. “What are you doing here? Jack let you out? What are you doing with Alex’s family?”

“Oh, um. I met Kurt last night....”

She grinned at me. “Nice going, Anna.”

I blushed.

“So, how come you’re here? Why did Jack let you out?”

“Oh, I...I don’t live with him anymore.”

“He let you move out?”

“Kinda...more like he had me move out.” She gave me a strange look. “It just happened this week. I don’t really understand what’s going on. But I’m staying with Kurt tonight. I’m sure I’ll understand more later.”

She grimaced. “You always have weird things going on, Anna.”

“But I might be able to dance more,” I added with a smile, trying to change the subject. “Maybe even perform again...if I’m good enough. Maybe with the school.”

“Oh, Anna. That would be great. It was such a shame Jack cut your dancing back. I never understood why he did it.” She hugged me again.

“So, can we be real friends again? Like, talk and stuff?”

I looked at her sadly. “I don’t know. I don’t know what’s going on. I think I might be able to see you more....”

I heard a man laughing nearby. “Heh. I should have known the whispers were about you, Alex. Oh, and Kurt too. Why am I not surprised? Hello, Wilhelm.”

I turned and saw a tall man walk behind me and greet Alex with a handshake. He had light brown hair and was wearing only a pair of navy blue sweat pants. His back was all lean muscle and perfectly defined. Definitely a dancer.

Kurt saw me looking at the newly arrived man and grinned. “Aaron, I think you have a fan.” He nodded in my direction. “She said she knew you.”

Aaron?

Aaron turned. He stared with his denim-blue eyes for a moment, head tilted. “Is that my little Giselle?”

He remembers me? He always called me his little Giselle after he accepted me as his partner. I nodded and bit my lip.

He walked over and stopped in front of me, tipping my head up with his hand. "It is you! All grown up." He grinned. "You grew up good, Anna," he said in a softer voice, affection filling his eyes.

I backed away, knowing I needed to be focusing on Kurt, not Aaron. But Aaron's touch...did something to me.

Alex cleared his throat and walked over to us. "You know her, Aaron?"

Aaron laughed, his blue eyes sparkling. "I do. The partner I didn't want." He put his arm casually around my shoulders and looked at Alex who grimaced. Aaron rolled his eyes and grinned at Alex. "I got stuck dancing with her for my graduation performance."

Jenna grinned at me; Alex looked confused.

"She walked in with Delia and I was told that I was dancing with a twelve-year-old. I flat-out refused. Until I danced with her. Then it turned out it wasn't so bad." Aaron looked back at me. "I'd love to dance *Giselle* with you again."

Kurt took my hand and pulled me away, laughing. "You really were telling me the truth when you said you were a good dancer."

I shrugged. "It was a long time ago."

"You're still good, Anna," Jenna said. "I've watched you in your classes." She looked at Aaron. "She said she was gonna take more classes

again.”

“Maybe,” I corrected. “I don’t know anything for sure.” Though Devin said he’d make the call. I smiled. “I’m hoping to.”

Aaron looked at me and grinned. “Anytime you want to practice partnering, Anna. I’m available.”

I blushed. “I think he likes you,” Kurt whispered in my ear, which made me blush even more and shake my head.

“Don’t listen to anything he says, Anna,” Aaron laughed. “He’s full of shit.”

“Alex, I need to get to the airport,” Kirsty said loudly with her arms crossed and a pout on her face.

Alex looked at his watch and nodded. He looked at everyone. “I’m sorry, Kirsty is right and I promised her I would get her there in time. I will see you all later.”

Kirsty gave brilliant smiles to all the men, glared at me, and ignored Jenna. Alex gave a slight bow and the two of them turned and walked away.

“Bitch,” Jenna muttered under her breath after they were gone.

The men laughed. “I told you, Anna,” Kurt said.

“Anna, I have to get going,” Jenna said. “Give me your number and I’ll call you on Monday so we can get together.”

I stared at her. “I don’t have a phone number.”

She frowned at me, looking hurt. “Okay, I’ll give you my number.” She found a pen and wrote a number on my program. “Call me. If you want.” She hugged me and gave me a sad smile. “I really want to spend time with you, Anna. I miss you.” She turned quickly and walked away.

I watched her leave and swallowed back tears. I didn’t want to hurt her, but I had no idea what was going on past tomorrow afternoon.

“She’s just worried about you, Anna,” Aaron said. “She has been for years.”

I looked back at Aaron. “How do you know?”

“Our mutual concern about you kinda bonded us together. She’s the little sister I never had.” He smiled. “You pretty much disappeared after your parents died and she couldn’t talk to you about it, so she came to me. We’ve been friends since.” He grimaced. “I still don’t understand why you pulled back from dancing.”

I bit my lip. “It’s a long story.”

He studied me for a while then sighed. “Listen, if you are ‘back from beyond’ and allowed to socialize again, I’m having a party next Sunday night to celebrate the end of *Sleeping Beauty*. I’d love for you to come if you can.”

I glanced at Kurt. He was my only reason for being out of the Manor. “Oh, Aaron, thank you. But I don’t know if-”

Kurt smiled at me. “I will be gone by then. We are leaving that morning to go back to Germany. You should go.”

The thought of Kurt leaving made my heart ache, but I smiled at him anyways then looked back at Aaron. “I’ll see what’s going on. My life is rather...confusing right now. I’ll see.” I had no idea if Devin would let me to go a party thrown by an old dance partner. I had a feeling he would say no.

Aaron smiled and wrote his number on the program. “I live out in Lake Street. I can pick you up if you need a ride. Call me.” He kissed my cheek and I closed my eyes at his touch. “It’s really good to see you, Anna. I gotta run. I’ll see ya later, I hope.” He shook hands with Wilhelm and Kurt then disappeared into a dressing room after giving me one last smile.

I looked at Wilhelm and Kurt and gave them an apologetic look. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know it would take so long.”

Wilhelm smiled. “Not a problem Anna. It was not that long. And I am glad you were able to see some old friends.”

We took the limo back to Alex’s house. When we arrived, Kurt said goodnight to his father and took me directly upstairs. I glanced back at Wilhelm as we went up the stairs. He chuckled and walked into the living room.

As soon as the door closed, Kurt swung me around and kissed me hard. “It has been a long day,” he murmured against my lips. “A very good day, but long.”

He looked at me with tender eyes and ran his thumb across my cheekbone gently. “I am so happy that Devin brought you over to me and that you are here with me, Anna.” He leaned down and kissed me softly. He caressed my cheek with his fingers and then trailed them down my neck and across my collarbone.

I tugged at his bowtie until it loosened and then Kurt watched as I unbuttoned his coat and pushed it off his shoulders. “Where would you like me to put this?”

“Just throw it to the side. It will get cleaned up later.”

I unbuttoned his vest and dropped it on top of his jacket. I pushed the straps of his suspenders off his shoulders, then moved my hands expertly down the buttons on his shirt, unfastening the cuffs at his wrists. I ran my hands up through his chest hair and over his muscular shoulders, but didn't push his shirt off yet.

I smiled as I trailed my fingers down his chest and over his nipples. They tightened as I ran my fingers in circles around them. “You are a very handsome man, Kurt,” I said, leaning forward and licking his left nipple. He

groaned and put his hands on my hips. I smiled and sucked gently, and he groaned again.

“Would you like me to undress?” I asked softly, looking up into his eyes.

“*Ja*,” he said in a husky voice.

I kicked my shoes to the side. “Would you help me?” I asked as I turned away from him, pulling my hair over my shoulder and exposing the ties to my dress.

He pulled at the ties of my dress, quickly loosening them. He unzipped the short zipper and I turned back to him before letting my dress gracefully slide to the ground.

I watched as his eyes slowly took me in, starting at my face and moving down to my toes, a smile growing steadily on his face. “I like your stockings,” he said with a seductive smile. “Perhaps we should leave them on.”

“Whatever you would like, Kurt,” I said softly. This was my element; this is where I knew how to act. Everything I did tonight would be about him. His kindness towards me had made me forget my purpose: to please him. I’d been selfish today and would make sure to treat him extra well tonight.

He smiled again and shook his head. “*Nein*. I want to see you fully undressed. I did not have that pleasure last night.”

I nodded and slowly unfastened my stockings and rolled them off, one at a time. I unfastened my corset, not taking my eyes away from his face. His breath hitched as I let it fall to the floor. I hooked my thumbs in the thin straps of my thong, pulled it down, and stepped out of it.

I stood before him naked. I wasn't nervous; I'd never had a man complain about my body before. I did hope I was pleasing him, though. He had been so kind to me; I wanted him to be happy. He looked at me approvingly and grinned. “*Bezaubernd*.” he said. “Beautiful.”

I smiled and pulled him to sit on the bed while I knelt to remove his shoes and socks. I sat up onto my knees and worked at his pants while I looked up into his face. His eyes were stormy with desire. I blinked and inhaled sharply at the intensity of his gaze. He wanted me, badly. He leaned back a little and I unbuttoned his pants, caressing his hard cock over the soft cotton of his boxers.

He smiled and lifted his hips so I could pull his pants and underwear off, and he sat gloriously naked in front of me. I leaned forward and took his throbbing cock into my mouth, deep and down my throat immediately, to make up for not being able to the night before. It burned a little, but I could handle this amount of discomfort.

He jumped slightly and I smiled to myself as he moaned loudly and caressed my hair. I pulled back to get a breath then swallowed again. He mumbled in German and tightened his grip on my hair, but allowed me to control the movements. I sucked and licked and swallowed as I sensed he wanted.

I could feel that he was getting close to climax but he pulled at my hair, pulling my mouth off him. I looked up, startled. “Did I do something to displease you, Kurt?”

He shook his head. “*Nein*, Anna. That was...incredible. You have a fantastic mouth.” He trailed his fingers over my swollen lips then pulled me up to him. “I want more than your mouth, though,” he growled, pulling me into the middle of the bed. He lay on top of me and kissed me hard, his tongue exploring my mouth. I moaned, losing myself in his kiss.

The back of his index finger ran from my ear down my neck to my shoulder. It tickled and I shivered. He pulled away from my mouth and looked at me questioningly. “Tickles,” I said.

He smiled and leaned down to trail his tongue across the same path. I shivered again, feeling my whole body respond to him. His tongue left a hot trail down to my breasts. He paused there and kissed each nipple gently.

I squeezed my thighs together and felt my clit tighten. Moisture rushed to the area. I was tender from the previous night’s rape, but I could

handle it. I would not let him know I was hurting. He deserved better.

Kurt stroked the side of my left breast gently with his thumb and then cupped it with his big hand. His thumb swept across my nipple, back and forth, teasing it and making me squirm. He leaned down and took it into his mouth, sucking gently.

My head rolled back as his tongue swirled round and round. He dragged his tongue from the bottom of my breast up to the nipple from different angles. He repeated the treatment on my other breast; first with his thumb, then his tongue.

He didn't use his teeth at all; just his tongue and his gentle fingers. He shifted his body and his cock slid against my thigh as he moved.

He kissed the valley between my breasts and began moving down. My clit throbbed and ached for his touch. I could feel myself getting wet and swelling. I spread my thighs apart and flexed my hips. The tip of his cock brushed my outer lips and we both groaned. I edged my body down, wanting more. The tip pressed against my clit and we both moaned. I rotated my hips and his tip ran up and down the length of my outer lips, slowly spreading the wet folds apart.

“I want you, Anna,” he growled. “I want to bury myself deep inside your body and make you scream.”

Fear gripped my heart until I looked at him and realized he meant to make me scream from pleasure and not pain. He grinned and adjusted his body. He pulled my knees up and spread my legs further apart. Leaning forward on one arm, he used his other hand to rub himself over my wet folds. My breath caught in my throat at the sensation. He pushed forward and paused, bringing his body down to touch mine. The look in his eyes when he leaned down to kiss me warmed my heart.

I concentrated on the good sensations, rather than the pain, as he pressed into me slowly. The feeling of him entering my body made me gasp for breath. My body opened to him as he continued to press forward, slowly and gently, bending to nuzzle my neck.

I opened my legs wider as he moved forward. I wanted all of him. I could feel every inch of his cock moving inside me, his veins caressing my inner lips as he went in. I moaned deeply as the crest of his cock slid by an especially sensitive spot. He stopped, backed out a little ways and pressed forward again.

“Oh, yes,” I whispered.

He continued the short thrusts and I felt myself getting dizzy, the pressure building inside me again. He rotated his hips upward and the sensation intensified.

Over and over he thrust until I felt myself rocketing into the stars. My muscles clenched around him and I heard him murmur something in German. I whimpered and clung to his body, his lips pressed against my neck.

I slipped slowly back to earth. He paused at the peak of my climax, letting the pressure alone send me along. Slowly, I felt myself slipping back to earth.

“I like hearing you cry out in pleasure, Anna.”

He thrust gently the rest of the way in and I gasped, tears of pleasure filling my eyes. I squeezed his cock with my muscles and he let out a low moan.

He looked down into my face and I leaned up to kiss him, sucking on his bottom lip. He pulled out of me and thrust gently back in, making me let go abruptly and inhale sharply. He moved back and forth in a steady rhythm and, as I met his thrusts, waves of pleasure rolled throughout my body again. His balls slapped against my ass with every thrust.

“Oh, Anna,” Kurt groaned into my ear. “You feel so good. So tight. I want to stay inside you forever.” He wrapped his arms around my body and I held him tightly. I could feel his heart pounding in his chest.

We moved together in a beautiful dance, his cock filling me with every thrust. I felt him begin to tense up as pressure built up in my body yet

again. His thrusts intensified and I groaned.

“Oh God!” I exclaimed as an incredible wave of pleasure shot through my body.

Kurt cried out in German and I felt his cock throb, adding to my own pleasure. I stiffened, pressing my head back into the pillow and screamed out his name. My back arched, and I pressed my body against his while digging my fingernails into his back. My legs wrapped around his hips tightly, wanting him deeper inside. I clung to him as I soared through the stars. I flew for what seemed like ages and then descended back to earth and into Kurt’s arms.

“Oh, Kurt, I’m so sorry,” I exclaimed fearfully, pulling my fingernails out of his back. I did that to Jack sometimes, on accident, and he always got upset with me. I didn’t mean to, it just happened.

Kurt looked at me wide-eyed and said something in German.

“I don’t understand what you said, Kurt.” Was he furious?

Kurt gave me an apologetic smile. “I am sorry, Engle. I said I did not even feel your nails until you said something.”

