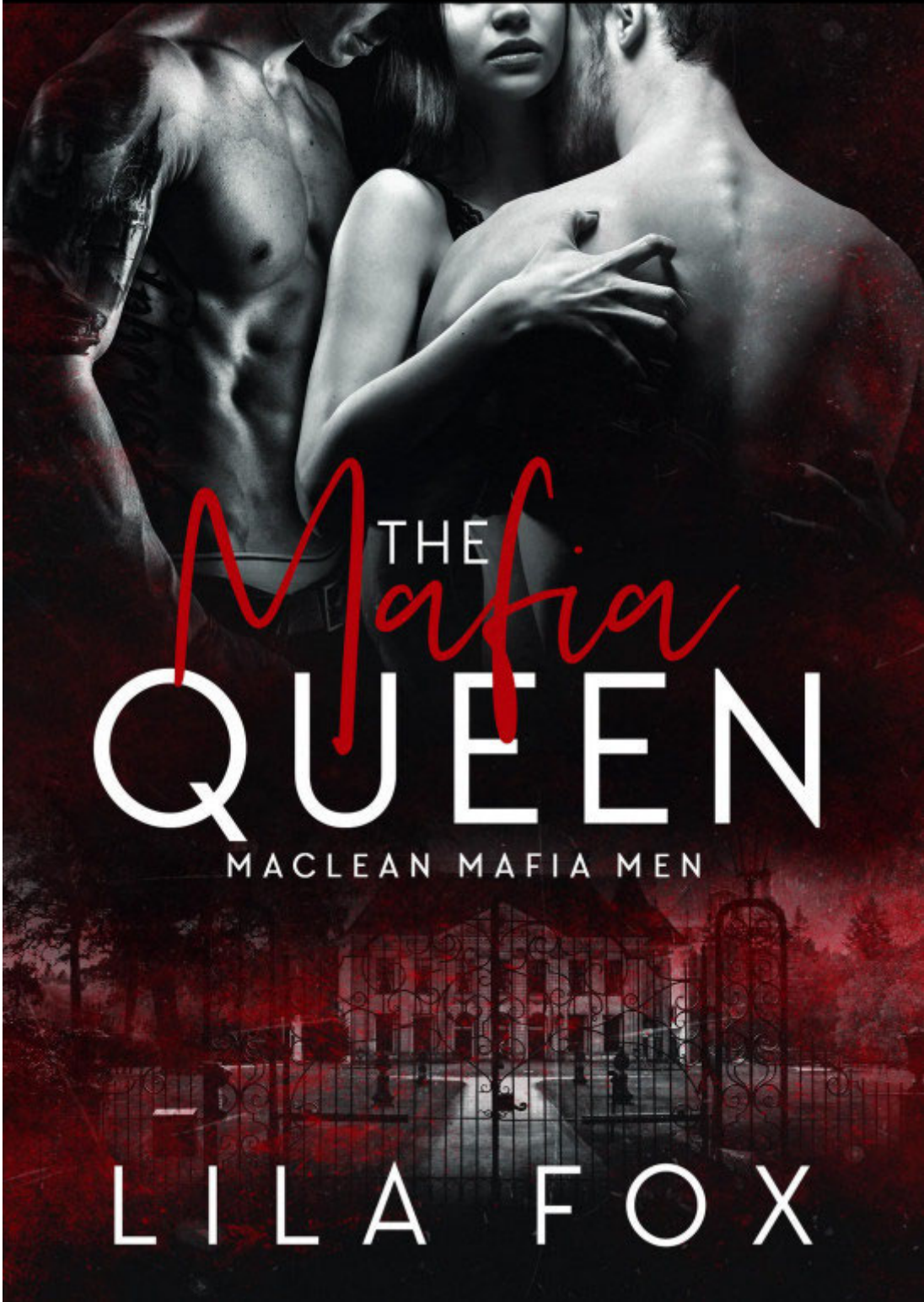


EVERNIGHT PUBLISHING®



THE  
*Mafia*  
QUEEN

MACLEAN MAFIA MEN

LILA FOX







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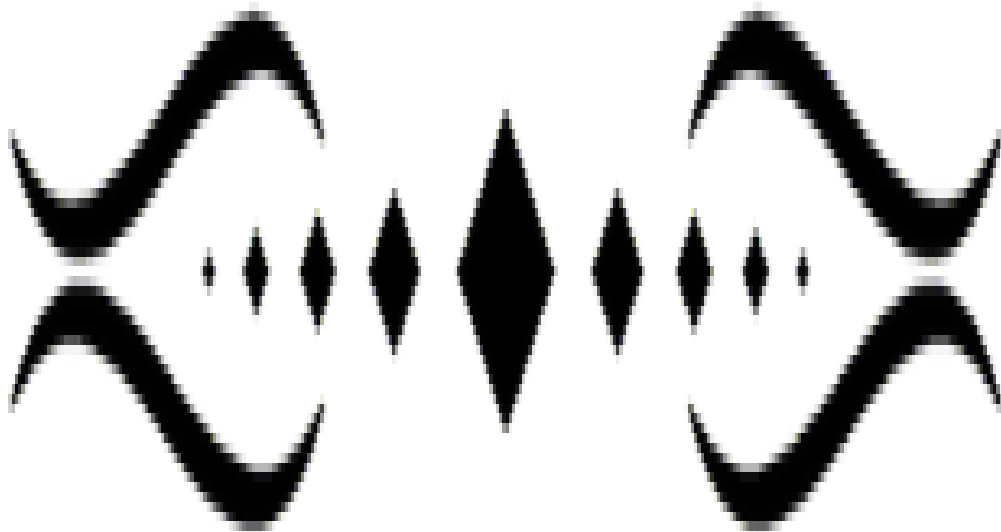
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# THE MAFIA QUEEN

*Macleans Mafia Men, 5*

Lila Fox

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## Chapter One

Aria pulled herself out of her bed and wrapped a robe around herself. Her husband of twenty-five years had just left after raping her. Most people in her world would call it her wife's duty, but she just considered it rape. It was always painful, and she got no enjoyment from it at all, but he didn't care as long as he got what he wanted.

This time, he was extra brutal because he was pissed that he'd lost two daughters and couldn't use them as offerings to a madman.

However, he gave her some hope this time and told her she was too old to have children. Besides, she'd only given him daughters and was frigid. He didn't want to waste his time on her anymore.

Forty years old, she'd never known what it was like to have a man make love to her. Her father had given her to Lorenzo Moretti when she was sixteen. Women who grew up in the mafia world they lived in didn't get many choices. They weren't considered human, just a possession or commodity to buy and sell.

Her only happiness came from her three beautiful daughters, Faith, Hope, and Angelica, and the only two friends she'd ever had, Trent and Mateo. They were two of her husband's guards who hated how he treated her from the beginning. Those two men wanted to kill Lorenzo, but she'd stopped them because there would be repercussions—they would be killed and taken from her.

If she lost them, she'd lose her mind. They were the only thing that kept her sane, even though they hadn't ever been able to spend quality time together because if her husband knew, they'd all be dead.

She thought about the weeks when two of her daughters had gotten free, and she was so pleased. Mateo had told her they were married to good men. Two of her precious daughters

were safe, and the men treated them well as far as he knew. If she ever found out differently, all hell would break loose.

Now, if she could only get Angelica away, she'd be able to do the thing she'd dreamed of for years. Kill her husband.