“You’re not angry?” *Why not?*

“Why would I be angry, *Engel*? I consider that a compliment.”

I stared at him for a long moment. Why wasn’t he angry with me? I didn’t understand.

I gave him a timid smile, not totally believing he was telling me the truth, and he rolled off me and I moved so he could pull the duvet back. He lay down and I scooted to the other side of the bed to give him space to sleep. He gave me a strange look before reaching out and pulling me close, wrapping his arms around me and hugging me close. I stiffened, not understanding what he was doing.

“Did I please you, Kurt?” I asked softly, wanting to give him personal space.

He took my hand, placed it on his chest and pressed my head against his chest. “*Ja, Engel.* Very much so.” He nuzzled my hair. “Did you enjoy yourself?”

Cuddling? He wanted to cuddle? Okay, I can probably do that. I took a deep breath and tried to relax. “I don’t think I’ve ever enjoyed sex so much.” I looked up at him and smiled.

He frowned but didn’t say anything. He kissed my forehead and stroked my upper arm slowly.

I stared at the wall beyond him. Would he want something else? Why did he frown? Had I displeased him somehow?

“Anna, relax,” he whispered, hugging me again. A few minutes later I heard him snoring softly.

My eyes fluttered closed and I slept deeply.

CHAPTER 14

I felt someone playing with my hair. It felt good and I smiled. *I must be dreaming.*

“Guten Morgen, Engel.”

I wasn't dreaming. I opened my eyes to see the golden, morning sunlight streaming in through the windows of the bedroom. Kurt was lying on his side, his hand on the bed near my chest and playing with my hair. He smiled.

“Good morning, Kurt.” I smiled back.

“How did you sleep?”

“Good, thank you. You?”

“I always sleep well with a beautiful woman next to me.” He grinned, eyes sparkling with mischief. “I don't sleep well at home.”

I giggled. I was pretty sure he was joking about not sleeping well at home.

He pulled me close and kissed me, his hands roaming over my body. I reached for his cock and stroked it.

He moaned. “Oh, Anna. That feels so good.” He buried his face in my neck.

He brought his hand down to my pussy and slid a finger inside. “Wet already?” He wrapped his arms around me and rolled me onto my back, his body hovering above mine. “You felt so incredible last night.”

I parted my legs and his cock slid against me. I smiled and reached my hand down to position him at my entrance.

Kurt grinned and slowly pushed inside me, his hot cock filling me. “You feel so good, *Engel*,” he groaned. He began moving in and out and I quickly matched his rhythm. Our bodies rocked together, pleasure engulfing my senses. His neck muscles bulged and he exclaimed something that sounded like a curse as I felt him pulse inside me. A moment later, pleasure swept through my body and I cried out his name.

I opened my eyes. He shuddered slightly and then looked down and smiled at me. “I love morning sex.” He rested his weight on his elbows and panted.

His smile was infectious and I grinned back. This was by far the best morning sex I’d ever had.

He kissed my neck and rolled off me, pulling me against his side. I rested my head against his shoulder, my fingers playing with his chest hair. I liked cuddling after sex. It was...heart lifting.

Kurt sighed deeply. “I could stay here with you forever,” he murmured. He breathed as if he were going to say something else, but

didn't speak.

"Are you okay, Kurt?" I could feel that something was bothering him. Had I done something to upset him?

"*Ja*. Just...reality."

"Did I do something?"

"*Nein, Engel*." He stroked my hair. "You are *wunderbar*."

We lay there cuddling in a peaceful silence for a long while. I liked the feeling of his arm around me and the beat of his heart against my ear. Kurt was thoughtful, so I stayed quiet, careful not to interrupt him.

After a while, we got out of bed to shower and dress for the day. I knew I had to go back to the Manor that afternoon and the thought saddened me: I'd much rather stay here with Kurt. But he was going back to Germany in a week and he surely had better things to do in San Francisco than spend his time with me. Devin had changed and was nice now; maybe things really would be better overall. Kurt said he visited his brother often. Maybe he'd come see me when he came back, too.

"What are you thinking about, *Engel*?" Kurt asked interrupting my thoughts.

I glanced up at him. I still had my sandal in my hand that I'd picked up a few minutes before. I bent down to put it on. "I was thinking about

what a nice time I had yesterday.” I bit my lip. “How often do you visit here?” I asked slowly.

He beamed at me. “I think I will have to visit more often than I used to.” He kissed me. “I would like to see you often, if you would like that.”

My heart leapt at the possibility. “I would.” Would Devin allow such a thing?

He pulled me to my feet. “Let’s go have lunch.”

“Lunch?” I looked at the clock. It was almost noon. “I didn’t realize we slept in that late.”

The afternoon went too quickly and before I knew it, it was time to take me back to the Manor.

“What are you doing on Tuesday evening?” Kurt asked me as the limo pulled up in front of the Manor.

“I have ballet class,” I answered. “Why?”

He grinned. “I wanted to see you again. What about Wednesday?”

“I would have to ask Devin. I don’t know if he has plans for me.”

“Would you like to come over to Alex’s and have dinner with us?”

I glanced at Wilhelm, who smiled.

“We enjoyed having you with us last night,” he said. “We would like to see you again.”

I looked back at Kurt and smiled. "I'd like to, but I don't know if Devin would approve."

"I will speak to him," Wilhelm said with a determined look on his face.

"I'd like that," I said shyly.

"I would as well," Kurt said, kissing me deeply. "Or else, I will have to come visit you."

Devin wasn't at the Manor when we arrived. I said good-bye to Kurt and Wilhelm, and Ian led me back to my room.

"Did you have a good time?" he asked when we'd arrived at my room.

I was surprised at his interest, and then realized he probably wanted information to share with Devin.

"I did. I think Kurt was happy."

Ian nodded, face inscrutable. "Devin will be pleased," he said, closing the door behind him and leaving me alone in my room.

CHAPTER 15

Devin came by Monday morning to give me a cell phone and ask how things went with Kurt. He didn't stay long, because he had to get to work, but I was glad he'd stopped by.

Wednesday morning I awoke to Devin's ring from my phone. I reached for my phone and pressed the screen.

"Hello, Devin," I said sleepily. I'd stayed up late the previous night reading a Sherlock Holmes mystery.

"Did I wake you?"

"Yeah."

"Staying up late with all the men in the Manor?" Devin asked with a laugh.

"What? No, I was reading."

Devin chuckled. "You and your books, Anna."

I bit my lip, uncertain if he was unhappy or not. "I really appreciate all of them in my room, Devin. Thank you."

"My pleasure, Baby. That's why I put them there." The affection in his voice was becoming more familiar and less disconcerting. "I was wondering if you'd like to come to lunch with me today."

“Lunch?”

“Yes. Ian will bring you to my office and we’ll go to a nice restaurant.”

“Your office?” Devin wanted me to visit him at work? Jack never invited me to his work.

“Since that’s where I am, it would be most convenient for me.”

“I would love to have lunch with you.”

I could almost hear him smile. “Good. Ian will drop you off a little before noon, alright?”

“Yes, Devin.” I was going to have lunch with Devin!

Maggie came in a little while later and helped me get ready. I put on a blue sheath dress and stockings with matching lingerie. She also showed me how to put on makeup and how to do my hair. I asked her how she knew how to do all these things and she told me that Devin had her learn it so she could help me.

Ian dropped me off in front of the tall building where Devin worked. I stared up at it for a moment before walking through the glass doors.

After stopping at the security desk, I rode the elevator up to the 30th floor and stepped out into a large, wood-paneled room. A blonde woman

was seated behind a large wooden desk. She looked at me suspiciously.

“May I help you?”

“I’m here to see Devin,” I said softly. “Um...Devin Andersen.” I gave her a nervous smile.

She frowned at me. “And you are?”

“Anna Perkins.” My voice was shaky. I wasn’t used to being out in public. I was beginning to think it was better to stay at the Manor. People were intimidating.

She arched her brow and looked me up and down then nodded. “Sit over there. I’ll let him know you’re here.” She motioned to a row of brown leather chairs along one wall.

I sat down with a straight back and clasped hands on my knees. A moment later, a dark wooden door opened across the room. Devin stood in the doorway looking incredibly handsome in a dark suit and powder-blue tie.

He looked at me and smiled. “Hello, Baby. You look wonderful.” He crossed the room and kissed me chastely on the cheek. “Come in to my office. We’ll go in a few minutes. I just have to finish something up.” He took my hand and led me into his office, closing the door.

His office was large, with a wall of windows that overlooked the financial district of San Francisco. The furniture was dark wood, ornately

carved and heavy looking. In the corner was a round table with had several chairs sitting around it.

Devin pulled me into his arms and kissed me, his tongue demanding entry into my mouth. His hand slid down to my hips and over my rear. I wrapped my arms around his neck as he tangled his hands in my hair and pressed my mouth firmly to his. I could hardly breathe, his passion was so consuming.

“God, I’ve missed you,” he murmured against my mouth a few minutes later as he pulled away.

I looked up at him, smiling shyly. My lips were swollen and I could feel my nipples tight under my dress.

He smiled down at me and traced my cheek with his finger. “You look beautiful, Anna. All grown up.”

I beamed.

He took my hand off his shoulder and slid it down his body to his cock, hard under his suit. “See what you do to me?” he said hoarsely. I rubbed him over his pants and he closed his eyes. “Mmm. That feels good,” he murmured.

He kissed me and pushed me backwards until my thighs hit the table and then turned me around, pressing my chest onto the hard surface. He

pulled my dress up over my hips. “I like the stockings, Anna. Always wear stockings, never pantyhose.”

“Yes, Devin,” I said. He caressed my ass cheeks and I felt dampness between my legs. His fingers slid under the straps of my thong and down between my cheeks. I moaned as he caressed my anus before sliding lower, dipping a finger inside my wet folds.

He groaned. “So wet, Baby.”

He thrust a finger in and out of me several times. I moaned with each thrust and arched my back so he could go in deeper.

I heard a zipper being undone and then hot, hard skin was at the entrance of my pussy.

“Please, Devin,” I whispered pressing backwards. He obliged and pressed into me, groaning softly. I moaned as his piercings hit all the right spots. “Oh, Devin,” I sighed.

He chuckled. “You feel amazing, Anna.” He leaned down and kissed the back of my neck, moving gently in and out. He pressed against my back, pushing me down on the table and began thrusting harder, almost to the point of pain. My hips banged against the table, but all I could register was the intense pleasure of his cock inside of me, rubbing all the good spots with those little silver balls. I hadn’t had sex since Sunday morning and this felt so good!

I moaned loudly as he pounded me hard, almost lifting me off my feet with each thrust. I felt the tingling of the beginnings of an orgasm. “Devin...” I groaned.

“Come quietly, Anna. My secretary doesn’t need to hear you.”

I pressed my hands to my mouth as the orgasm overtook me. I bit my lip and groaned as quietly as I could. Devin stiffened behind me and he cursed softly as he released himself into me.

Devin leaned over me, elbows on the table. I lay with my cheek on the table, panting. His chest heaved against my back.

I smiled as he nuzzled my neck. *My beloved Devin*. “You smell good,” he murmured nipping my neck. Then suddenly he stood up, pulling himself out of me. He spun me around and pulled at the neckline of my dress. “Where’s your necklace?”

I reached up to my neck, fearfully trying to remember what necklace he was talking about. “My...necklace...?” I asked, confused.

He zipped up his pants and leaned close, speaking with clenched teeth. “The diamond necklace you were given last week. You were not to take it off. Where. Is. It?”

I blinked, remembering, and spoke quickly. “I...Wilhelm cut it off. Kurt wanted me to wear a different necklace to the ballet.” I winced and braced for the blow. His hand was already halfway up in the air.

He paused. "Wilhelm has it?" He looked surprised.

"Yes, Devin," I whispered, trembling at his anger. The last thing on earth I wanted to do was make Devin angry.

Devin spun around and went to his desk. He picked up his cell phone and made a call. "Wilhelm...Anna said you have her necklace.... Yes...I see...." His face softened as he spoke with Wilhelm. I relaxed. Slightly. "No, that's fine...yes, that makes sense. I hadn't thought about that. I would have had that issue as well.... No, I'll have her pick it up.... Yes...alright...yes, see you Friday." He put the phone back on the desk.

I grasped the table behind me, afraid to move. I watched Devin as he sat for a moment and looked at me.

"I'm sorry, Devin," I blurted out. "I-"

He held up his hand. "It's alright, Baby. Wilhelm told me what happened. It makes sense. You do need to be able to remove it. When I take you out I want you to wear beautiful jewelry as well." He walked over to me and hugged me. I nearly cried in relief at his abated anger. "After we have lunch I want you to go pick up the necklace and take it to the jeweler to have the clasp fixed. I'll give you the name and address."

"I'm seeing Wilhelm tonight," I reminded Devin.

He frowned. "I don't want you to forget. Pick it up on the way back to the Manor. But you can get it fixed tomorrow."

I winced at his irritation. “Yes, Devin.”

“I will leave the clasp unlocked, but you must wear it at all times, unless you are wearing another necklace for a special occasion. When you get home after such an occasion, you will put it back on before you go to sleep. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Devin.” I looked at him hesitantly, but all signs of anger were gone. “May I ask you a question?”

“Of course, Baby.” He pulled my skirt back down over my hips. I’d forgotten it was still pushed up.

“Is there a significance to the diamonds?”

He smiled as he studied me. “You are a very observant girl. Yes, there is significance. Diamonds mean you’re special.” He stroked my cheek. “Diamonds mean that you belong to me and only others of my status are allowed access to you without express permission.”

“Your status?” I frowned, confused.

“An Elder. The diamonds offer you an element of protection, unless you disobey me. Then nothing will protect you.”

I swallowed at the lump in my throat. His eyes were cold. “I was punished on Friday, wasn’t I?” I whispered, realization hitting me square in the chest.

He nodded. "Yes. That was mild, Anna. You know that. But I understood that it was your first time at a Gathering. If you are very bad, I will put you in the Red Room."

I sucked in a deep breath. "No, Devin. Please don't." I backed into the table and grasped it. "Please..."

"As long as you obey me, Anna, you have nothing to worry about. I just want you to know that just because you wear diamonds, does not give you the right to disobey me."

"I don't want to disobey you," I whispered. "I never have."

He smiled kindly at me. "I know, Baby. I don't anticipate it ever being an issue."

I gave him a nervous smile.

"One thing, Anna. You must keep your phone with you at all times and answer all my calls. If you do not answer, I will consider it an act of willful disobedience. If I know you are in the middle of something, such as a dance class, I will be more lenient. But I expect you to call me back immediately after you are done with the activity. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Devin."

"I would suggest you making my ring distinctive so you will know it's me. Do you know how to do that?"

I shook my head. "I'll ask Ian."

“Good girl.” He smiled. “Now, shall we go have lunch?”

I nodded, now afraid that I was going to be punished for forgetting about my necklace. Devin looked down with compassion in his eyes and kissed me gently, his lips caressing mine. He took my hands and put them on his shoulders, then wrapped his arms around my waist. His kiss deepened and I found myself relaxing into his arms.

“Just do your best, Anna,” he said softly. “I know you. I’ll know if you’re trying or not.”

“Yes, Devin.”

He kissed me once more, and then straightened. “Let’s go. I have reservations.”

Devin held the door to this office open for me and I walked through quickly. “Madison, I’m going to lunch,” he said to his secretary.

I saw her look at me and her eyes narrowed slightly. She was in her early thirties, attractive, with stylish blond hair and hazel eyes. She was very sophisticated looking. Much more so than me.

Devin and I walked to the elevators and he pushed the call button. He put his hand on my hip and rubbed his thumb up and down, stoking the fire of desire deep in my belly once again.

We walked to a steakhouse around the corner from Devin's office. People treated him with immense respect. While we were waiting for our table, Devin spoke quietly with a man standing next to us. He didn't introduce me.

"I don't remember your daughters being this old, Devin," the man said with a chuckle.

Devin smiled and put his arm around me. "She's not my daughter."

The other man raised his brow and glanced at me. "Is this...?"

Devin nodded. "She looks just as good dressed, doesn't she?" he said in a low voice.

I looked up at the man. He didn't look familiar, but from their conversation, I had to assume that he'd been at the Manor on Friday. I could feel his arousal radiating from him and I scooted closer to Devin, hoping he wouldn't give me away to him. Devin tightened his arm around me.

The hostess called Devin's name and we were led to a table near the window.

"Should I have known that man?" I asked softly after the waiter left.

Devin chuckled and opened his menu. "Not yet, no. Although he got to know you a bit on Friday."

My eyes widened. "Oh!" I blushed.

Devin looked amused.

The rest of lunch was very enjoyable. Devin asked me lots of questions about Wilhelm and Alex. I didn't have a lot of answers but I did the best I could. He especially seemed interested in Alex.

Ian parked on the street in front of Alex's house and butterflies flew into my stomach. I didn't understand why I was nervous. I was just here to get my necklace. I walked up to the door and rang the doorbell. Frau Gersten answered the door. I smiled at her and she nodded politely and told me that Wilhelm was in the living room.

"Thank you," I said, and walked into the well-lit room. Wilhelm sat by the fireplace reading a book. He looked up and gave me a bright smile when he saw me.

"Hello, Anna. It is good to see you." He placed a bookmark on the page and closed the book as he stood. He hugged me and kissed my forehead. "How are you doing?"

"I'm good. You?"

He smiled. "Enjoying a quiet afternoon. Your necklace is up in my room. I was going to get it before you arrived, but..." He shrugged sheepishly and lifted up the book in his hand. "I got lost in the book. I will go get it."

I smiled. "Thank you, Wilhelm."

While I waited, I walked to the windows and gazed out at the city skyline. He returned a few minutes later and handed me the necklace.

“Was Devin very angry with you?” Wilhelm asked.

“He started to get angry, but stopped when I told him you had it.”

Wilhelm looked thoughtful. “I am truly sorry Anna. I had forgotten to call him. If he had hurt you because of me....” He shook his head. “I never could have forgiven myself.”

“I’m fine. We had a very nice lunch. He’s so different from how he used to be. I mean, he’s like he was before he changed.” I laughed at myself. “I’ve known him since I was little. I adored him then. He was so affectionate and loving towards me. Then he changed....” I shuddered at the memories, but then smiled again. “But he’s back to how he used to be.”

Wilhelm’s face was inscrutable, though his jaw seemed a little tense as he nodded. “I am glad he is treating you well, Anna.”

I looked at the necklace in my hand. “I should get going. Ian’s waiting for me. Thank you for holding on to it. I’d forgotten all about it.”

“My pleasure, Anna. If you need anything, please let me know.”

I hugged him. I liked Wilhelm. He was so kind and thoughtful and treated me like a person. I decided I liked being treated like a person.

“Thank you, Wilhelm. I will.”

I looked up at him, suddenly reluctant to leave. His embrace was comforting.

I slowly leaned my head on his chest, hoping he wouldn't push me away. He didn't, instead wrapping his arms tighter around me.

Wilhelm is an Elder. Like Devin.

I turned in his arms so I could see his right hand. He wore a large oval ring on his pinky with a standing, double-tailed lion holding a sword. The lion had a crown on its head. Diamonds were inset around the edge of the ring. "Is this your Elder ring?"

His arms were still around my waist and I leaned back against him. "Ja. Why?"

"I've only ever seen Devin's. He...said something about men of a similar status." I traced the edge of the ring and felt Wilhelm shiver. I smiled at his reaction. "He meant you, right?"

"I would qualify as someone of a similar status, *ja*. But having the same title does not necessarily mean the same type of man."

Wilhelm spoke softly and twisted his fingers around a lock of hair that had fallen across my shoulders. He caressed it slowly with his thumb and I took in a shaky breath. His hand moved to the nape of my neck and he smoothed his fingers down the length of my hair, brushing my breast as he passed by. My heart pounded so hard I felt dizzy. He repeated the

movement, seeming to brush my breast deliberately as his hand moved down my hair.

I turned and looked up at him, wide-eyed. I hadn't considered the possibility he'd thought of me that way. *He's a man, Anna. Of course he has.* He leaned down and brushed his lips against mine, his mustache tickling my upper lip. Tingles ran through my body as I kissed him back. He brought his hand behind my head and ran his fingers through my hair.

“Anna...”

His lips moved to the side of my neck and I sighed into him. He sucked on the tender skin there and I moaned softly as my body reacted to his touch. He brought his hand to my breast and cupped it, his thumb playing with my nipple.

“Wilhelm,” I said breathlessly, clinging to his upper arms and rising to my tiptoes to kiss him again.

I heard footsteps in the entry hall and Wilhelm pulled away quickly. I stood there, staring at his chest, dazed at what had just happened.

Someone called out in German and stopped suddenly. I turned to see Alex in the entryway of the living room. His eyes were wide as he looked at Wilhelm and myself. I looked into his cobalt-blue eyes and they looked...*hurt? How is that possible? Why is he looking at me like that?*

Suddenly it was hot in the room. I needed air. I looked back at Wilhelm for permission to leave. He nodded and I walked quickly past Alex and out the front door. I ran to the car and collapsed in the back seat, trembling.

“Did you get your necklace?” Ian asked.

I nodded, trying to understand the emotions flying through my body. They made no sense. *Why do I care what Alex thinks? Why does it seem that Alex cares about me? He doesn't know who I am. He doesn't know that I've dreamed about him. There's nothing special about me.*

I looked at the necklace in my hand. Maybe there *is* something special about me, but to Devin, not to Alex. *But why does Alex look at me the way he does?* I shook my head to rid it of this nonsense and stared out the window as Ian drove back to the Manor.

CHAPTER 16

That evening Wilhelm and Kurt picked me up and they took me to a very nice restaurant near the bay. I didn't ask why we didn't go to Alex's house. I wasn't sure if I wanted to know.

Wilhelm was the perfect gentleman, not even giving a hint that anything had happened earlier that afternoon. Kurt was cheery and flirtatious, his normal disposition.

After dinner, we went back to Alex's house. Alex was nowhere to be seen, and Kurt and I went upstairs to watch a movie in the media room. Seth and Tony, whom I had met on Saturday, were there and invited us in. I wondered why they were there.

"You seemed to enjoy the ballet the other night, Anna," Seth said, giving me a bright smile.

I looked at him, not understanding. "How did you...?"

Seth grinned. "Tony and I were at the opera house with you guys. I enjoyed watching you enjoying yourself. Tony too."

I glanced at Tony and Kurt who were on the other side of the long L-shaped couch.

"I didn't see you there," I told Seth.

“Then I did my job right.” He chuckled. “If you’d seen me, something was wrong.”

I frowned at him. “I don’t understand.”

“You could say we’re Alex’s...bodyguards.”

“Bodyguards?” I thought about Alex. He seemed like he was perfectly capable of taking care of himself. He was bigger than either Seth or Tony and as tall as his father, but broader. I looked back at Seth who just smiled at me and went back to watching the movie.

I frowned and looked at the TV. Why would Alex need bodyguards? Was it because he’s the son of a duke? But then why wouldn’t Kurt have one? Or even more so, Wilhelm?

We were watching some sort of action movie that was reasonably interesting and I curled up next to Kurt. He kept running his fingers up and down the side of my neck and I had a hard time concentrating on the movie. I ran my hand down his chest and over his cock, which was hard. I smiled and stroked him over his khakis. He groaned softly.

“May I please you, Kurt?” I asked softly, running my thumb from base to tip. I looked up at him and gave him a smile.

He gave me a sensual smile and nodded. I lifted his shirt and pulled at his belt. It came loose and I unfastened his pants quickly. I licked my lips, wanting to taste him. When his cock sprung free, I smiled and lay

down on my side. I stretched out my legs on the couch and took him into my mouth.

I wrapped my hand around his shaft and ran my tongue around the slit. He put his hand on my head and groaned as I moved my head up and down, loving the taste of his skin. My tongue lapped the pre-cum that had escaped and I moaned in pleasure.

I felt a hand on my calf and jumped but Kurt didn't seem concerned so I continued to stroke and suck on his cock.

The hand slid up to my thigh. I moaned softly as it moved under my dress and caressed my hip, then my ass. My panties were pulled off and I continued to stroke and suck Kurt, praying that whoever was touching me wouldn't hurt me. It was difficult to concentrate as the hand moved back up my thigh and gently pulled my legs apart. Fingers trailed up to my dampening pussy.

I moaned as the fingers glided over my outer lips. The blood rushed down to the sensitive folds of skin as I was spread open. I groaned on Kurt's cock loudly. One of my legs was lifted up and I felt a hot mouth on my pussy, kissing and licking me.

"Mmph!" I cried as the person's tongue delved inside me. My grip tightened on Kurt and he groaned too.

"You like that, *Engel*?" Kurt asked.

“Mmm,” I mumbled and nodded.

“*Gut.*” He petted my hair. “I want to hear you enjoy yourself, Anna. Can you do that for me?” He pulled at my hair lifted me off him.

I looked up at him to see him smiling down at me. He turned me so I was on my back and pulled my dress over my head. As I freed my head from my dress, I looked down to see the top of Tony’s head between my legs. Kurt unfastened my bra and tossed it on the ground.

“Oh, God,” I cried out as Kurt caressed my breasts and Tony devoured me. His tongue flicked my clit and I moaned. He sucked hard and I found myself already teetering on the edge of an orgasm. He sucked a few moments more and I arched my back and cried out as I came. Tony looked at me with mischievous dark eyes as I relaxed against Kurt.

I moaned in bliss and then looked up at Kurt, who was cradling me against his chest. “I wanted to make you come,” I protested weakly.

He grinned. “Do not worry, you will. But I thought you might enjoy an appetizer first.”

I bit my lip and looked between the two men. Why were they doing this to me? I didn’t understand why they were being nice. But, on the other hand, it felt incredible. I gave a shy smile to Tony as he traced my swollen pussy with his finger and looked at me.

“You are delicious, Anna. I might have to have seconds.” He stuck his tongue out and licked me and I jumped. “And thirds.” He licked me again.

I smiled lazily at him and he grinned back. I glanced over at Seth and saw him watching us, rubbing his cock over his jeans. Three men to take care of. And they were nice men. I didn't mind this at all.

“You want to see what it's like to be shared, Anna?” Kurt asked, pushing me up and off the couch. “Get on your knees on the pillow,” he whispered, tossing a pillow on the floor.

I obeyed immediately and bit my lip, not knowing what to expect. I looked up at Kurt, frightened. Sharing was never pleasant at Jack's house.

Kurt knelt in front of me and kissed me passionately. He had taken off his shirt and I ran my hands up over his bare shoulders. Someone wrapped their arms around my waist from behind and moved up to my breasts. They kissed my neck as Kurt pulled on my nipples.

“Mmm,” I groaned against Kurt's mouth. This is much better than anything that happened at Jack's.

I stroked Kurt's cock as I kissed him and he groaned. I reached behind me and felt a hard cock under jeans. I tugged at the button and zipper and pulled him free.

“Fuck, you’re good, Anna,” the man behind me said. Tony. I glanced behind me to give him a smile.

This was my element: pleasing men. This was the one “social” place where I knew exactly what to do. I just hoped they wouldn’t hurt me.

“How may I please you, Kurt?” I asked, kissing his neck and stroking his cock up and down.

He moaned and smiled seductively at me. “I want to share you with Tony,” he murmured. He looked behind me and nodded, then sat back on his heels to watch.

I forced myself to stay still as Tony put his hand gently on my shoulder. Something hot and hard pressed between my ass cheeks. Tony’s cock. I stiffened and I squeezed my eyes shut and arched my back in preparation.

Tony moved his hand to my hip and kissed my shoulder. “Anna, relax. This shouldn’t hurt.”

Yeah right.

I swallowed and took a deep breath as he pressed forward slowly. He’d used lube; I could tell by how easily he slipped into me. He slid his other hand to my breast and I felt a pleasing fullness pass through my asshole. I gasped and opened my eyes in surprise, then rolled my head back against his bare shoulder and moaned as he slid inside me.

“Oh, it doesn’t hurt!” I exclaimed in surprise. “It actually feels...good.” I exhaled as he slowly thrust in a few times before pausing.

“It should never hurt, Anna,” Tony murmured in my ear, then sucked on my earlobe. “It should feel incredible.”

I hissed as he pinched my nipples. My brain was rapidly trying to process this new information and I felt a little dizzy. Anal not hurt? *Oh, God, it feels so good!* I moaned loudly and Tony chuckled.

“There’s more, hon.”

I opened my eyes as he pushed my knees apart and held me close. Kurt lifted back up onto his knees and moved closer to me, stroking his cock. He kissed me as his cock pressed against my pussy and he pushed himself inside.