Remove one monster off the earth and any future chance he'd have to hurt her babies. Because she knew it was a death sentence for her, she needed her babies taken care of.

She shut the bathroom door behind her, closed her eyes, and rested her head against the wood.

"Don't even think about it."

Her eyes sprang open to find Trent in front of her with his arms crossed. He was a huge man who stood over a foot taller than her and outweighed her by a hundred pounds, but he had the gentlest, most beautiful blue eyes she'd ever seen.

"What are you talking about?"

"Giving up," he said. "I see it in your face."

As she sighed, she bowed her head.

"Are you hurt?" Trent asked.

She shook her head.

"So, what with the attitude lately? You're just going to what?"

She didn't consider her plan as giving up but finally found the courage to do something that needed to be done.

"Do you want to tell us what this is for?"

She spun to see Mateo in the doorway of the secret passageway they used to get to her. When she saw the knife in his hands, she recognized it as the one she'd taken from the kitchen to kill her husband and thought she had hidden it fairly well.

She lunged for it. "Give me that."

He gently pulled her against his chest and pressed a kiss to the top of her head while holding the knife out of her reach.

"Start talking, pet," Trent said.



Her shoulders dropped. How did she think she would get away with it? They knew her well, better than anyone in the world.

“I took it.”

Trent nodded. “We know that, baby. Now, tell us why.”

She pulled out of Mateo’s arms, walked away from them both before tightening the belt on her robe, and then faced them.

“I’m going to kill Lorenzo,” she said.

Both men stiffened.

“Oh, really. When do you plan on doing that?” Trent asked and raised one brow.

She sighed. “After we got Angelica free.”

“I see,” Mateo said. “You know you’d be killed, right?”

She nodded without looking up at them.

“Goddammit,” Trent cursed. “What about us? Don’t we matter?”

Her head jerked up, and she stared at him. “Of course, you do. I’m doing this for you, too.”

She could tell she was making them madder, but never once had she ever been afraid of them.

“How do you figure that, pet?” Trent asked.

“I feel like you’ve put your lives on hold for me for so long. I want you to be happy. Find a woman you love who can give you children.”

A shiver raced down her spine when they both stared at her.

“What about what we want?” Mateo asked.

The gentle way he said it broke her heart. “I’m thinking of you. I’ll never be able to have your children. I’m too old. Hell, I might not even be able to have sex. I’m not good for you. I love you both too much to bind you to me for more years.”

Trent walked to the secret passage and turned to look at her.

“It would be nice to decide for ourselves what we want.

You’re doing to us what your father did to you. Think about that.”

She cried out. “Trent.”

She heard his steps and then nothing. She faced Mateo. “You understand, don’t you?”

“Not at all, baby. We want you in any way we can get you, and now that we might have a chance at being together and happy, you’d take that away from us.”

“The only things changing are my daughters getting out of this hellhole.”

Mateo shook his head. “No, there’s more going on. We have people helping us.”

“What? Who?” Her stomach tightened with anxiety but also a spark of hope for a future she’d not had before.

“We don’t have time now. Please don’t give up on us.”

“I’d never do that. I want to do everything in my power to make you both happy. You’ve done so much for me. There were times I wanted to give up, and if it weren’t for you and my daughters, I’m ashamed to say I would have taken my life.”

Mateo slipped the knife into his belt and walked to her. He cupped her face and ran his thumb over her cheek. “What you’re missing here is that you make us happy, and it would break us if you were taken from us.”

She whimpered and laid her forehead on his chest. “I’m so sorry. I love you both so much.”

“And we love you.”

“What if I can’t—”

“Can’t what, baby?” he asked.

“Can’t have sex. You know I’ve never been treated well in the bedroom.”

He tilted her head up so she looked into his face. “You will be. You’re a passionate woman and have never been given a chance to explore that. I guarantee it will take both of us to keep up with you.”

His lopsided grin always charmed her.

“It’s just...”

He bent his head until his lips were close to hers. He studied her for a moment before pressing them against hers.

The heat of passion raced through her. Before she knew it, she was clinging to him. He ravished her mouth and she begged for more. Where her body had ached just a moment before because of her husband, Mateo brought it to life and made her feel things she never had.

They’d kissed her over the years, but they were more like brotherly kisses than sexual ones. Mateo showed her a different kind of pleasure, which made her hotter than she ever thought she could be.

“Do you see?” he asked after he raised his head.

Her eyes slowly opened, and it took a moment to focus. She loved how he groaned when her tongue came out to taste him on her lips.

“We’re not going to have any problem, baby. We’ve saved enough money to take care of you for the rest of our lives. We can go wherever you want to live.”

“I’d want to stay close to my daughters,” she said.

Mateo tipped his head forward. “We can do that.”

“Okay.” She hugged him tightly. “You should go.”

“I will. Take a bath and get into bed. Tomorrow will be a new day.”

Aria nodded. “Will you tell Trent that I’m sorry?”

“You can tell him the next time you see him,” Mateo said, leaving through the hidden door in the linen closet’s back panel.

She bathed and got into bed. Just as she started to drift to sleep, a warm body pressed against her back, and an arm went around her waist. She wasn’t alarmed because she knew Trent’s scent like her own.

“Hello, pet,” Trent said.

She rolled to her back and pressed her hand to his face. “I’m sorry.”

He pressed a kiss into the palm of her hand. “I know. I’m sorry I got mad. It just terrifies me at the thought of you not on earth. I would just want to lie down and die because I couldn’t go on.”

Tears ran down her face. “No, don’t ever say that. I can’t even comprehend what the world would be like without you.”

“Then don’t take any chance. Let us take care of you. You’ll be free soon. I promise.”

Her heartbeat accelerated at the thought of being with them and not having to hide it. “I can’t wait.”

“Me, either. Now I want a kiss. Mateo said you gave him one, so it’s only fair.”

She nodded and grinned. “Oh, yes, please.”

He bent down, wrapped an arm around her waist, and took her lips. It started off small and gentle but soon turned to molten fire. She couldn’t prevent the moans coming from her or the way she pressed her body against his.

Trent yanked his head up. “Jesus, Mateo was right. You’re going to burn us up.”

“Is that a good thing?” she asked.

“Oh, yeah, it’s very good. Now, I’ve got to go, but I’ll see you soon. I love you.”

“I love you, too,” she said.

He pressed one more kiss to her lips and rolled away.

She wanted to call him back so badly, but they were already taking a lot of chances that could get them all killed, and that was the last thing she wanted.

## Chapter Two

Aria had no idea what time it was when she was shaken awake.

“Aria, come on, baby. We have to get you out of here,” Mateo said.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, we’re getting you out of here. The shit is about ready to hit the fan, so we need to get you and Angelica to safety.”

She was still groggy and didn’t understand everything he said, but she followed his directions because she trusted him implicitly.

He pulled the sheets back and lifted her out of bed. “Let’s pack a quick bag.”

She stared up at him and pushed the hair from her face. “Um, wait, I already have one. I update it every so often, but I’ve had it for years. Just on the off chance we could escape.”

“Good girl.” He grabbed it from the back of her closet. “Let’s get you into some clothes.”

She shed her nightgown, not the least bit shy because Mateo and Trent had seen her naked on many occasions when they had to bathe her after Lorenzo beat her or was too violent with her during sex.

Aria always detested them seeing her like that, but she wouldn’t have been able to do it herself most of the time. What she hated the most was the fury the men always showed that she’d have to calm to prevent them from killing Lorenzo.