Gasping, I broke the kiss and cried out loudly as he filled me with his huge cock. It was more intense than any sex I’d had before. *Is there room there for both of them?* I moaned and writhed as he pressed his body against mine.

I was on my knees, sandwiched between these two large men. I felt so small. My nerves were tingling everywhere. They both still wore their jeans, but their chests were hot and bare. My brain and body were on sensation overload. I could hardly breathe. Electricity surged through my body.

Kurt took my cheeks in his hands and turned my face up to look at him. “Are you okay?”

I nodded, mouth hanging open, speechless. I wasn't used to so much concern for my well-being. I liked it. Kurt leaned down and kissed me, trailing his fingers down my neck. “You are so beautiful, Anna.”

Tony kissed the side of my neck and moved his hands down to cradle my breasts. Kurt's hands moved down to my hips and they began to move. First, they moved in unison, both thrusting in and out at the same time. Pleasure surged through my body unlike I'd felt before. I couldn't think about anything but the sensation of them both fucking me at the same time. I was approaching orgasm already. I panted as they changed their rhythm to thrust alternately inside me. First Tony, then Kurt. Back and forth. I could hardly process what was going on.

Kurt and Tony changed back to the first rhythm and I groaned. The feeling intensified instantly and I screamed. Enormous waves of intense pleasure steamrolled over me. I heard Kurt and Tony groan and curse. They throbbed inside me, which pushed me into a whole new level of pleasure. Tears of pleasure streamed down my face as I clung tightly to Kurt's upper arms.

I gasped for breath as I leaned forward onto Kurt's shoulder. He brought his hand behind my head and massaged the back of my neck. Tony

moved his hands around my waist and sucked on the side of my neck.

I liked the sensation of being in between two nice men. I felt warm and cared for. Their body heat radiated into me as they kissed and caressed me. My body felt as limp as a noodle; If I hadn't been in between them I would have fallen over.

Tony slipped out of me first, followed by Kurt. "You seemed to enjoy that, *Engel*," Kurt murmured in my ear.

I nodded. "Did you?" That was more important than my enjoyment.

"*Ja*. Very much so." He looked behind him and chuckled. "Are you up for a little more?"

I looked at him and he motioned to where Seth was sitting in an armchair, watching me as he stroked his cock. *God, that's erotic.*

"Would it please you, Kurt?" I asked.

He grinned and nodded. "*Ja*," he said firmly.

I looked up at Seth as I stood and walked over to him. He pulled me to straddle his lap and kissed me. I took his cock in my hand and rubbed myself on him as he moaned. My thumb grazed his double-ring piercing.

"Hi," he said in a quiet voice, his face close to mine.

"Hi," I replied in an equally quiet voice.

His thumb caressed my cheek and his brown eyes were soft as he looked at me. I blinked, surprised at his gentle touch and the affection in his

eyes. *Where did that come from? I hardly know the man.*

He kissed me again, deeper this time. His dark hair, although cut very short in a military fashion, felt soft against my fingertips. He cupped my breast and massaged it gently. Even though I'd just had a magnificent orgasm not five minutes before, my body awoke once more under his touch.

I liked his gentle touch and the way he looked at me. A lot. Seth continued to kiss me and caress my body. I stroked his cock up and down until he gasped for breath.

His eyes were intense as he put his hands on my hips to direct me onto his cock. He kissed me and guided me in rocking my hips against him.

“You feel so good...,” he groaned against my mouth.

I smiled and clenched around him as I moved. He cursed and tightened his hands on my hips. I moaned against his mouth as I felt another orgasm building. I leaned my head back and cried out loudly as his hands tightened at my hips and he throbbed inside me.

“You are an amazing woman, Anna,” he murmured as collapsed on his chest. He ran his hands slowly up and down my back. My eyes closed and we sat together quietly as we caught our breath.

Tony cursed softly from the couch and I opened my eyes to see him looking towards the doorway. Alex stood there with his arms crossed and his jaw clenched.

His eyes hardened when our eyes met. Was he jealous? I could take care of him too. I wouldn't mind at all. I gave him a small smile and moved to stand and go to him, but his frown deepened and I froze, halfway out of Seth's lap.

"Kurt, take Anna to bed," Alex commanded, not moving his gaze away from me. "Now."

Kurt laughed and said something in German. Alex turned to glare at his brother and Kurt stopped mid-word.

I blinked, unable to move. Seth pushed me gently and I straightened. Kurt helped me into my dress before pulling me to the door. Alex stared past me as he moved aside for Kurt and I to leave. As the door closed behind us, I heard Alex shouting in German.

"Why is he angry?" I asked softly, looking up at Kurt.

He frowned and shook his head. "I have no idea. We were all enjoying ourselves. I do not see why he would be upset. You were enjoying yourself, *ja*?"

I nodded and smiled. "Very much so. Were you?"

Kurt wrapped his arms around me. "*Ja*. You are a beautiful woman, Anna. Watching you is like watching a beautiful dance. You are so graceful." He chuckled. "A man can only enjoy himself so much before he needs a break. Watching you is almost as good as having you."

I smiled at the compliment. “Thank you.”

“I will ask *Vati* what is up Alex’s ass tomorrow. He has never cared about my activities before. He usually encourages it.”

We settled into bed and watched TV for a while, then made love one more time and went to sleep. I would miss Kurt when he was gone.

CHAPTER 17

Ian knocked on my door about a half hour after I had returned to the Manor.

“Devin wants you to go get your necklace fixed this afternoon.”

I looked at where the necklace was sitting on the fireplace mantle.

“Okay. When do you want to go?”

He shook his head. “You’re supposed to drive yourself.”

I stared at him for a moment. “Me drive?” I had my license, but rarely used it. I hadn’t even taken the driving test. Jack gave me a few lessons over the course of several weeks, took me downtown to the Department of Motor Vehicles and, after I’d given some man a blowjob, was handed my license. Jack only let me drive on rare occasions. Very rare. “I...okay.” I knew I had to do as Devin asked, but the whole idea of driving made me nervous.

Thirty minutes later, I pulled the borrowed BMW into a small, run-down shopping center and looked around nervously. This is where Devin would have me get my jewelry fixed? Why would he use such a place? I went into the jewelry store and told the man behind the counter that Devin had sent me to have my necklace fixed.

He looked at it, surprised. “You are Anna?” He spoke with a thick accent.

I nodded.

He looked at me closely. “Twenty minutes,” he said, and turned and walked to the back of the store.

I left the store and wandered around the shopping center. It had a liquor store, a coin-op laundry, and a gas station. Something about it gave me the creeps, but I knew Devin wouldn’t send me somewhere dangerous.

Twenty minutes later, I walked back into the store but didn’t see the man, so I perused the jewelry in the cases. Some of it was very pretty. Some of it...well, I didn’t understand why anyone would want to wear such an ugly thing.

Ten minutes later, the man still hadn’t reappeared. I stepped to the counter closest to the open door at the back of the store. “Hello?”

“*Da, Da,*” he said. “I’m almost done. I’m sorry it took longer than I expected.” He walked out with a friendly smile. “If you’d like, there are chairs back here. I’ll be about ten more minutes.” He motioned through the door.

I looked at the door hesitantly. Devin wouldn’t send me anywhere dangerous.

I smiled and accepted his invitation. He pointed to a group of wooden chairs in the corner and so I sat down and watched him work. I guessed him to be in his early sixties, with gray hair and beard. He wore a blue flannel shirt that brought out the blue of his eyes.

A few minutes later a younger man, maybe in his early thirties, walked in the room and spoke with the older man in another language. The older man nodded and motioned in my direction. The younger man peered at me with a wicked smile on his face and walked toward me.

Butterflies started fluttering madly in my stomach and I stood quickly. “I can come back tomorrow....” But the younger man stepped in front of me.

If I hadn’t been so scared of the expression in his eyes, I would have thought him handsome. His jet-black hair made his electric blue eyes stand out. I didn’t want a stranger touching me. For the first time, I felt the need, and the ability, to try and run away from a man.

I took a step to the side and tried to get by but he stepped in front of me. He caressed my upper arm. “Where are you going?” he asked. He had an accent as well, but it was much fainter than the older man’s.

“I—I have to get home.” I tried stepping the other direction but he moved too. I swallowed. “Please let me go,” I whispered.

“Let a pretty girl like you go without getting to know you better? That would be a crime against nature.” He grabbed onto my waist and pulled me towards him, then slid his hands down my ass and began kneading it.

I pressed against his chest. “Please, let me go. Don’t you know who I am?” I tried to pull my diamond status card.

The man just laughed. “You’re a sex slave from the Manor.” He grabbed a fist full of hair and yanked my head back, exposing my neck, which he sucked on. “You’re not supposed to say no.”

No, I’m not! I’m Devin’s Mistress. “But Devin said my necklace-”

He laughed. “I don’t see a necklace. Do you, Papa?”

The older man chuckled and shook his head. “No, Max. I do not.”

“I don’t see a necklace. How am I supposed to know what kind of girl you are?” He gave me an evil grin. “Are you a red girl?”

Oh, God... “No, no I’m not!” I exclaimed. I pushed against his chest hard and fell backward onto the chair.

He laughed. “No, sweetheart. We’re not going to do it here. Someone might hear you scream and that would be bad for business.”

Terror filled my heart. “Please don’t hurt me,” I begged softly.

He pulled me to my feet. “Come with me nicely, and I’ll think about it. Make me drag you, and I’ll make my decision now.”

I swallowed and looked at him. His eyes were ice cold. He wasn't going to be nice whether I went quietly or not. I hung my head and nodded.

He led me out a back door and across the street to a row of townhouses. He walked up to one and shoved me inside. I paused inside the door. A man sat across the room on an old couch watching TV and drinking a beer. He looked up as we entered.

"Is this her?" he asked.

"Yeah," Max responded. He took my purse from me and threw it on the ground, then dragged me up the stairs and into a bedroom. He pushed me backwards onto the bed and laughed.

I lay on the bed looking at the ceiling. Do I dare run? It never does any good to try and get away. I've never succeeded before.

Before I could make a decision, Max was on top of me. He pulled my arms above my head with one hand and groped my breasts with the other, finding my nipple and squeezing hard.

I cried out in pain and tried to pull away from him. He just grinned and pinched harder. He produced a knife and pressed it against my neck. When I stopped moving, he released my hands. He reached under me to unzip my dress and yanked it down, trapping my arms at my sides. He cut the center of my bra and pushed it aside, then trailed the knife around my

nipples as I whimpered. The metal was cold and I whimpered when he dug the tip in a few times.

He chuckled and pinched my nipple. He pressed the knife against my breast. “It would be a shame to remove such beautiful breasts. But I will if you don’t cooperate.”

I nodded.

His mouth closed around one nipple, biting it hard.

“No, please don’t!” I cried. He pinched and squeezed and bit my breast, then moved to the other one, doing the same thing. I cried and begged him to stop, but he ignored me, continuing to pinch and bite as he pleased. I pulled away from him, trying to escape, but he sat on my hips and laughed at my tears.

He cut my garter belt and panties and threw the ruined pieces onto the floor. His knees rested on my calves, digging into them. He ran his fingers along the outer lips of my pussy.

I saw the man from downstairs walk up to the side of the bed.

“Ah, Jim,” Mad said. “Check out this gorgeous pussy.” He thrust his fingers inside me and I groaned in discomfort. “Damn. Tight too.”

“Beautiful, Max.” Jim squeezed a nipple and I cried out.

Jim pulled my dress down further and yanked my arms out. He pinned my hands above my head with his knees and pinched my nipples.

Max continued to thrust his fingers inside of me. Jack had trained my body so I could come with minimal stimulation. He'd trained me to come when being attacked. He'd trained me well. I grunted and groaned, my body betraying me with the beginnings of an orgasm deep inside.

I pressed my head back, moaning and crying at the same time. I hated what my body what my body was doing.

"Fuck, she's gonna come." Max laughed and looked down at me. "You like it rough? You like me shoving my fingers up your cunt? You *must* be a red girl."

I shook my head and groaned as he thrust in hard. The movement sent me over the edge. I arched my back and cried out, the unwanted orgasm hitting me hard. I heard them laugh as I came back down to earth.

I saw Jim grinning at me through the tears in my eyes. "You are a little whore aren't you? You like being fucked by complete strangers?" He looked at Max. "She's going to be fun."

I gave up fighting and they continued to play with my body. Jim repeatedly pulled my nipples up far enough to pull my back off the bed. I sobbed at the pain and humiliation.

Max opened his pants and started stroking his hard cock. "Fuck, I want my dick buried in this bitch."

He pulled his legs off me and grabbed onto my ankles, pushing my knees into my chest. Jim spread my legs apart and kept punishing my nipples.

“Please don’t,” I begged softly. They won’t listen, Anna. They never do.

“Why not? You like it.” Max laughed and shoved his cock inside me. I screamed out in pain. He laughed and rammed his hips against mine over and over again.

“No, please, no,” I sobbed.

He slid his hands down to my upper thighs and held so tightly I knew I’d have bruises this evening. He slammed his hips against mine, making my head slam back against Jim’s knees.

I closed my eyes and felt another orgasm building. I screamed out again as I heard him cursing.

“Fuck. Oh, fuck yeah!”

He thrust a few more times even harder and emptied himself inside me with a scream.

He sat there for a moment, chest heaving.

“Fuck, you feel good honey. I might keep you here and not let you go back to the Manor. They wouldn’t miss you. They have plenty of other girls.”

He grinned an evil grin, gave one last thrust and pulled out. He released my feet and they fell to the bed, my legs splayed apart. I hurt. I couldn't move.

“You gotta try her out, Jim. She's fucking tight.”

Jim laughed and flipped me over onto my stomach before moving behind me. His finger strayed down to my ass. “Maybe I should try out her ass.” He pushed forward and forced a finger inside my tight ring.

I whimpered, my voice muffled against the bedcovers. I clenched my ass muscles involuntarily and he laughed.

“That would feel fucking awesome.” He took his finger out and shoved it in my pussy. “But it's been a while since I've had a nice hot pussy.”

He pushed my ass up in the air and knelt behind me. My face stayed buried in the bed. I screamed as he shoved his cock inside me. My fingers clenched at the bedcovers.

Over and over he pounded. He stopped for a moment and pulled out, and then pain ripped through my ass as he thrust inside me in one quick movement. I screamed against the mattress.

He began pounding into me again, hard. I thought he would never come and it hurt so badly, tears were streaming into the fabric beneath my face. A couple extra hard thrusts and he was done. He pulled out and I fell

sideways on the bed. I sobbed into the mattress and their voices faded away as they walked out of the room.