She pulled on some old jeans, a t-shirt, and tennis shoes. It was something she’d never been seen in but had always wanted to be able to wear.

“Fuck, baby. I think you can’t get any sexier, and you pull this shit.”

She giggled.

“I want to know how you got these clothes, but later,” he said and grabbed her hand. “We need to leave.”

“Does Trent have Angelica?” she asked.

“Yes. They’re probably already in the car.”

They went down the back passage and out to two large waiting SUVs. He lifted her into one, and she cried out when she saw her daughter. She pulled her into her arms. “Oh, baby girl. How are you?”

The young woman hugged her tightly. “I’m good. How about you, Mama?”

“I’m fine, sweetheart.”

“I worry about you all the time,” Angelica said.

Aria straightened and cupped her daughter’s cheek. “There’s no reason to, honey.” If she knew her daughters had been aware of her abuse, that would break her heart. She didn’t want them warped, to think it was okay to be treated like she was. She wanted them to acquire all the happiness they could get.

“Mama, we know how you’re treated.”

She flinched. Oh, God, no. “Who told you?”

“No one. We’ve heard people talk about it over the years, and we would hear you cry when we passed your room. There’s always a guard with us, or we would have broken in and killed the bastard.”

“Oh, Angelica, no.”

“We hate him, Mama.”

Aria pulled her tightly against her and kissed the top of her head. She couldn’t think of anything to say as she made eye contact with Trent and Mateo, who sat in the front seat. Mateo turned around from the front passenger seat, and Trent looked at them in the rearview mirror. She knew they hurt for her, and she hated the pain she saw in their eyes.

It was the middle of the night, so very few cars were about. Her head swiveled right and left, trying to take in everything.

She couldn't remember the last time she'd been able to leave her house. She caught the keen interest in her baby's eyes and wanted to kill her husband even more.

The light flickered into the car when they passed under a streetlamp as they drove through the streets. They crossed the town and pulled into the basement of an expensive hotel. Then Aria and Angelica were instantly surrounded by a dozen men and herded into the employee elevator.

Trent had a hand on her upper arm as he led her into a suite.

*Oh, my. The room was beautiful. Everything was different shades of white and gray. There was a comfortable seating arrangement in the middle of the main room with a large TV and a bar off to the side. She noticed her reflection in the far wall made of all glass.*

Four different rooms led off from the main one. "This has four bedrooms?" she asked. She wondered if they planned to have separate rooms.

Mateo nodded. "Yes. Angelica will have one, and the three of us in another, and the men will take turns sleeping in the other two while they aren't working."

She exhaled and nodded. Her daughter went to the huge windows and looked out onto a vista of stars and night lights in the street. It looked almost magical.

"Isn't that pretty, Mama?" Angelica asked as she hugged her mother to her side.

"It is, sweetheart."

"Ladies, do you think you can go back to sleep?" Trent asked.

Angelica nodded.

Trent held out a hand to Angelica. "Come here, honey, and I'll get you settled in one of the rooms."

Aria hugged her daughter. "Get some rest, sweetheart."

"I will. I hope you do, too."

She nodded and smiled. She was tired but too hyped up to rest at the moment.

Could this be it? Could they really be free? It was almost too much to think about, and she didn't want to get her hopes up.

A short time later, a large body came up behind her and wrapped arms around her as she stood looking out the window. She jerked and looked at the other guards in the room.

"Should we do this?" she asked.

Trent nodded and kissed the side of her head. "Yes, honey. These men are loyal to you and not Lorenzo."

Her eyes widened and burned with tears she kept from falling. "Really?"

"Yes. Over the years, we've hired people who were against Lorenzo and pledged their loyalty to you, Mateo, and me."

She relaxed back against him. "I love you so much."

He kissed her neck, making a shiver race up her spine. "I love you, too, pet."

They stood quietly and stared out the window.

"Can you tell me what's going on?" she asked.

"If the plan goes well, you'll never have to see Lorenzo again as long as you live."

She twirled to face him. "Seriously?" It would be a dream come true if he died.

"Yes."

"How?"

"I don't know all the specifics. I just know the Macleans are taking care of him and Rizzo."

"Oh, my God. We'll owe them for the rest of our lives. When will we find out anything?" she asked.

"We won't get any news for a while, pet," he said.

"Have you heard anything about my other girls?" she asked.

"Just that they are doing well and are heavily protected."

"Good."



“How about we go lie down? I’m anxious to be able to hold you in my arms and not have to worry about being caught.”

She nodded. “I’d like that.”

He led her into one of the bedrooms and shut the door.

“Where’s Mateo?”

“He’s coming. He had a last-minute thing to do.”

She let him take her shoes and jeans off but left her shirt on.

He took off everything but his dress pants.

She lay on her side with her back pressed against his chest and one of his massive arms wrapped around her. It was the most wonderful feeling in the world.

“I’d ask for a kiss, but I think it would get out of control easily,” he said. “And I’d like Mateo with us the first time we make love.”

“I want that, too.”

“Good night, pet.”

“Night.”

An hour later, she felt another hot male body lay down beside her, and he maneuvered himself until she rested her head on his shoulder.

She giggled when Trent grunted his displeasure.

“Is everything okay?” she asked.

Mateo ran his hand up and down her arm that was draped over his stomach. “Yes, baby. Everything’s going well.”

“Why can’t I know how it’s happening?” she asked.

“Hey, we will never keep anything from you. It’s just right now, we don’t know a lot. The head of the Maclean family didn’t give too much information. I’m waiting for a call,” Mateo said. “I’ll tell you immediately after I’m done with it.”

“Okay, good.”

She felt his breathing deepen but couldn’t go back to sleep. Her worst fear was that Lorenzo would find them and kill

them all, or they'd have to return to him. She knew she'd take the brunt of his anger. She always had, even if she wasn't the cause, and she didn't think she'd survive this one if she were brought back to him.

## Chapter Three

Aria woke up alone in bed and stretched before looking around the room. The door was closed, but she could hear voices on the other side. She rolled until she sat on the edge of the bed and rested before she stood and walked into the bathroom.

She saw all her things spread out on the counter and decided to take a shower that would help her to wake up.

As she dried her hair, a shadow off to the side caught her attention. She hadn't gotten dressed yet, so she was standing in a towel wrapped around her torso.

"Good morning, baby." Mateo came to stand behind her with his hands on her shoulders.

She smiled. "Good morning."

"Can I get your clothes for you?"

"I'll wear the clothes I came in. I only had the jeans on for an hour last night."

"Okay, let's get you dressed. We have breakfast ready for you, and your daughter is waiting for you."

After hurriedly finishing her hair, she dressed and brushed her teeth.

When he opened the door, she saw Angelica at a table with Trent loading her plate and laughing at something she said.

"What's wrong?" Mateo asked when she stopped suddenly.

"I just haven't seen any of you this happy and relaxed," she said.

Mateo kissed her temple. "We're all going to be happy, baby."

She sighed and nodded. She really hoped so.

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Trent turned when he heard Aria's voice, and his breath caught in his throat. She was so fucking beautiful, and she was theirs. Mateo, Aria, and he had been together from the start. Aria had been twenty-seven, had lived with Lorenzo for years, and had all three girls by then.

Right from the start, they'd seen the abuse and wanted to kill Lorenzo, but she told them if that happened while her father was still alive, he would give her to someone else that could be worse, and there was a real possibility both Mateo and he would be killed.

Even after her father died, they knew she could and probably would end up worse off and taken away from them since an uncle of her father lived in the house she grew up in. There was also a real probability that the girls would be taken from her, and he knew she'd die if that ever happened.

It had been a fluke when Mateo found the door to the secret passageway that went to an empty bedroom no one knew about. They devised a plan to get her into it so they could take care of her and see her as much as possible.

They ensured her bedroom had been flooded. The carpet had to be taken up, and furniture was moved to another room, so Lorenzo moved her into the room they wanted her in.

There were others he could have put her into, but the men had done something to make each of them unlivable at that moment, like a broken sink in one, no drapes or bed linens in another, gouges in the wall in another.

They'd found other secret passages in the house and had kept them between the three. Lorenzo had bought this house right before he married Aria and didn't take the time or wasn't interested in looking around it. The previous owner had been slightly delusional and paranoid, so he had certain things done to the house to protect himself. Besides secret passages, there were four safe rooms in the house. Small, modified areas that held provisions and weapons.

When Mateo and Trent had been hired, they made it a point to look in every crevice in the house. Since they had worked at

night when few people had been around, they could study the house without anyone becoming suspicious.

They guessed there were other modifications to the house, but they hadn't found them yet. Aria was informed about all of them, but she'd only been able to see her own passage in her bathroom.

Lorenzo kept Aria and the girls locked in separate bedrooms the majority of the time and only brought them out when he wanted to show them off. But they were guarded at all times, so they felt she couldn't risk being seen out of her room.

Trent often thought that Lorenzo hadn't liked the women's closeness and felt threatened by it somehow, or it might have been a control thing.

He couldn't understand how Aria had been able to take the abuse her husband gave her and stay as sweet as she was. She would laugh if he ever told her this, but she was one of the strongest people he'd ever known, and he meant every word. More than once, she put herself between her girls and Lorenzo when he went after one of them. She'd been beaten so severely a few times it had taken her weeks to recuperate from the beatings.

He pulled out a chair. "Good morning, pet."

He bent and kissed the top of her head after she sat, and he pushed her up to the table. This routine was going to be something that would happen every day for the rest of their lives. He'd make sure of it.

"Good morning. The breakfast looks delicious."

"I might have gone overboard with the amount, but we have the other guys with us who need to eat."

"I'm glad you thought of that." She hugged her daughter.

"Good morning, baby. How did you sleep?"

"Great. You still look tired," Angelica said.

"I'll get more sleep later."

Mateo's phone rang, and he walked off. She tried eating some toast and fruit but kept her eyes on Mateo. She couldn't read

anything on his face when he came back to stand by them.

“He’s gone. You guys are free.”

Aria heard a buzzing sound in her ears, and her daughter cried out. Mateo did not just say she was free.

Mateo crouched in front of her and lifted her hand. “Baby, did you hear me? Lorenzo is gone forever.”

“Are you sure?”

Mateo chuckled. “Yes, I’m very sure.”

She cried out and flew into his arms, knocking him back to the ground and making him laugh. She kissed all over his face. A gasp tore from her mouth when she felt someone lift her from Mateo.

She turned and smiled up at Trent. God, they were both so handsome. Trent with his sable-colored hair and bright blue eyes, and Mateo with his coffee-colored hair and brown eyes. Both of them were large and muscular, with colorful tattoos on their chest, back, and arms.

“Today, our lives together begin.” Trent kissed her with a passion that took her breath.

She laughed when he twirled her around, making her dizzy. She would have fallen if he hadn’t had a hold of him.

“What happens now?” she asked.

“We go back to the house. We’ll go see the Macleans in a few days. We want you to get some sleep and eat. I’ll call Alastair later.”

She leaned against him and then felt her daughter move between them, making them laugh and then hug her. Tears stung her eyes at the thought that her babies were safe from two monsters and could now live full lives.

## Chapter Four

Mateo helped her from the car when they got home. She looked up at the house she'd lived in for twenty-five years and saw it differently. She and her men were going to make this their home. They planned to take everything that reminded them of Lorenzo and burn it or throw it away, then bring in things they picked.

"Are you okay, baby?" Mateo asked and wrapped an arm around her waist.

"I'm more than okay."

"You look tired, love. How about a nap, lunch, and some cuddling before bedtime? We could watch a movie or play cards."

She grinned. The thought of lying naked between them filled her head. On the one hand, she was apprehensive that she wouldn't be able to have sex with them, and on a deeper part, her need for them was a fiery obsession. She was afraid she was going to jump one or both of them.

"If you guys take a nap with me, I'll lie down."

"How about if I nap with you while Trent gets a few things taken care of, and then he'll come."

As much as she wanted to dig into the office and start to work, she could feel her body grow weak. There was plenty of time later.

Angelica ran ahead of them.

"Where are you going?" Aria called out.

Angelica turned with a huge smile. "I'm going into the backyard. I've stared out my window at it for so long, and now I can actually touch and smell the flowers."

She looked up at the guys. "Is it safe for her?"

"Yes. We have the whole area covered with more guys than Lorenzo had. We will keep all of you safe."

Aria smiled, nodded, and turned to look at her daughter. “You go ahead. I’m going to go up and nap.”

“Call me if you need me.”

“Have fun.”

She smiled as her daughter laughed and tore into the house. “She’ll be guarded back there the whole time, right?”

“Yes, baby. We’ve got guards who are one hundred percent loyal to us. I don’t want you to worry about that.”

Mateo led her up to their room and pulled all her clothes off, except for her panties. He laid her under the blanket before stripping his own clothing off, leaving him in just boxers.

“You’re so handsome.”

He grinned, slid onto the mattress beside her, and pulled her into his arms. “Thank you. I’m glad you find me attractive. It will make getting into your panties much easier.”

She giggled and tucked her head under his chin.

When she opened her eyes a few hours later, she saw it was late afternoon. She stretched.

“Ouch.”

She jerked her head around to see Trent and rolled toward her. “When did you come to bed?”

“About two hours ago.”

“Oh, wow. How long did I sleep?”

“About five hours.”

Her eyes widened. “You guys didn’t have to stay here with me if you had things to do.”

Trent kissed her lips. “There’s nothing more important than taking care of you.”

“I love you,” she said.

“I love you too, pet.”

“I love you three, baby,” Mateo said behind her, making Trent snort and laugh.



“Have you seen Angelica?” she asked.

“Yes, she went over to see her sisters. She said to hug and kiss you and that she’ll see you in the morning.”

“She’s not coming home?”

“Not today. Is that okay?” Mateo asked.

“Yes. I love the idea of the three girls together. They didn’t get a lot of chances to spend time together while they grew up.”

“Good, because we’re already planning on having you in bed for the rest of today,” Mateo said.

There was no place she’d rather be, and she had no desire to leave the room for the rest of the day. Everything could wait until then, but there was a knock on the door.

“I’ll get that,” Mateo said and rolled out of bed.

“Who is it?” she asked.

“It’s our dinner tray,” Trent told her. “I ordered it special before I came up here.”

Mateo pulled the cart in and shut and locked the door.

She sat up in bed and let the blanket pool around her waist. After the first time they bathed her, she hadn’t had a shy bone in her body when it came to them.

Trent smoothed the blanket out, and Mateo put out the food. She couldn’t believe her eyes. There were so many delicious things that she had been forbidden to eat, and the men remembered.

“Would you like some wine, baby?” Mateo asked.

“Yes, please.”

“Do you want to start with the cheesecake or cheeseburger?” Trent asked.

“Cheesecake.”