I opened my eyes suddenly and looked around. *Where am I?*

I remembered what happened and blinked back tears. How had I softened so much after being gone from Jack for only a few days? This sort of thing had happened all the time when I'd lived at home. I suppose it bothered me there too, but...things were different now. I felt different. I had met Kurt. And Wilhelm. They'd given me hope. Devin had promised things would be better.

But they weren't.

I sighed and listened, but heard no sound. I moved slowly to look behind me. The room was empty and the house was quiet. Maybe they were gone. By the position of the sun, I could tell that it was much later in the day than when I'd arrived.

I sat up and fixed my dress, zipping it as best I could. My shoes were still on my feet but I pulled them off so I could walk quietly. I tiptoed out the door and down the stairs. Both men appeared to be passed out on the couch with an ashtray in between them.

I crept towards the door without taking my eyes off the men.

What are you doing, Anna? They're gonna wake up and beat the shit out of you.

Maybe not. Maybe not this time. Maybe it would be different.

My purse sat on the floor near the couch. I picked it up and turned back towards the door, which didn't appear to be locked. I reached for the handle, turned it and slowly pulled the door open, glancing back at the men. They hadn't moved. I slipped through the narrow opening and winced at a squeak, but the men didn't stir.

Once I was outside, I took two steps away from the house and then sprinted down the street along the back of the shopping center. I ran around to the front where the car was parked, pulling my keys out of my purse to unlock the car as I approached it. I had the car in reverse before my door was closed.

I tore out of the parking lot and had driven for a mile or so before I realized I had no idea where I was going. I pushed the "home" button on the GPS, as Ian had instructed me to do when I was done, and it told me I was heading in the completely wrong direction. I followed the directions it gave me and was relieved when I finally made it to the freeway.

CHAPTER 18

I was still shaking when I pulled up in front of the Manor. Why hadn't Ian driven me? None of this would have happened if he'd driven me. I felt beaten and defeated. I wanted to go upstairs, take a bath and crawl into bed. At least I didn't have to worry about anyone using me tonight.

I straightened my dress as best I could as I got out of the car. Ian waited by the door with an impassive look on his face. I kept my head down so he wouldn't see my red eyes.

I drew a bath as soon as I got to my room and sank into the hot water. My ass hurt. My pussy hurt. My nipples hurt. I felt ashamed. Now I understood why Devin insisted on me wearing my necklace...

My heart sank. I still didn't have my necklace. The thought of going back to the store made me sick to my stomach. But what else could I do? The only option was to call Devin. Would he be angry? Or understanding?

I dragged myself out of the bath and wrapped my soft robe around me before crawling into bed, taking my phone with me. I pressed the screen over Devin's picture and waited for him to answer.

"Anna," came Devin's voice after a two rings. "This isn't a good time."

“I...I’m...” I burst into tears. I prayed that he wouldn’t get angry with me, but I couldn’t control myself.

“Anna, what’s wrong?”

I couldn’t answer. I just kept crying.

“Are you sick? What happened?” I could hear the impatience in his voice.

I sucked in a deep breath and let it out through pursed lips. “I didn’t get my necklace,” I whispered, terrified of his reaction.

“Why not?”

So much was communicated in those two words. I trembled, imagining what he would do to me for my disobedience.

“Because...they took me.”

“Took you? What the fuck are you talking about, Anna?” He wasn’t hiding his irritation now.

With a shaky voice, I told him what happened at the jewelry store.

Devin didn’t say anything for a few minutes. Had he hung up?

“This is why you need to wear your necklace, Anna,” he scolded in a low voice.

I shivered. “I know that now, Devin,” I said softly. “I won’t go out without it again.” I took a shaky breath. “I’m afraid to go get it though. I’d have to go back there.”

He didn't answer right away. Would he make me go back? "I'll have Ian get it tomorrow," he said after a moment.

I let out a breath of relief. "Thank you." I thought for a moment. "Are you going to punish me?" I whispered.

"No, Anna. I think you've learned your lesson."

"I have, Devin," I whimpered. "I promise."

"Do you want me to come see you tonight?"

The shock of his offer dried my tears instantly. "You'd come here?"

"Of course, Anna. I care about you. I want to make sure you're okay. But I won't if you don't want me to."

I didn't answer for a moment. He wouldn't come if I didn't want him to?

"Anna? Are you still there?" He sounded concerned.

"I'm here," I said quickly. "Yes, I'd like it if you came."

"All right. I'll be there soon."

We hung up and I lay down on my bed watching TV until Devin arrived, about an hour later.

The door opened. "Anna?"

I sat up and saw Devin standing there in jeans and a button-down shirt. He walked over and kissed me. I wrapped my arms around his neck,

desperate to be held. He lay down on the bed and held me tightly for a long time.

When dinner arrived, we ate at my little table and Devin mentioned that his wife was pregnant.

I smiled at him. "That's a good thing, right?"

He frowned. "I wouldn't mind if it was mine. But it's not." He looked angry. He muttered something under his breath that sounded like "Fucking bitch."

"I'm sorry, Devin." I couldn't come up with a better response. Why would Devin's wife desire any man except him?

"I found out last week. Just before you came to the Manor." He gave me a wicked smile. "I told her I was going to stay with my mistress tonight." He stared at his plate for a moment. "I have half a mind to take the baby when she has it. Raise it in the Manor. I'm certainly not going to allow it to be raised in my home."

"Why not?"

"Because it would give the impression that I'm okay with what she did. She's disrespected me. I don't give a fuck if she sleeps around, as long as she's discreet. But this is crossing the line." He laughed. "Or I can make her get rid of it. But if it's a girl, it would be a waste of a potential slave." He frowned, looking thoughtful. "Which do you think would be worse?"

I stared at him for a moment. “I...Devin, I have no idea. I’ve never been pregnant.” Jack had told me that the first time I was taken to the Manor they had done something to me to make sure I would never become pregnant. It had worked.

“I’m glad you haven’t Anna. It would ruin your beautiful body.” He took my hand and kissed it. “I would hate for that to happen. You’re so beautiful and perfect.”

I smiled, his compliment warming me to the core. He leaned forward and stroked my cheek, trailing his fingers down my neck. “I need you, Anna,” he said huskily.

I nodded and he pulled me to over to my bed. I hadn’t finished my dinner, but Devin needed me. Devin wanted me.

“Undress,” he commanded softly.

I obeyed, untying my robe and letting it fall to the floor. I hoped Devin would be gentle with me; my body ached from what had happened earlier.

He frowned when he looked at me and my heart leapt into my throat. “Have I displeased you, Devin?”

He stepped forward and traced my hips. “You have bruises.” I looked down and sure enough, there were bruises on my hips where Max and Jim had grabbed on to me. “Ian will take care of them tomorrow when

he retrieves your necklace.” He ran his fingers up my body to my breasts. I winced as he cupped them but didn’t say anything. I wanted to please him.

“That hurts?”

“A little, but it’s okay.”

“No, Anna. I don’t want to hurt you. I didn’t realize....” He paused.

“It’s alright. We don’t have to make love.”

Tears came to my eyes. “But I want to Devin. I want to be with you.”

He smiled tenderly. “I’m not leaving, Anna. I’ll still stay the night.”

I stepped forward, grateful he wasn’t leaving, and reached out to him. “I want to please you, Devin.” I tentatively placed my hand on his jeans over his cock and looked up at him. “May I?”

He nodded with a slight smile on his face. “Undress me.”

I undressed him quickly and then knelt before him, worshiping the man so gloriously naked in front of me. His cock was so hard. I ran my fingers over the silver balls that I so enjoyed.

“Let’s get on the bed,” Devin said softly, helping me to my feet.

He lay on the bed and I knelt between his thighs and took him into my mouth. I stroked him with my hand as I licked and sucked him. He groaned and buried his hands in my hair, guiding me up and down as he liked. I glanced up at his face and he smiled and pushed my head down. I

swallowed him eagerly and he groaned as I did so. I repeated the motion several times and he cursed softly.

“Oh, fuck, Anna. You feel so good.” I pulled back for a breath and repeated the multiple swallows. “I’m gonna come, Baby.” I pumped my fist at the base of his shaft and he pushed my head up and down. He cried out and stiffened and my mouth was filled with his salty fluid, which I eagerly swallowed.

“Good girl,” he whispered. I lay with my head on his hip and his cock still in my mouth. He petted my hair gently. “Good girl,” he repeated. I played with his sac and continued sucking gently on his cock. He moaned softly. I was content. I’d pleased Devin. He was happy with me.

We lay there like that for a long while, and then Devin suggested I go turn the lights out. I did and returned to bed, snuggling under the covers next to him.

“I love you, Devin,” I said softly.

“I love you too, Baby.” He squeezed me gently and I fell asleep in his arms.

I awoke the next morning with Devin on top of me, kissing my neck. When he saw that I was awake, he smiled. “Good morning, Baby.”

I smiled back. "Good morning," I said softly. He kissed my neck again and nudged my thighs with his knees. I eagerly parted my legs for him. He positioned his cock at the entrance of my sex and pressed forward.

I whimpered at the unexpected pain and jumped as he pushed into me.

"You still sore, Baby?" he murmured into my ear. He stopped moving.

I nodded. "I'm sorry," I whispered.

"Give me your pain, Anna," he whispered. I felt dizzy suddenly as he said it and my eyes rolled back into my head. "Give me your pain and feel my pleasure."

He sank slowly inside of me and it hurt. I cried out but the moment I did, the pain became erotic. Something inside me knew I was pleasing my Master by crying out. His pleasure in my pain became my pleasure.

"Yes, Anna, good girl," he whispered. "Give it to me. Let me feel it."

I felt dizzy and euphoric with pleasure. His cock pressed forward into my abused pussy. I groaned and squirmed underneath him, wishing I had more pain to give him. His pleasure consumed me. He pulled back and I whimpered. He slammed back inside me and I groaned in painful pleasure.

His movements became rhythmic, out and in, painful, consuming. Again and again he slammed into me, hurting and pleasuring me at the same time. He leaned down and bit my nipple and I screamed. He pulled back, keeping my nipple between his teeth. I hissed in pain and he groaned and released me.

The eroticism became savage. The more it hurt, the more I felt his pleasure. In turn, his pleasure translated my pain into pleasure. He held my hands over my head and rammed himself into my battered pussy over and over again. I writhed underneath him, taking the pounding and allowing it to push me into higher levels of consciousness.

“Come for me, Baby,” Devin shouted as he abused my sex. “Come hard for me.”

The orgasm hit me with such force that I couldn't breathe. I screeched and struggled against his hold on my hands. He pounded even harder into me and I felt a painful pinch inside my pussy pushing me higher than I'd gone before. Stars sparkled across my eyelids and my body exploded with the intense sensations. Devin let out a primal scream as his cock throbbed inside me, shooting his cum deep inside my body.

I felt him keenly inside me. More than just his cock. I felt *him*. Our souls became one as we rode the crest of simultaneous orgasms. Wave upon wave of pleasure shook my body.

Devin released my hands and wrapped his arms tightly around me. “You are mine, Anna,” he said forcefully. “All mine.”

“Yes, Devin,” I said breathlessly. “Yes. All yours. No one else’s.”
Who else would I belong to? Who else mattered?

He kissed me gently, claiming my mouth and we glided gently back to earth. I wrapped my arms around him, hating the idea that we would soon be two separate bodies again. He nuzzled my neck.

“I love you,” he whispered.

“I love you too, Devin,” I whispered back.

He held me for a while longer then rolled to his side. He looked lovingly into my eyes. “I hate that I have to go to work.”

I pouted. “Me too. Can’t you stay here with me? You run the company.”

He laughed. “True, but I have a lot of work to get done today and I have to leave early to be back for the gathering tonight. I’m sorry, Baby.” He kissed me and caressed my body. Nothing hurt anymore. “In August, you are coming on a long trip with me. We’ll have plenty of time together then.” He kissed my nose.

“Where are we going?”

“Washington, DC.”

“Really? Oh, Devin! How wonderful!”

He grinned at me. "I thought you might like that." He rolled out of bed. "But I do need to get moving."

"okay." I gave him a sad smile. "I'm going to miss you."

He kissed my head. "I'll miss you too, Baby." He cupped my chin. "Tonight at the Gathering, I'm going to show everyone that you are completely mine." He kissed my lips. "That you belong only to me."

My heart swelled at the thought. *All his. All Devin's.*

"I love you, Baby. I will see you tonight. Ian will bring your necklace to you later."

He gave me one last smile and disappeared through the door.

Devin came in while I was eating dinner that evening. "Hello, Baby." He kissed me on the cheek and then sat down at the table across from me.

I smiled brightly at him. "Hi, Devin." My heart swelled with love.

"I wanted to talk to you about tonight," he said. I looked at him nervously. "You haven't done anything wrong, Anna. I just wanted to talk to you and prepare you for what is going to happen."

"Okay," I said slowly.

"Anna, tonight is the night you receive your piercings."

"Piercings?" I asked. "What piercings?"

He smiled gently. “Your slave piercings, Anna. Slaves must be marked.”

Tears stung my eyes. “You mean...I really am a slave? But...I thought...” I thought I was just his mistress. Kurt and Wilhelm didn’t think I was a slave.

“Of course you are, Anna. What made you think you weren’t?”
Sympathy lit his eyes.

“I guess I thought...” My heart sank. “I thought I was your mistress,” I said softly.

Devin looked at me sadly and put his hand on mine. “It must be this way, Anna. You are my slave, though like Ian, I don’t think of you as such. I do think of you as my mistress.”

I looked at him through my tears but didn’t respond. My heart ached.

“You won’t be marked like the other girls, if that helps, Anna. Your markings are different. You will only have one nipple ring.”

I forced a small smile. I didn’t want to anger him, but his words didn’t make me feel any better.

He knelt down next to me. “It has to be this way. But your rings will differentiate you from the other girls. Even if you’re not wearing this.” He pointed to my necklace. Ian had returned it earlier in the day. “And after the

main parts of the ceremony are over, I am going to perform a very special ritual with you, to bond us together and make you completely mine.” He stroked my cheek and kissed me.

“Would you like that, Anna? Would you like to have no more doubts?” His voice was soft and melodious and I lost myself in his words. My eyes grew heavy and I looked at him from under hooded lids. His voice grew softer. “No more worries...no more doubts. You would be free to do as you wish, because your only desire would be to please me.” He brushed a stray piece of hair away from my face. “We would spend so much time together.”

Yes, that is what I want. Nothing seemed more desirable than what Devin had just said.

His fingers glided down my neck and along the neckline of my robe and I shivered with desire. He pulled open the robe and took a nipple into his mouth, sucking gently.

“All mine,” he whispered. He caressed my breast and slid his hand up my leg to the apex of my thighs. His fingers slid inside me and my eyes closed as he gently thrust his fingers in and out. His thumb slowly circled my clit.

I sighed and pressed my hips up.

“I love you, Anna. I want you.” He continued in his hypnotic tone. “I want you to be mine, completely. Do you want to be completely mine, Anna? No one could ever separate us.”

I floated on a cloud of desire and love. He wanted me. He loved me. Nothing could separate us. My head spun at the idea of complete union with Devin. I nodded and looked down at him.

“Yes, Devin,” I whispered, dizzy and euphoric.

“Good girl.” He grinned and turned me in my chair, spreading my legs apart. “Baby, there will be parts of tonight that are painful. But I want you to trust me and give me your pain like you did this morning. Can you do that for me?”

I nodded and gave him a lazy smile. *Anything for my Devin.*

“Let me give you pleasure now, since I won’t be able to later.” He opened my pussy with his thumbs. He smiled then bent down and began kissing me.

“Oh!” I exclaimed, leaning my head against the wall behind me. He feasted on me as if he were a starving man. His tongue was everywhere at once. His teeth gently tugged on the sensitive folds of skin. I moaned and grasped the edge of my chair.

“Oh, Devin!” I cried out. “Oh, yes!”

He continued sucking and licking and kissing me. I moaned and writhed under his mouth. I felt myself climbing the peak of ecstasy and suddenly I was on the edge and flew off, flying through the sky under Devin's skilled mouth. I cried out his name as I came.

Slowly his tongue's movements subsided and I glided back to earth.

He leaned back on his heels and I sat there, amazed at how good I was feeling. I opened my eyes slowly and gave him a huge smile. He grinned back, his black eyes sparkling in the lamp light.

"Anna, Baby, for your protection, I'm going to remove your ability to speak. I don't want the men to think poorly of you for speaking or making noise. Women must be absolutely silent during the proceedings." He smiled. "You'll be able to speak in the morning though, don't worry. Anything you want to say before I do so?"

My heart overflowed with love for him. He was so considerate. "I love you," I said with a small smile, his face becoming blurry. I squinted as I looked at him. I couldn't bring his face into focus.

"I love you too, Baby. I'm so proud of you."

He trailed his fingers up to my neck and across my throat, murmuring something softly. I felt a tingling in my throat. I knew I would not be able to make a sound now and I had no desire to do so. Peace settled over me and I smiled. He kissed my forehead.

“Finish your dinner, Baby. Maggie will be back soon.”

I nodded and smiled lazily at him. He smiled, and then left the room.

I finished eating and Maggie and Sarah returned to prepare me for the evening. My head cleared and I was impatient for the Gathering to begin. I would be Devin's. Completely. I bet even Jack couldn't separate us.

“Mistress, this is a ritual night. You will be unclothed,” Maggie explained as they began putting my jewelry on me.

I nodded. Whatever Devin wants.

They wrapped my wrists and ankles in my diamonds. My hair hung loose down my and over my shoulders.

Maggie and Sarah wrapped me in the white velvet cloak and we waited for Ian. He knocked and entered a few minutes later wearing a black belted robe that reminded me of something the pope would wear. Maggie and Sarah greeted him, and then left.

“Hello, Anna. How are you doing?”

I nodded and smiled.

“Did he Silence you?”

I nodded.

I noticed a sadness in his eyes that I didn't understand. It was the first hint of emotion I'd seen from him. He hugged me and petted my hair;

an unexpected move for him. I wanted to ask, but I couldn't.

He straightened and his face became inscrutable. "Shall we? We don't want to make Devin wait."

CHAPTER 19

Ian adjusted my cloak, pulled the hood up over my head and we left the room. His hand on my arm was comforting as we walked through the maze of dimly-lit hallways and stairs. My stomach churned with nerves. I didn't want to disappoint Devin.

Soon the familiar double doors appeared in front of me. Ian opened one of the doors and he guided me inside and into the back corner. Standing in the dark corner, I could lift my head enough to see the full scope of the room without being seen.

Soft golden light filled the center of the Hall with slightly brighter lighting in the corner where the golden eagle gleamed towered over the room, the majestic head almost reaching the ceiling. The talons were high above the main floor and it appeared to be sitting in a curved moat of fire. In front of the fire, a wide platform extended out with a raised dais in the back.

Devin's throne sat on the dais with three slightly smaller thrones on either side of it. In the middle of the main platform was a waist-high rectangular stone table about half the length of a twin-size bed.

Two thrones waited on the left end of the platform. On the other end was a smaller stone square table with various items resting on top, one of which looked like a bowl. Steps led down to the main floor several feet in front of the table.

The room was full of wooden benches in rows, with a single, wide center aisle. The benches were being filled by men in dark blue belted robes, the same style as the one Ian wore, though with a short cape over the shoulders and a hood over their heads.

The low hum of men talking with one another filled the room and I could see the girls above in the balconies. They didn't move, though, and it didn't sound as if they were talking either. They wore hooded cloaks. Mostly blue with a few red scattered throughout.

A sharp rapping sound shot through the room and it became quiet. I looked up and saw a man in a green robe with gold edging standing in the middle of the platform with a long wooden stick. The men on the floor quickly sat on the benches, turning the space ahead of me into a sea of blue.

Two men in green robes appeared at the end of the aisle of benches near me. Their hoods were up and they each held out a smoking silver ball suspended on a chain in front of them. Two additional green-robed men appeared, one on each outer side of the benches, carrying a similar object.

Another man in a green robe came out from behind the eagle and began chanting in an unknown language.

As one, the men with the balls began slowly walking towards the platform, swinging the balls back and forth in front of them, dispersing the smoke up the aisle. The smoke reached me and it smelled sweet. I began to feel a little dizzy and very relaxed.

As the green-robed men walked towards the platform, three men in white robes emerged from behind the eagle. Two of the men's robes had gold edging, and all three wore their hoods low over their face. The man without the gold trimming on his robe had very broad shoulders.

The men in blue all stood when the three white-robed men appeared. One white-robed man walked to the middle of the platform and stopped, while the other two walked to the left side of the platform and stopped by the empty thrones.

The men in the green robes reached the platform. The chanting ended and the room fell silent. Then the man in the white robe on the platform raised his arms up in the air, and the men in blue sat back down on the benches. The green-robed men climbed the steps to the upper platform and sat on the smaller thrones.

“My Brothers,” came Devin’s voice from the shadow of the hood. He spoke in a deep, commanding voice that sent delicious shivers up and

down my spine. “I give you good greetings. Tonight we welcome into our fold two new brothers and several new slaves.” He motioned to the side where the other men in white robes sat. “I would also like to extend a special greeting to our visiting German Brothers.” He turned his head toward them and bowed slightly.

The two men bowed slightly in return.

German Brothers? Does that mean Wilhelm? And...Alex? Kurt? What were they doing here?

Devin pulled his hood back and the other men in the room did the same. Devin continued to speak, but his voice faded in my ears as I watched the other men in white pull their hoods back. It was indeed Wilhelm and...Alex.

Something stirred in my heart as I looked at Alex. Memories of his kind blue eyes from my dreams floated to the front of my consciousness, eroding the peace I’d received from Devin and had enjoyed only moments before. He turned his head in my direction and I felt his gaze burning me, even though I knew it was impossible for him to know I was there. He couldn’t see me; I was in a dark corner.

My breath caught in my throat and I blinked, tearing my eyes away from him. I pushed aside the traitorous thoughts and returned my attention to my beloved Devin.

Devin was looking to the side of the room where a door was opening. Five young women, about my age, chained together at the wrists emerged from the doorway being led by a man in a black robe like Ian's. Three blondes and two brunettes. Completely naked. They were led to the platform and stopped in front of the table. They stood facing the back of the room, heads up, eyes focused on the back of the room.

Devin walked up behind one of the blondes and reached in front to cup her breasts. He caressed them for a moment then pulled at her nipples. It looked like he pulled hard, but she only closed her eyes in reaction. A twinge of jealousy poked at my heart.

"Freshly trained slaves, my Brothers," he smiled. "Take a good look. We will mark them and then you may sample them after the ceremony."

Appreciative murmurs and chuckles came from the men in blue. Devin grinned and motioned to two of the men in green robes. Devin sat down in his throne, resting his chin on his fist as the other men walked in front of the blonde on the end.

One man stood behind her and rolled her nipples between his fingers until they were erect, then the other man put a gun-type device against her breast and I saw her jump and bite her lip, but she didn't make a sound. He pulled the gun away and a silver ring now hung from her nipple.

That's how they pierce them? It didn't look too bad.

The other nipple was pierced and then her belly button. I could see tears forming in her eyes as he progressed. He knelt in front of her and the other man held her hips. The one in front pulled at her left outer pussy lip and put the gun to it and a moment later she cried out in pain and he pulled away, revealing a silver ring where the gun had been.

Tears filled her eyes and she clenched her jaw. My stomach churned as I saw her pain. *That will be me soon.*

The men repeated the process with the other girls. Their nipples and pussies became red and swollen. It looked very painful. When the men were done, silver collars were placed around their necks. One blonde had the collar of a Red Girl. The girls were led to the edge of the platform and sat on their heels with their knees spread and hands on their thighs.

Ian touched my arm and motioned me forward. “Bow when we get to the edge of the platform.”

I swallowed nervously and we walked down the aisle together. I kept my head down, wishing I could look at Devin for courage. I concentrated my thoughts on Devin and could feel his love surrounding me.

My pain brings him pleasure. I want to give him pleasure. My piercings will give him pleasure. I will be his completely.

The last thought brought Alex’s eyes to my mind again, which made me doubt my desire to be bound to Devin.

I tried to concentrate on the peace that Devin gave me, but Alex's presence was making it difficult. What made it worse was that I didn't know why Alex had such an effect on me. I hardly knew him. He certainly didn't know anything about me. He didn't even like me.

I arrived at the bottom of the steps and saw the bottom of Devin's robe move down the stairs. I sank to my knees and bowed down to him as he approached.

"My brothers. I have a special treat tonight. As those of you who were here last week know, I've taken a mistress. What I didn't share is that she is not just an ordinary mistress." He pulled me to my feet led me up to the platform.

He pushed my hood back and gave me a tender smile while he stroked my cheek. I felt warmed from his touch and relaxed. *I am Devin's.*

He kissed me gently on the mouth, his lips caressing mine. I felt all his love and adoration flow into me. *He is my Master. I love him.* I gave him a loving smile and he looked pleased.

He turned me to face the other men and undid my cloak, letting it fall to the ground. "She is an Elder-Mistress and I claim her now for myself."

His announcement brought a rush of low murmurs and soft exclamations. He kissed my neck and caressed my breasts in front of the

men, but I didn't care. I closed my eyes and lost myself in his touch. *I am his. I want to please him.*

“Are you ready to show my Brothers you submit yourself to me?” he whispered into my ear as he tugged gently at my nipples.

I nodded dreamily.

He turned me so that my side was to the main room and pushed me gently down on to my knees. He knelt in front of me. I trembled, partially with excitement and partially with fear. He caressed my cheek with his hand and I relaxed.

“Good girl,” he whispered. My heart warmed at his praise.

As a green-robed man handed him the piercing gun, I happened to glance behind Devin to where Wilhelm and Alex were sitting. Alex's eyes were narrowed and Wilhelm was frowning. Alex saw me looking at him and his eyes became full of tenderness and concern. They looked as they did the night he first talked to me in my dreams.

My connection to Devin faltered and terror began to rise in me. I couldn't look away from Alex. Why did he look so worried? So...scared? My breathing became short and my heart raced in my chest. The concern and tenderness that Alex emanated made Devin's love look counterfeit.

No, that can't be right. Devin loves me. He will protect me and care for me. Alex is a stranger. He's dangerous.

I forced my eyes away from Alex's and looked into Devin's black eyes. He was frowning slightly.

"Keep your eyes on me, Anna," he murmured in a low voice. "I will give you the strength to walk through tonight. Anyone else will take it away from you, leaving you vulnerable."

I willed myself to stay looking into Devin's eyes as he brought the piercing gun to my right breast. He had to look away from my eyes as he positioned the gun properly, but I didn't look away from him.

Alex will make me vulnerable. I never want to be vulnerable again.

Devin looked back at me. "Give me your pain, Anna," he whispered and I felt a sharp stab in my nipple. Tears filled my eyes and I gasped and blinked, but didn't look away from Devin.

Devin leaned forward to kiss me and I felt him take my pain and received his pleasure. Peace descended to my heart once more. Devin positioned the gun at my belly button and the stabbing pain came once more. This one wasn't as bad, but tears still filled my eyes. Devin kissed me again, then leaned back to pull at the left outer lip of my pussy and position the gun

He looked into my eyes. "Mine," he said firmly.

I nodded and he pierced the skin. If I could have made noise, I would have cried out. All I could do, however, was open my mouth and

inhale loudly.

I began shaking and he stroked my cheek.

“Good girl, Anna,” he whispered. “Good girl.” He kissed me deeply and I felt his pleasure. “There is one more thing I must do and then I will perform our special ritual, okay?”

He pulled back and looked me in the eye. I nodded and blinked back tears of pain. I gave him a brave smile and he looked pleased. I wanted to ask if the ritual would hurt too, but I obviously couldn't.

“Go sit between Wilhelm and Alex. I will get you when I'm ready.”

I stared at him. Go sit next to the man who makes me loose connection with you? Why? I want to stay near you!

I hadn't moved and Devin frowned. I nodded quickly and stood with shaky legs. My new piercings stung. As I walked across the platform, the ring between my legs jostled and I winced. I carefully went to my knees and greeted Wilhelm with a bow.

I felt Wilhelm's gentle hand on my head and looked up. His eyes were full of concern. He gave me a gentle smile and I looked back down at the ground and motioned to the spot between him and Alex.

“Devin told you to come sit between us?” Wilhelm asked softly, his brows raised slightly.

I nodded.

“Then do so. I would be honored to have you next to me, Anna.”

I smiled gratefully at him and sat on my heels between the two men. Wilhelm petted my hair briefly then removed his hand.

I looked subtly up at the platform where two young men stood naked. Two women sat at their feet and Devin stood between them. He was saying something about new brothers.