He chuckled and handed her a plate. Her eyes slid closed after the first bite. “Mmmm. Oh, God, this is so good.”

The men laughed and ate their own. She ate about half the piece of cake and then started on the cheeseburger and fries.

“Oh, Lord,” she moaned and relaxed back against the headboard. “I’ve never eaten that much in one sitting in my life.”

Trent pressed a kiss to her shoulder. “You might want to prepare yourself for pizza night sometime soon.”

She loved pizza. “When is that?”

“We were thinking this Friday. We’re planning a movie night in the family room no one ever uses.”

She clapped. “Yes, I love that idea.”

“Good,” Mateo said and kissed her.

“Do you want to watch a movie before we go to bed?” Trent asked as he put the things back on the cart.

“Yes.”

“Which one haven’t you seen?” Mateo asked.

“I want to watch Fifty Shades of Grey.”

Trent choked. “Pet, do you know what that’s about?”

“Yes, but if you’re too uptight, we can pick a Disney movie,” she said.

Both men stared at her for a stunned moment. Then Trent pounced on her, wrestling her onto her back and then tickling her.

She shrieked. “Oh, God. Please don’t. I hate being tickled.”

“Good to know,” Mateo said.

She scowled at him. “You’re no help.”

Mateo chuckled, and then Trent pressed a hot kiss to her lips.

“Mateo, will you find Fifty Shades of Grey on Netflix for us?” Trent stared down at her with a look of need and hunger. It made her blood rush through her veins.

“Sure.”

## Chapter Five

Trent sat her against a pile of pillows and with her wine glass in her hands. The guys settled in on either side of her as the movie turned on.

A quarter of the way through the movie, she realized she might have made a mistake. She'd never watched anything so sexy or erotic in her life, and it got her body heated. Her cunt was wet and tight.

She looked from one man to the other. They seemed to have their attention on the movie, but for some reason, she sensed that it was all on her. She brought the blanket up to hide her hard little nipples and gasped when Mateo yanked it back down.

“We like seeing you aroused, baby.”

“But—”

“No butts.”

“Are you guys aroused?” she asked.

Both men laughed and whipped the blanket farther down to show her their erections.

The breath caught in her throat. She looked back and forth and got the courage to ask for what she'd dreamed of for years.

“I need... Can we— I need you both to fuck me.”

“Are you sure you're ready?” Mateo asked. “We can wait as long as you need, baby.”

“No. I can't wait. I've waited for over a decade for the both of you to make love to me.”

Trent cupped her face in the palm of his hand. “Okay, pet. We'll take care of you. Just relax and enjoy.”

She waited to see how they would react and hadn't been ready for how they both came at her, making her giggle. Flat on her back, she had one man kissing the hell out of her while the

other was running his thumb over one of her nipples and sucking on the other.

Aria hadn't realized how much it would affect her, and she wondered if she'd be able to deal with them. She had to try because she wanted a normal sex life. Well, as normal as it could be with two men.

"Everything's going to be okay, pet," Trent said.

"I know. I just don't want to disappoint you guys."

"That's not possible," Mateo whispered against one of her breasts before he sucked her nipple into his mouth, making her bow off the mattress.

"Oh, God," she gasped.

"Do you like that?" Trent asked.

"Yes." The heat and suction from Mateo's lips made her abdomen tighten in need. Cream flowed from her cunt, wetting her thighs and the sheet underneath her.

Trent moved down in between her legs. His thumbs spread her cunt lips apart and blew on her swollen clit. "I want a taste of this pussy."

God, she didn't know if she could handle this type of pleasure. She hadn't known it existed. It felt like electric shocks spread through her body and tightened her core almost painfully. The throbbing in her cunt grew more intense, and she cried out again and again.

Mateo cupped and sucked first one breast and then the other, paying special attention to her tight nipples. At the same time, Trent licked and ate at her like he was starved. Her fingers clutched his hair, making him chuckle.

"Let's see how she takes a finger," Trent said.

He started to push one of his large, blunt-tipped fingers steadily into her cunt. She hadn't realized how big his fingers were until he was fucking her with one.

"So, fucking tight and juicy," Trent said. "Mateo, man, you've got to feel this."

“Hell yeah.” Mateo groaned.

She felt one finger pull out and another slightly different one pushed into her.

“Goddamn, woman. You’re going to burn us alive.”

She felt him pull out.

“I want to see how she takes two,” Mateo said.

“All right.”

Trent pressed two fingers into her, making her feel stretched. Her husband’s cock hadn’t been this large. She wondered if she would have a problem taking their cocks into her cunt.

“Let’s try three,” Trent said and started to thrust three into her.

She cried out in shock but also felt her cunt cream even more, and her need escalated. She would never have thought she’d enjoy this kind of sensual pain, but she’d take anything these men gave her.

“Hand me a condom, man.”

“No,” she said. “I’m not sure I can get pregnant, but I need to feel you both come in me and fill me with your seed. I would be thrilled if we get pregnant, but I won’t stress over it.”

“Goddamn, woman. We’ll take you any way we can.” Trent moved up her body.

Mateo leaned away from them to give Trent some space, but he still had his hand on her breast. Trent stared down at her before he leaned in and kissed her softly and so sweetly that it brought tears to her eyes.

“Make love to me,” she begged.

She felt his cock head start to press against her cunt and steadily work its way into her. Both men watched her carefully for any discomfort, but all she wanted was more.

“Hurry,” she said. “I’ve waited so long for this. I don’t want to wait any longer.”

“There’s no way I’m going to hurt you, pet. You just lie there and let your men make you feel good.”

Her nails dug into his upper arms, and she pressed her heels into his muscular ass.

Mateo chuckled. "I think she's getting impatient, man. Give her what she wants."

Trent gritted his teeth, and she screamed when he thrust the last few inches into her.

"Fuck, Jesus." Trent groaned. "I've never felt anything like this in my life."

"Please."

"I know, pet. Just relax for me."

She nodded at Trent and relaxed as he started to pump into her. He took it slow and steady for a few minutes, but she kept begging for more.

"God, woman, I love you so fucking much," Trent murmured against the side of her head.

"I love you guys more than I ever thought possible," she said.

The breath caught in her throat when Trent powered into her, moving her steadily higher and to a place she'd never been to before but craved with every breath she took.

"Fuck, baby, I need you to come for me," Trent said.

"It's— It's so..."

"Mateo, man, help her out. She's fighting it this first time because she doesn't understand."

"You got it." Mateo slid his hand between them and played with her clit. "Give Trent what he wants, love, or he's going to fuck you all night, and I need my chance to be inside of you. Feel how good he's making you feel. I can make you feel just as good. Now come."

The breath stalled in her throat as the band inside of her body felt like it snapped and threw her into a kaleidoscope of feelings and flashes of colors. She vaguely heard herself scream, which mixed with Trent's groan as he came. It was the most beautiful thing she'd ever heard.

## Chapter Six

Mateo watched as Trent bent and kissed their woman, and he could practically feel the love between them. Although he needed to be in her more than his next breath, he wanted to give them this moment because it was so special. It was the night they were finally making Aria their woman, and there was no way they'd ever let her go.

Finally, Trent kissed her one more time before he pulled out of her. She turned and looked at him with so much love in her gaze that it made tears sting his eyes.

"How are you doing, love?"

"I'm good," she said. "But I'd be better if I had you inside of me."

"Are you sure you're up for it?" Mateo asked.