I felt a large but gentle hand on my head. I thought it was Wilhelm again but then I realized the angle was wrong. It was Alex? My eyes closed involuntarily and I felt warmth from his hand spread through my body. The pain from the piercings lessened as the warmth spread.

What is going on? What is Alex doing to me?

Alex's touch distracted me from Devin's words. I tried to concentrate, but Devin's voice faded and all I knew was Alex's hand on my head and his comforting, yet disturbing, presence next to me. I felt soothed, not only from the pain, but from the reality of my life itself.

No! Alex will hurt me. Alex will take me away from Devin.

I knew I needed to maintain my connection with Devin and wanted to lean away from Alex, but I was afraid to move for fear of upsetting Devin. I dug my fingernails into my palms, trying to distract myself from Alex, but it was becoming increasingly difficult as the minutes passed in close proximity of Alex.

Abruptly, Alex removed his hand and Devin's voice slowly came back into focus. I opened my eyes and blinked, trying to orient myself.

Devin was standing in front of a man in his mid-twenties holding the piercing gun. The man's cock was erect. Devin took it in his hand and pressed the gun to the crest of the other man's cock. I heard a click and the younger man hissed. A moment later, the gun was removed and he had the double-ring piercing of the Brotherhood.

Another man was sitting on the step with a woman next to him, stroking his cock. I could see that he already had his piercing. Two other women emerged from another side door holding blue robes. The newly arrive women and the others worked to put the robes on the men and then the men went to stand next to Devin.

"Let us welcome our new Brothers, Quinn and Shawn," Devin announced. There was a loud round of applause. The women escorted the new Brothers off the platform.

CHAPTER 20

Ian was suddenly in front of me. I looked up at him and he reached out his hands to help me to my feet. He led me across the platform to Devin.

Devin stepped in front of me and looked at me intently. I blinked, uncertain of my connection to him. He frowned and glanced behind me, then looked back into my eyes. He gave me a tender smile and then kissed me. When he pulled away, I was confident of him again.

Devin took my hand. “Lie down on the table, Baby.” He kissed my forehead and walked to the front of the platform, speaking to the rest of the men.

I did as instructed and Ian chained me, spread eagle, to the table. The metal dug into my ankles and wrists and I winced.

Ian stepped between my knees and looked at me apologetically and I felt something cool in my pussy. He walked around to my right side and gave me a shot in my upper arm. A few minutes later my pussy began to sting at the same time I began to feel loopy. The stinging inside me felt slightly familiar, but my brain was getting fuzzy and I couldn't concentrate on anything. I closed my eyes when the room began to spin.

I heard Devin speaking at the front of the platform. I heard a strange bleating noise from the direction of the eagle. *Did I just hear a goat? No, I must be imagining things.*

Devin turned back to me and stepped close to stroke my cheek. I tried to look at him adoringly but didn't know if I succeeded. He gave me a strange smile and trailed his finger down in between my breasts. He leaned to take my unpierced nipple into his mouth.

I gasped with pleasure and thrust my chest up, wanting more. He obliged and brought his hand around to caress my tender right breast. He bit my nipple hard but it aroused me even more. He squeezed the freshly pierced nipple in between his hard knuckles and I gasped in pain, but I could feel my arousal increasing.

“Are you ready to become completely mine, Baby?” Devin whispered into my ear.

I nodded absently. My thoughts were blurred and disconnected. He trailed his fingers down my ribs and stomach to my swollen pussy. *Oh, I want him inside me.* I squirmed as he caressed the outer lips and then gasped as he brushed my clit.

He moved his finger down and pressed forward. A sharp pain exploded in my body and I inhaled sharply at the pain.

“Good,” He murmured. “Almost ready.” He walked away.

The pain had cleared my mind for a moment and I remembered why the stinging felt familiar. He'd used it when he punished me for my suicide attempt.

Oh, God, no! Please not that.

He had used a cream to tighten my vaginal muscles to the point where a small finger inserted hurt. It was more painful than the first time he had sex with me. The cream didn't allow my muscles to relax; I stayed tight until it wore off, hours later.

Tears stung my eyes. *Why? Why is he punishing me? I've tried so hard to be good.* I strained against my bindings and saw Devin look over at me and smile.

Why does he look pleased that I'm uncomfortable? I thought he loved me. No, I know he loves me. He said tonight would hurt...then everything would be perfect. Give him my pain...I just have to make it through a little bit more. I can do this.

My brain went fuzzy again and I couldn't concentrate on anything for long. I closed my eyes, afraid, but I couldn't remember what I was afraid of. I tried not to think of anything and almost succeeded.

Suddenly the overhead lights went out. Only the fire at the back of the platform gave light to the room. I heard a strange sound. Almost

singing, but not quite. My mind began to clear. Chanting, I concluded. It sounded like Devin.

I heard the bleat of what I had assumed was a goat, a swiping sound and then a dull thud followed by silence. Devin, Jack wearing a blue robe, Alex, and a man in a green robe that I didn't know approached the table. Devin stood at my feet. Jack was to my right, Alex to my left and the unknown man at my head. Ian stood a few feet behind Devin, his face impassive as he looked at me.

I tried to control my fear as I lay there watching Devin. He stared at the contents of the black stone bowl for a moment then looked at me. His dark eyes flickered in the firelight. I stared back, unable to look away.

He held the bowl above his head, murmured something, and then lowered it and tipped it back to drink. He pulled the bowl away from his mouth and passed it to Jack, who looked at me with a smirk on his face. Jack lifted the bowl to his lips and grimaced slightly. He drank and then passed it to the unknown man. The unknown man drank and then passed it to Alex. Alex tensed as he took the bowl and hesitated for a moment, then closed his eyes and drank.

Alex lowered the bowl and had a determined look on his face. I felt my head being raised off the table and Alex put the bowl to my lips. There was a thick, dark liquid inside.

“Drink,” Alex said gently.

I looked up at him fearfully and he gave me an encouraging smile. I felt uncertain as I looked at him, his eyes were sad and sympathetic.

“Open,” he said quietly.

I opened my mouth and a warm, metallic-tasting, thick liquid was poured into my mouth, enough to fill my mouth. I tried to swallow and sputtered. Red drops splatter on my breasts.

Did I just drink blood?

I closed my eyes and coughed, shuddering at what I’d just done. A gentle hand brushed my left temple.

Just a little while longer. Then I’ll be completely Devin’s. I won’t have to worry about anything....

I opened my eyes as Devin began to chant again. He held the bowl above his head and then lowered it to take another drink. I was afraid I’d have to take another drink, but he handed the bowl to Ian who set it on a table behind him.

As he was chanting, Devin began stroking my legs. My body began to feel light. The other men stepped back and Devin made his way around the table, chanting and skimming his hands all over my body. I began to get dizzy again. He returned to my head and placed his hands on either temple, chanting all the while.

I looked up at my beloved Devin and terror gripped my heart. Gone was the gentle loving look that he'd given me only minutes before. His eyes were black and cold. Hard and full of hate. His lips curled into a sneer. He looked at me as if he were going to consume me from the inside out.

I tried to look away. To turn my head or close my eyes. He held my head still. Inside my head, I screamed for help. He smirked as if he could hear my internal panic.

I didn't want to do this. I wanted to run away. I strained against the manacles, feeling the metal cut into my wrists, but I could only look up into Devin's cruel black eyes. I felt like I was floating up to him. My mind drifted and he grabbed hold of it, wrenching it from my will. I stiffened and I let out a grunt. I began to tremble and watched fearfully as Devin walked back to my feet, fingers trailing down my body to my legs.

I couldn't stop shaking. My heart raced so fast and so hard that I was afraid it would explode. Dread filled me as Devin stood at the end of the table. The chains holding my wrists loosened and he pulled my hips down to the edge of the table.

No! I screamed inside my head. *Devin's not safe! Devin will hurt me! I don't want this!* My heart was in my throat. I yanked against the restraints, willing my voice to work so that I could scream.

With all my strength, I tore my eyes away from Devin and looked at Alex. My mouth gaped as I stared at him. *Help me!* He stared back at me, his eyes mirroring my fear.

I felt Devin's cock at the entrance of my sex and tears filled my eyes, but I kept looking at Alex. I begged him with my eyes. I didn't know him, but something told me that he could help me.

Suddenly, pain shot through my body as Devin rammed himself into me with one long thrust. My mouth opened in a silent scream and I arched my back completely off the table. Strong hands on all sides of my body pushed me back down onto the table. I resisted as hard as I could, but they were much stronger than I was. Devin thrust in and out and I thrashed my head from side to side. Inside my head, the screams were unbearable. Outside I was silent.

After an eternity, I heard Devin cry out and stiffen. A few moments later I felt him withdraw. He sneered at me and he turned away to face the men in blue robes.

Betrayal stabbed my heart. My pussy burned and tears rolled down my cheeks. The hands that had held me slowly removed the pressure. Devin moved to the front of the platform, grinning, but not nicely.

A large hand brushed my forehead and I turned my head to see Alex looking down at me. His beautiful cobalt-blue eyes were wide with shock.

My eyes filled with tears as we stared at each other. I knew he would have done something if he could have.

My mind began to go fuzzy again. My eyes drooped and I was feeling sleepy. *Goodbye, Alex.* He seemed so far away and moving farther as the seconds passed. As my eyes closed, I saw a look of determination on his face. He moved above my head and put his large hands on my temples, much like Devin had.

I half-opened my eyes and I could see his mouth moving but his voice was fading into the distance. My eyes fluttered again as I felt my mind going blank.

I faintly heard Alex say, “Stay with me, Anna.” My name sounded nice coming out of his mouth.

He looked anxious. Suddenly the same floating sensation flowed over my body and the overwhelming mind-meeting sensation brought me fully awake and made me grunt.

He kissed my forehead and then moved to the foot of the table. I looked at him, eyes widening and fear filling me as I realized what he was going to do.

I shook my head mutely.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Devin turn around to see what was going on. In my mind’s eye, I could see his face was first surprised,

then shocked, then full of rage as he took steps towards Alex.

“Forgive me, *Schatzi*.” Alex’s voice caught my attention. A pained expression entered his eyes and then he gritted his teeth. “Forgive me,” he repeated.

In my head I saw Devin lunge towards us just as I felt pain explode between my legs. It felt like I was being ripped apart.

I faintly heard Devin scream “No!” over the internal scream in my head.

My body convulsed and shook. Alex held my hips down as he thrust in and out of me. Tears streamed down my face and I tried to pull away. Why was he doing this to me? I thought he felt bad for what Devin did to me? Why is he doing the same thing?

I thrashed my head from side to side. Oh! The pain was unbearable. My body arched off the table and Alex moved one hand between my breasts, holding me down.

Oh, God. When will it end? Pain shot through my body with every thrust. I knew my body wouldn’t shut down and remove the pain. The cream was designed to prevent that sort of relief. Devin had told me so himself the first time he used it on me.

Devin stood frozen to my left, horrified shock on his face.

I heard Alex groan. He gave one last thrust and then pulled out, chest heaving and head resting on my knee.

I hurt all over and I sobbed silently. *What is going on? Why did Alex do that to me?* I pulled weakly at my wrist and ankle restraints. I wanted to curl up into a ball but couldn't move. My struggle seemed to bring Alex back to awareness.

He straightened and looked at me, tears in his eyes. *Tears? What are they for?*

Alex looked at Devin and they stared at each other for a long minute. I could feel Devin's wrath radiating from him. Then he plastered a fake smile on his face and turned to face the rest of the room. "Enjoy the girls, my Brothers." The lights came up and male and female voices rose and filled the room.

Alex pointed behind me. "Get me a blanket," he commanded. His voice was firm, not to be questioned.

Jack squeaked behind me. "What?"

Alex gritted his teeth. "Get me a fucking blanket for her or I'll break your fucking neck."

Shock momentarily erased the pain in my body. No one talked to Jack that way. I looked at Alex in awe. What power did he possess to make Jack squeak?

Devin turned back around to face Alex with shock on his face. He blinked and I could sense him trying to figure out what had just happened.

Alex glared at Devin as he freed my ankles from the restraints. He pushed Devin out of the way as he moved up to my arms. He unfastened my wrists and brought my arms slowly down to my sides. I hissed in pain as my muscles cramped from the movement.

“I’m sorry, *Schatzi*,” he said quietly as he massaged my shoulders.

My body hurt all over, but where he touched me, the pain seemed to subside. He picked me up and sat on the floor behind the table, cradling me against his chest.

“Shhh, *Schatzi*,” he whispered. “It will be okay.”

His embrace felt wonderful. I was shaking and hurting, but being in his arms was somehow soothing.

“What the fuck did you just do?” Devin stood above Alex and glared down at him. His voice was deadly low, his rage just barely contained. The force of it threatened to suffocate me.

I felt as much anger radiating from Alex. “I kept you from breaking a beautiful creature and sucking the life out of her.” Alex’s accented voice was equally low and deadly. “And more.”

“How dare you! You had no right—”

Wilhelm walked up at that moment interrupted him. “And what right did you have to perform that ritual? We do not treat them like this. They are not animals. They deserve our respect.”

Alex wrapped a soft blanket around me. His body radiated heat and the blanket captured it and held it next to my body. I hadn’t realized how cold I was.

Devin snorted with derision. “What do you know?”

“We know quite a bit,” Wilhelm said calmly.

I could feel a momentary flash of fear in Devin, then as quickly as it appeared, he pushed it away. “This was not your concern, Alex,” he said arrogantly. “You shouldn’t have interfered.”

“Yes, it was my concern,” he growled.

Devin was silent for a moment. “I can undo it, you know.”

“I do, once she’s old enough. But I don’t plan on letting you.”

“What do you care? This isn’t your country.”

“Grandiose plans from men like you always involve more than you let on,” Wilhelm said in soft, but firm, voice.

“I will defeat him.” Devin glared at Wilhelm.

“Anything you do to me puts her in danger,” Alex said. “I hope you know that.”

There was a pause. I could sense Devin’s confusion.

“If you kill me, you will kill her.” Alex laughed bitterly. “I’m just as much bonded to her as you are. Of course, the same thing goes for me. If I kill you, I’ll kill her.” Alex paused. “That’s the only reason you’re still alive,” he growled.

Devin laughed, but not in amusement. It was more like a cackle. “You would dare kill an Elder, Elder-Son?”

“I would,” Alex said almost casually. “I’ve done it before. Recently, as a matter of fact.”