She raised one of her eyebrows. "Are you calling me a pussy?"

He chuckled. "No, ma'am." He kissed her and ran his hand up and down her body. Then he studied her as he pushed two fingers into her and watched her arch and cry out.

"Please, Mateo. Don't make me wait."

"I know, baby."

He rolled on top of her and between her legs but instead of diving into her, he softly kissed her lips, face, and neck while he murmured to her. "You're so fucking beautiful. You're ours forever."

"Yes, please don't make me wait," she said.

He reached down between them, lined his cock up to her pussy, and pushed into her.

Her cries got louder and more desperate, and he could already feel his orgasm building.

The force of his thrusts became more urgent. Going faster and harder with every passing moment. He could tell she was close and just needed something to push her over.

“Trent, man, help her. She’s fighting it.”

“My pleasure.” Trent lay beside her, stroked his hand up and down her torso, and kissed her neck as Mateo continued to ram into her.

Mateo saw Trent’s hand disappear and then felt it against his balls. It startled him for a moment until he felt his finger spear deep into her ass. Over a decade ago, they’d shared women, and he knew he’d get used to feeling Trent’s touches. As long as he didn’t want to fucking cuddle with him, he was fine.

Aria screamed and tightened on his cock, making it nearly impossible for him to move.

“Fuck, yeah, that’s a good girl. Keep coming, baby,” Mateo said and let himself go.

A few minutes passed as he slowed, and they both concentrated on their breathing.

“I’m going to clean up. I’ll bring a washcloth back for her.”

Mateo nodded to Trent.

“God, baby. I love you so much.”

Aria stroked his cheek. “I love you so much. I can’t believe we finally get to touch each other. Tell me this isn’t a dream.”

Mateo smiled. “No, baby. This is very real, and it’s going to last until we die.”

“I hope that’s not for a long, long time,” she said.

“We’ll make sure of it.”

“Hey, man, pull out of her so I can clean her.”

Mateo slid from her cunt and to her side. He kept a hand on her thigh to hold it open for Trent. When Trent walked away, Mateo pulled her back against his chest and kissed the back of her head.



Mateo had never felt this height of emotion before as Aria cuddled up against him, and Trent got comfortable on her other side.

He would do whatever it took to keep her safe from harm and give her all the happiness she deserved. Always.

## Chapter Seven

A few days later, Aria stood in front of Angus and Alastair Maclean and her three daughters. Two of them stood by their husbands, while Angelica, Trent, and Mateo were on either side of her. She had a sneaking suspicion that her youngest daughter would be marrying one of the brothers, too. They tried to hide their attraction, but it was so blatant it felt like it charged the air around her.

“We’ve made a decision,” she said.

“Good,” Angus said.

“We will keep the house and legit businesses, and we’ll find every person involved in the human trafficking and tear them apart.”

“Mama, are you sure?” Faith asked.

She turned to her oldest. “We’re very sure. We’ve got some house cleaning to do and rooms we want to be redone, but otherwise, everything will be okay. My life wasn’t horrible because of the house I lived in, baby. It was because of the horrible man I had to marry.”

Trent cleared his throat. “We’ve got several businesses that will keep us busy and a house we will make our own.”

Faith nodded and leaned against Graham, her husband.

“Are you guys going to get married?” Hope asked.

Trent said. “Your mother doesn’t want a wedding ceremony, honey.”

Aria shook her head. “I hope you understand, baby. I already had one and hated every bit of it. A piece of paper isn’t going to tell us that we belong to each other.”

“Oh, I definitely understand,” Hope said. “I’m just glad you three are finally together.”

The men put their hands on her, Mateo’s on her lower back, while Trent held her hand. “We are, too,” Aria said.

“I think your ideas for the Moretti family are wonderful,” Angus said. “Call if you need anything. We are family now.”

Aria looked at her three daughters and smiled. They had all found good Maclean men and would all stay together eventually. Angelica was still fighting her attraction and would come to live with her until she married, but she would spend a lot of time at the Macleans with her sisters and Beth. “Yes, we are.”

“Let’s get you home, pet.” Trent looked at everyone in the room. “Thank you for everything.”

Angus and Alastair nodded.

“You’re welcome,” Alastair said.

Mateo and Trent got her out into one of the vehicles. The guys were overzealous in protecting her if she went anywhere, so she would always have at least a dozen men with her. She hoped they’d calm down when everything settled, but she wasn’t holding her breath.

For years, the three of them had often talked in the early morning hours when most people were asleep. They’d discussed what they would do if she ever got free, and now that she was, they were going to do everything they always talked about.

“We’ve still got some personnel to interview,” Mateo said. “A few of them I can see keeping, but at least one was very loyal to Lorenzo, so I don’t trust him.”

Trent nodded. “Franco is a wild card.”

“I don’t think I’ve met him,” she said.

“We’ll see what you think,” Mateo said.

She adored that they never decided without her. They gave her the power she’d never had before, and she loved them for it. It would be one of the best things for her as she recovered from all the years of abuse.

“The security cameras around the house should be set up and ready to go,” Trent said.

“How many men did you have to get rid of?” she asked.

“Only three. They were the oldest ones and had been loyal to Lorenzo since you two were married.”

“The severance packages we gave them made them happy,” Mateo said. “Frankly, I don’t think they cared too much that Lorenzo was gone.”

“Good.”

“Do you want to go up and rest for a bit?” Trent asked her.

She shook her head. “No, I’m excited to go through the office and get rid of what we don’t like. On Monday, I have a decorator coming to look at the rooms we want to be redone.”

“Did you give her name to Devon, our head of security, so he knows she’s coming?” Mateo asked.

Her back stiffened. “No. Am I supposed to get permission from the head of security every time?”

Trent rolled his eyes. “No, we want everyone that comes in contact with you looked into. We will never take your safety for granted, pet. You’re our queen and will always be our first priority.”

Trent smiled when she rolled her eyes. They had called her a queen for years. In some families, that was what she represented. Lorenzo had often called himself a king. Kings and queens and her girls would be princesses.

She relaxed her shoulders. “I’ll call him when we get home.”

Trent pressed a kiss to her head.

They pulled up around the circle drive and stopped at the two massive main doors. She loved the intricate designs in the wood and was amazed when they were both open. It was large enough to get a large truck through.

Trent opened the door facing the house, pulled her out, and wrapped an arm around her. “Let’s get you inside.”

She understood the reasoning, but she disliked having to still live in fear. Men surrounded her as they got her into the house,

and she finally exhaled. “Should we get the interviews done with?” she asked.

Mateo nodded. “I’ll have them called to the office.”

“We want you to stay on the other side of the desk just in case, pet.”

“All right.” She nodded and headed that way. Once through the door, she stood in the middle of the room and looked around. It would have been a great room if it hadn’t belonged to her husband, so she just wanted to do a few things like new furniture, paint, and carpet. She planned to keep the shelving and desk and maybe have two others brought in. The room was big enough. They had also considered taking the next two rooms adjoining it to make into separate offices for the men but put in doors that would make it feel like one long office when they were opened.

It was something they needed to discuss before the designer got there.

After she went behind the desk, she opened all the drawers and pulled everything out. She was going to inspect the whole thing to see if there were any hidden compartments that she guessed there were.

“Baby, this is Mitchell,” Mateo said.

She looked up into his eyes and found them cold. She moved around the desk to stand in front of him. “Hello, Mitchell. You know who I am?”

“Yes.”

She tilted her head to the side. “Would you call my husband sir when you addressed him?”