Another flash of fear skidded through Devin’s body and was pushed away. “That was you?”

“That was me,” Alex confirmed. “I only did as I was ordered.” I saw him lift his right hand to Devin. At first, I thought he was giving a rude gesture to Devin, but then I saw a gold ring glint on his little finger.

My mind was going fuzzy again. Alex had saved me from whatever Devin tried to do to me. Maybe that’s why I dreamed of him. Something inside me told me that Alex was safe. Was Devin?

I don’t want to think about that now.

I lay my head against Alex's hard, muscled shoulder, and he kissed the top of my head. “Go to sleep, *Schatzi*. Everything will be okay.”

I closed my eyes and slept.

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Keep going for an excerpt from
The Life of Anna, Part 2.

ABOUT MARISSA HONEYCUTT

Marissa's story of Anna began with a dream about being kidnapped with Adam Savage from the Mythbusters (Yes, really). Over the next year and a half, it morphed into the story you just read. She has several other stories in progress, one of which is based on her kidnapped dream.

When she's not writing or editing, Marissa is taking care of two young boys, training to be an astronaut, running her household, wrestling with gorillas, playing around on Facebook, promoting whirled peas, and busting her tush for her accounting degree. She enjoys chocolate, air conditioning in the desert's summer heat, really good strawberry margaritas, sleeping, and shopping.

Stalk Marissa:

on **Facebook** at

<https://www.facebook.com/MarissaHoneycuttAuthor>

on **Goodreads** at

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/8306428.Marissa_Honeycutt

On **Twitter** @Marihoneycutt

Reader's discussion & support group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1450699568539286/>

Deleted scenes coming soon to Marissa's blog:

<http://marissahoneycutt.wordpress.com/>

EXCERPT FROM THE LIFE OF ANNA, PART 2

Friday Night-Alex 's Point of View

Alex sensed Anna the moment he walked into the Great Hall. He didn't understand why he could sense when she was around, but he was glad nonetheless. Sometimes it was stronger than others, like now. Sometimes it was nearly impossible for him to keep himself from pulling her into his arms and kissing her like there was no tomorrow.

He kept caught himself before he started tapping his fingers on the arm of the chair. It wouldn't do to appear bored or uninterested, even though the last thing he wanted to do right now was to listen to Devin babble on about whatever it was he thought was important. Devin's arrogance was grating. Alex was thankful that his hood sheltered his face from view, else he'd have to appear interested.

As it was, he relaxed his hand and turned his thoughts to the girl across the room. Anna's obvious, deep-seated fear confused Alex. An

Elder-Mistress rarely showed any emotion at all. To see one so beat down and afraid struck him at his core. She should have been a beautiful, confident young woman that took the breath away of every man she came in contact with. Nothing about her was what Alex had expected.

Well, no, that wasn't entirely true. She was as beautiful as he'd expected, but her personality, while very sweet, was unlike any he'd seen in an Elder-Mistress before. Every time he saw the fear in her eyes, it stabbed his heart. It was his fault she was like this.

Alex looked towards the darkened corner of the room. A figure wrapped in white could just barely be seen. His heart pounded as he realized that it was Anna. *His* Anna. Kurt might think that Anna was a fun toy to have around, but he would never be able to care for her the way Alex did. Alex's heart had been tied to hers long ago by her own father.

Vati elbowed Alex gently and Alex pulled his hood down and looked away. It wouldn't do for his precautions to be undone now. He had to remain aloof or Devin would become suspicious. Neither he nor his father knew exactly what Devin had planned, but his gut told him it was nothing good, and they would be required to intercede before the night was over.

He composed his features to appear uninterested as Anna walked up the aisle to join Devin on the platform, but when Devin removed her cloak,

Alex's breath caught in his throat. Kurt had spoken of the beauty of Anna's naked body, but to see it first hand was a different experience. He shifted in his chair as his gaze moved down her body, from the sable-brown hair that hung down her back in waves, to her shapely calves.

Her neck was long and slender, her breasts full and round. Her nipples were pink and taut and oh-so tempting. The lines of her torso, the swell of her hips.... Alex gripped the arms of his chair tightly. God, she was beautiful.

Alex growled slightly as Devin mauled her in front of the men. Devin may think that Anna belonged to him, but before the end of the night, Devin would know the truth: Anna belonged to Alex.

Devin pushed her to her knees and Alex frowned. What was Devin doing? A Deacon handed him...a piercing gun? Her kind weren't supposed to be marked as....

Anna looked at him suddenly and he saw the fear in her eyes. He should just push Devin out of the way and take her from him now. Whatever Devin was planning couldn't be good. Not if he was going to mark her as a slave. Those ways were forbidden and had been for centuries!

She looked back at Devin and her eyes glazed over slightly.

"What did he do to her, Vati?" he whispered.

“I don’t know, Alex,” his father whispered back. “But I can’t believe he’s going to—“

There was a click and a sharp inhale of breath as Anna’s nipple was pierced.

“Vati, you can’t let this happen,” Alex said in an urgent tone.

Why didn’t she cry out? Tears were in her eyes and she was clearly in pain.

Vati didn’t reply, but stared at Devin and Anna.

“Vati?”

Devin pierced Anna’s belly button.

“The piercings can be undone, Alex,” Vati said quietly.

They both winced at the third and final piercing.

“Let him be. He’s not doing anything permanent. You can still take her afterwards.”

Anna started shaking and Devin spoke quietly to her. Tears filled her eyes and she nodded before standing and walking over to Alex and his father, clearly in pain. She bowed and then motioned to the ground between them.

“Devin told you to come sit between us?” Vati asked in a quiet voice.

She nodded.

“Then do so. I would be honored to have you next to me, Anna.”

Sebastian! Alex yelled in his head. *I can't sit and watch this!*

The reply from his friend came a moment later. *You must, Alex. This is your chance to save her.*

Vati said the piercings could be undone.

He's not done, Alex. You must stay.

She's in so much pain. I can almost feel it.

Put your hand on her head and concentrate.

Alex stroked her silky hair and then rested his hand lightly on top of her head. He felt warmth flowing through his body and into hers. After a few moments, she relaxed.

Devin gave him a suspicious look and Alex removed his hand. Her pain had been minimized, though Alex wished he could do more for her. He inhaled deeply to calm his heartbeat and regain his patience.

While new Brothers were being initiated, Alex's thoughts wandered once more. He wondered what else Devin was going to do tonight. What else *could* Devin do? Marking Anna as a slave was insulting enough.

Ian walked over and led Anna across the platform to the table. Alex's stomach filled with dread as he saw Ian produce a set of manacles.

“Vati...?”

Vati's jaw was clenched but otherwise his face was inscrutable. It was his 'angry but under control' face he used when dealing with arrogant government officials.

"Alex," Devin said, stepping in front of him with a slight smirk on his face. "Would you mind assisting me with something?"

Alex glanced at Vati who nodded slightly. "Of course, Devin."

He stood and followed the Elder to the back of the platform where a goat was tethered to a post. A ceremonial knife and bowl lay on a nearby table. Ian was fastening the manacles around Anna's wrists, chaining her to the table.

Alex felt anger bubbling to the surface. He closed his eyes and breathed deeply. It would not help anything if he lost his temper. He had to stay calm. He *had* to.

Sebastian, what is going on?

Tell me what you see.

Alex looked around again. *A goat, a knife a bowl.... Oh, God*

Sebastian, what the hell is he going to do to her?

What color is the goat?

Black.

There was a pause. *Where is Anna?*

On a stone table. I've never seen anything like it.

If the goat hadn't been there, Alex would have feared for Anna's life.

Devin walked to the front of the platform. "My Brothers, tonight you are fortunate to witness something not seen in a very long time. Something that will help us rein in those who think they don't need us anymore."

The men applauded and looked with interest at Anna, compliant and chained to the table.

What's going on, Alex?

He said he's going to do something that hasn't been seen in a long time.

Another pause. I could get into an enormous amount of trouble for helping you.

Please, Sebastian. I failed her once already.

Sebastian didn't answer and Alex grew nervous as Devin walked over to Anna.

Devin trailed his fingers over her body and she grimaced. His mouth latched onto her nipple and Alex suppressed a growl.

Devin stepped between her legs and stroked her pussy and she gasped in pain. She struggled against the bindings as Devin walked away, but then relaxed again.

Torn by his concern for her, Alex turned his attention to back Devin as the lights went out. Devin picked up the knife and began murmuring. Alex resisted the urge to look back at *Vati*. He also resisted the urge to punch Devin in the face. Alex didn't know what was going on, but knew enough about the Brotherhood to restrain his impulses.

Devin swiped the knife across the goat's neck and it collapsed onto the stone platform, its lifeblood flowing down into the bowl at the lowered edge. Alex swallowed as his mouth filled with hot saliva. He normally wasn't squeamish, but the whole situation set his stomach on edge.

Devin glanced at him with amused eyes as he walked to him. "You'll need to help her drink this," he lifted the bowl slightly, "and then hold her down if she starts moving. I wouldn't want her to hurt herself."

Alex forced a smile. "Of course, Devin." *Sebastian!*

Tell me what he does as he does it. I will guide you through what you must do. But you must trust me.

Alex hesitated. What would Sebastian have him do? *I trust you. I always have.* He'd known Sebastian for ten years and he'd never been led astray.

Alex moved to Anna's left side, his back towards the common Brothers in blue. Her guardian stood across from him with a smirk on his face and Devin's deacon stood at her head. Devin stared intently at Anna

and she returned the look. He began to murmur again in a language Alex didn't recognize. Devin lifted the bowl over his head, said something loudly in the unknown language, and then brought the bowl to his lips.

Devin passed the bowl to Jack, who drank, and then passed it to the Deacon. The Deacon did likewise and passed the bowl to Alex.

You're acknowledging that you're a witness to the ritual. Drink, Alex. It's the only way you can help her. You must be intimately part of this to save her.

Alex stared at the bowl and then tipped it towards his mouth.

Disgusting. He swallowed and looked at Devin, who nodded towards Anna.

Why do I have to feed her?

Devin doesn't realize it, but he's giving you the opening you need.

By you feeding her, you will be able to interfere with the bonding.

Bonding?

Feed her, Alex.

The Deacon lifted her head and Alex lowered the bowl to her.

"Drink," he said gently. As her lips touched the bowl, he felt a surge of warmth run through his body. "Open."

Obediently, she parted her lips and Alex poured some of the blood into her mouth. She coughed and shuddered, blood droplets landing on her perfect breasts.

Alex handed the bowl back to Devin. Devin took another drink and then handed the bowl to Ian, who had been waiting a respectful distance behind him. Anna trembled and Alex brushed his fingers over her temple to try and comfort her.

He is going to take her mind, Alex. You must watch carefully what he does and be prepared to do the same thing. It will weaken his bond with her and hopefully bond you to her at the same time.

Hopefully?

It's never been done before. But I believe it to be true.

Alex would have to trust his friend.

Devin moved around Anna, stroking her skin, as Alex and the other men stepped back. Devin stopped at her head and placed his hands on her temple. She looked up at him and terror filled her eyes. Her mouth moved and she trembled violently. The muscles in her neck strained and she stiffened. Alex could see the wild pulse in her neck.

Alex's heart raced as Devin walked back to the bottom of the table. Anna was shaking so badly Alex was afraid she'd fall off the table, despite the chains. The Deacon and Jack loosened her manacles and Devin slid her down towards him.

Anna's eyes met his, her terror ripping at his heart. *What must I do, Sebastian?*

Devin opened his robe and stroked his hard cock a few times before thrusting violently into Anna's body. She arched off the table and opened her mouth in a silent scream. Why wasn't she making any sounds?

The other men pushed her back down and Alex did likewise, if for no other reason than to keep her from falling.

It took all his strength to hold her down as Devin fucked her. Sweat glistened on Devin's forehead and his eyes were closed. An ecstatic expression filled his face. After what seemed like forever, Devin grunted and pulled out. Tears rolled down Anna's cheeks as she stared at Devin, bewildered, betrayed.

Devin smirked and then walked away. Anna looked up at Alex with such a hopeless look in her eyes, it stabbed at his heart.

Sebastian!

Go to her head, I will give you the words to say.

Anna's eyes were drooping and she shuddered as he put his hands on her temples.

Alex repeated the words Sebastian gave him. Anna's eyelids fluttered.

"Stay with me, Anna," he whispered, fearing he was losing her.

You must bond with her, Alex. You must fuck her.

Alex moved down to between her legs and flinched as he saw her pussy. She was bleeding, and from more than just her new piercing. *What the fuck...?*

Devin turned and their eyes met. Devin stepped forward and Alex steeled his mind.

“Forgive me, Schatzi,” he whispered. He opened his robe, surprised he was hard. How could he be hard at a moment like this?

Do it, Alex. If he touches her, it's over.

“Forgive me,” he said, positioning himself at her brutalized entrance. He pushed forward and Anna’s mouth opened in another silent scream.

And no wonder. Getting into her body was like trying to shove his cock into the barrel of his rifle. He knew he was above average in size, but this was ridiculous. It was painful for him; no wonder she was screaming...silently.

“No!” Devin screamed and reached for her.

Without thinking about it, he thrust his hips forward, tears filling his eyes, for Anna’s pain and his own. He was certain he’d torn her. Would she ever forgive him?

Tears streamed down her face and he leaned forward to hold her body in place as he thrust in and out. It was not even remotely enjoyable

and he prayed he'd be able to finish.

Miraculously, his balls tingled and he felt himself release into her body. It wasn't even an orgasm. Just release. Painful release. As soon as he was done, he pulled out and rested his head on her knee, breathing hard.

What did I just do? I tore her, Sebastian.

If everything went right, you've bonded with her. You are both her Master now.

Master?

You just performed the Bonding Ritual, banned centuries ago for its cruelty. It bonds a Master to his slave.

I don't want to be her Master, Sebastian. I want to be her lover and husband someday.

You will have to tread carefully, Alex. Her Masters have been cruel to her in the past. You will have to show yourself to be different.

Then why become her Master at all?

Because if you didn't, she would be Devin's puppet now. She would no longer be an independent being, but an obedient, dangerous tool in Devin's hands. You have saved her, Alex. You have done what you set out to do. Now you must win over her heart.

Can the bonding and slavery be undone?

I believe so, when she is older, but that is a matter to deal with later.

Nothing can be done about it for now.

Alex felt his temper rising. I'll just kill him now. Then it will be over.

If you kill Devin, you will kill Anna.

Fuck. Now what?

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