The man looked confused. “Yeah.”

“Then why don’t you address me as ma’am?”

“Whatever,” Mitchell said.

She made her decision when the man rolled his eyes. She could tell her men had seen it, too, because they both stiffened and growled.

“I don’t think working here will make you happy.”

“Now, wait a damn minute,” he said in anger.

She held up her hand. “Would you have rolled your eyes at Lorenzo or any other man?”

His face turned red, which gave her the answer.

“We both know you wouldn’t have. If you consider me a weak person, you’ll find out differently. My father is Julien Hamilton. I’ve been taught how to deal with people my whole life.” She caught his look and was pleased to see the fear in it. “Yes, I can see you do. Our family was one of the biggest and more ruthless families in New York. A cousin still runs it. So, you see, I won’t hesitate to kill someone who endangers my family. You don’t respect me, and it tells me everything I need to know about your personality. You will never be able to accept me as your boss because I won’t put up with your shit. I won’t hesitate to put you in the ground if you insult me, and I’m guessing my guys feel the same way. So, I think it best you leave for your own health.”

She looked at her men. “Will you have someone help him pack anything he might have in his locker and take everything that belongs to us, like his weapons?”

“Now, wait a fucking minute,” Mitchell said.

She could feel his hostility rolling off and the hatred in his eyes.

Trent took one of Mitchell’s arms and started for the door.

“How can you let a fucking woman boss you around?”

“Beca—”

“Trent, may I answer that?” she said.

Trent turned the man around but didn’t lose his grip on him.

“These two men have as much right as I do to make whatever decision that needs to be made. The three of us are equal partners in this family. They’re just allowing me to help with this because they want me comfortable in my own home. So

be warned, you're now dealing with one of the male owners of our dynasty."

Trent turned him back to the door but smiled at her over his shoulder. His grin grew when she blew him a kiss.

Mateo snorted when the door closed behind them. "You might want to hide."

Her eyes widened. "Why?"

"Trent wasn't pleased about you getting that close to the man. I wasn't either, but he told you to stay on the other side of the desk."

Oh, hell, he had, but she'd forgotten. "Shit."

Mateo laughed.

She knew they wouldn't hurt her, but they would spank her or threaten not to give her an orgasm for a while, and she hated that because she really liked the orgasms these men gave her. It had only been a few, but she was already addicted.

"I was kidding about hiding because he'd be more pissed if he had to find you."

She growled at Mateo, pressed on her stomach, walked around the desk, and sat down.

Trent was back in another few minutes. His eyes stalled on her and narrowed. Taylor and another guard followed him in and stayed in the middle of the room.

Trent bent over the desk. "You and I need to have a little talk, pet."

"I know. I'm sorry."

He nodded and straightened. "This is Taylor. He hasn't been here long." He turned to the young man. "Taylor, this is Aria."

She exhaled and looked at the young man.

The man nodded. "It's nice to meet you, ma'am."

## Chapter Eight

Mateo watched the man swallow several times, but his gaze stayed glued to Aria. If he didn't know any better, he'd think the boy had a crush on his woman. He didn't feel jealous because the boy was around her daughter's age, and he knew his woman loved him.

He bit back a grin when he determined she had no clue how the boy felt. She was oblivious. He sometimes forgot that although she'd gone through a lot, she was still so innocent.

Someone called his name, bringing him back to the conversation.

"What do you think?" she asked him.

"If you're okay with him, I am, too."

She nodded and looked back at the man. "We'd like you to stay on, Taylor."

"Yes. Thank you, ma'am."

Mateo bit his lip when the man nodded enthusiastically.

"If you have a question, you can come to any of us three until they pick who they want to manage the security."

"Pet, we asked Devon to stay, and he took the job," Trent said.

"We talked about it a bit. He's one of the first guards we befriended when we got here, and he's been on our side the whole time."

Her smile widened. "That's wonderful. You've met Devon, Taylor?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Good. Go to him for instructions, okay?"

"Yes, ma'am." The man scampered out of the room.

He saw the look in Aria's eyes and laughed.

"What?" she asked as she turned his way.



“The look on your face,” Mateo said.

“Well, the poor boy was so nervous. Why did you guys have to scare him so much?”

The men held back their laughter. Very few men who came into contact with her weren't enthralled by her beauty, and she never thought that, which made them chuckle.

Not only gorgeous, but she was also generous, thoughtful, and cared about others. Many had commented that her posture and mannerisms reminded them of a queen. She would just scoff at that and say she was far removed from being a queen. They never argued with her, but they did agree with the people who said it.

He'd never forget the first time he saw her. It was his first day, and he was out in the back. He looked up at her balcony to see her in a white nightgown, her long hair blowing against her, the wind making her hair fly out and plastering her gown to her breasts. She was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen.

When he returned to his apartment that night, he told Trent what he'd seen. It was a few days before Trent caught a glimpse of her, which also affected him. It felt like they were destined to be together.

Trent and he had shared a few women in the past but never thought they'd end up falling in love with the same one and seeing a future with the three of them as a triad.

When they learned how she and her children were treated, they were furious. Their first thought was to kill Lorenzo, but they needed to make sure it was something she wanted. He knew how mafia families were, but he didn't know the particulars of her family. If they made that move, they could put her in a worse situation.

Fortunately, they were able to talk to her when they found the tunnels and had her moved into the room.

She'd been terrified of them at first, but she'd learned to trust them the first time they'd taken care of her after Lorenzo had beaten her. The anger that grew inside of him made him want to howl. How could anyone hurt that tiny precious woman?

They often bathed her, patched her wounds, and iced her contusions after her husband had left her. He only hoped that whatever was happening to him was worse than the pain he inflicted on her.

“I’d like to see Devon. I have yet to meet him.”

“Okay, we can have him come up here,” Mateo said.

“I’ve never been down in the security room, and I’d like to see it. There’s not a place in this house that I don’t want to know and see.”

“Sure. Trent and I made sure to know every square inch. We’ll show you everything we’ve got. We still think there are more tunnels somewhere, so we keep looking.”

“And just the three of us know about them?” she asked.

“Yes, and we’d like to keep it this way,” Trent said.

“I agree.” She stood. “Can we see the security room now?”

“Are you going to want to lie down soon?” Mateo asked as he smoothed the hair from her beautiful face.

“No. I want to get things figured out. I want the house in order. We’re taking care of the personnel, which was a big thing on the list. We’ve got the decorator coming tomorrow. But I want all the business running well, and I know you guys don’t want me to leave the house a lot, so I’ll leave the visiting up to you guys.”

“Good.” Trent kissed the side of her head. “Our first priority is to keep you safe.”

“But I also need you guys to be safe.”

“We will be. We’ll always have men with us.”

“Okay. I also want to get a hold of the fed Angus told us about who’s in charge of investigating what Rizzo did for the human trafficking syndicate they were running.”

“We don’t want you to talk to him alone,” Mateo said.

“Oh, I won’t. I’ll let you two do the talking. I just want every bastard thrown in jail or killed.”

“Hey, Trent, did you know our woman was this bloodthirsty?”

Trent snorted.

Mateo took her hand. “Let’s go visit Devon before showing you the house.”

“I’d love that.”

They took her down the back stairs to the basement.

“Oh, wow. How many rooms are down here?”

God, she’d lived here for over twenty years and had never been able to explore.

“I would guess at least twelve,” Trent said. “There’s the huge main security room, and Devon has an office off of that.”

“Would he want an office on the main floor now that he’s in charge of all the security?” she asked.

Mateo squeezed her hand. “Good idea. We’ll have to ask.”

They showed her the workout room. A few guys were on a mat in the back, boxing.

She gasped. “Oh, my God. They’re going to hurt each other.”

Mateo looked at Trent over her head and grinned. “No, baby, they are training. We have to be tough to do our job.”

“You mean you guys hit each other?” Her voice rose with each word.

He couldn’t hold back his laugh at the shock and censure in her voice. “Yes, but it’s how you learn how to block.”

“You guys won’t do this anymore, will you?” she asked.

Mateo hugged her to his chest. “Yes, we will. One, we want to stay in shape, and two, we want to stay strong to protect you.”

“Can’t you just carry a gun?”

Trent snorted.

The men had stopped when Trent whistled and headed their way.

“Hey, guys, I don’t know if you’ve formally met Ms. Moretti.”

Mateo watched the men's mouths drop open, and their faces turned red at their first up-close look at her.

"Can't they call me Aria?" she asked Trent.

"Sure. She wants to check out the house. Baby, this is Aden and Kaysen."

She reached out to shake their hands, but they were wrapped up in tape to keep from breaking anything.

Kaysen lifted his hands to show her how sweaty and dirty they were. "Ma'am, you're not going to want to touch us."

"Well, it's nice to meet you," she said.

"You've never seen the house, ma'am?" Aden asked.

"No, not really. I've probably been in one-fifth of the rooms in the house in the twenty years I've lived here."

Mateo shook his head over hers, ensuring they didn't ask any more questions.

"I have to tell you guys, this is a scary room for me. Most of these machines look like torture devices."

All four men laughed.

"Some of them feel like it, too, ma'am," Aden said.

"We're taking her in to meet Devon."

Before they turned her away, she said, "I want you two to be careful."

They both nodded and said, "Yes, ma'am."

Mateo caught their grins after she turned away.

They walked her through a large room with a dozen large TVs mounted on the walls and men sitting at the desks. The house and grounds were constantly monitored, and Trent and he planned to add more safety measures.

"Hey, man, Aria wanted to meet you," Mateo said.

Devon walked to her with a smile on his face and his hand out.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Ms. Moretti."

"Please call me Aria."

Devon looked at the men and got their nods of approval. Aria gazed around with wide eyes and didn't see it.

"How do you keep track of everything?"

Devon scanned the room. "I guess experience helps. I didn't know a whole lot when I came to work here, but I learned. I've always been good with computers."

She smiled at him.

Mateo saw the flush on his friend's face and bit his lip. Even the mighty Devon fell under her charm.

"We were wondering if you want an office on the main floor since you're taking over the security in the house," Mateo asked.

Devon's mouth opened. "Oh, well. I'm not sure."

"We think it's a great idea if it's what you want," Mateo said. "You can design your own office to oversee everything from where you are and make someone manager down here."

"I like the idea. Which room are you thinking of?" Devon asked.

Aria looked at Trent and then him. "These guys would have to tell you."

"We can go around and check out which available rooms you'd like later today. You can pick your own if that's okay," Trent said.

"Sure. Just call down."

"Also, Aria has a decorator coming tomorrow."

"Let me write down her name."

Aria gave him the name and the time.

"I didn't know to approve it with you. I wasn't thinking. I'm sorry."

Devon seemed shocked. "No, it's fine. We both have a lot to learn. Just know I'm here to keep you safe, so I'd like to know who comes to visit beforehand. All right?"

She nodded. "Thank you."

“Thank you, Aria.”

“We’ve got more to show her. We’ll talk to you later today,”  
Mateo said.

“You got it. It was very nice to meet you, Aria.”

“You too, Devon. Bye.”

She stopped them down the hallway. “You guys would tell me  
if I’m saying something wrong or sound ignorant, right?”

Mateo pulled her against him. God, the thought she felt that  
way broke his heart. “At no time have you done or said  
anything wrong. And we’ve known you for a long time, baby,  
and not once have you sounded ignorant.”

## Chapter Nine

She rested against Mateo's chest and then sighed when Trent came up behind her and ran his hands up and down her sides.

"I don't know if I told you, but my father took me out of school when I was in eighth grade, so I never graduated high school."

"Why did he do that, baby?"

"He needed me to stay pure for the man he would give me to, so he didn't want me around boys. He also didn't think I needed to know anything other than how to care for a house and children. I've read everything I could get my hands on over the years, but sometimes I'm still afraid I sound stupid. The fact Lorenzo told me that on many occasions doesn't help."

"I don't want to hear that, pet, ever again. You're a smart, beautiful, loving woman, and you couldn't get more perfect."

She snorted.

Trent pulled her around to face him, and the look of love in his eyes made tears fill hers.

"No woman out there is more perfect than you."

"You say that because you love me," she said and tried to smile.

"You're damn right I do, but I thought that before I fell for you. I'm warning you now if I hear that shit again, I'll tie you to our bed and play with you for hours without letting you come."

"That's mean." She pouted.

He gripped the back of her head, pulled it back, and kissed her with all the emotion she'd seen in his expression.

She opened her mouth and gave him everything he demanded and more.

When he finally raised his head, she was breathless and dizzy.

Mateo came up behind her and wrapped an arm around her waist. “I back every word Trent just said.”

“So, you’re ganging up on me?” she asked.

“Yeah, get used to it,” Trent said. “Now, let’s go. We’ll show you the rest and get back to the office. What should I tell the kitchen about dinner?”

“Oh, I don’t have a preference for food, but I’d like to sit in the small dining room.”

“Then that’s what we’ll do.”

They only had an hour to work after the tour of the place and before dinner was served. They still hadn’t gotten to every room in the mansion.

“Ready to eat, baby?” Mateo asked.

“Yes. I’m starved.”

They led her into the small dining room.

She had always loved this room. One wall had windows facing the garden in the back. Plants were placed around the room, and a beautiful antique hutch stood against the wall. It also had a big round table that could fit eight to ten people, and the chairs were padded in soft creamy leather.

The men sat on either side of her, and it wasn’t a minute before two maids came in and set glasses of water and a salad in front of them.

“Is there anything else you’d like to drink?”

She studied the maids and saw how scared they were. “What are your names?”

“I’m Becky, and she’s Theresa, ma’am.”

“It’s very nice to meet you.” The shock on her face told her they’d probably been treated horribly when Lorenzo was here.

“My name is Aria.”

“We know, ma’am,” Becky said. “We’ve caught glimpses of you over the years.”



“How long have you worked here?” she asked.

“I’ve been here four years,” Becky said.

“I’ve been here three years, ma’am.”

She stood to face them and took their hands. “I want to apologize if my husband abused you. From the expressions on your faces, he did. Please tell me he didn’t force you to have sex?”

Becky shook her head. “He said we were too ugly. But he would slap or kick us for no reason or if we got in his way.”

“That bastard.” She almost smiled at the way the girls’ eyes widened.

“Well, that will never happen again in this household. Lorenzo has gone ... on vacation and will never be back. If you have a problem with anyone, come find one of us.”

Aria squeezed the girls’ hands. “I hope you stay on with us.”

They both nodded enthusiastically.

“Good. We’d hate to lose you. By the way, neither of you is ugly. You’re both very pretty, in fact.”

Becky shook her head. “No—”

“Do you think I’m ugly?” Aria asked them.

Their mouths dropped open, and they shook their heads.

“No, God, no. You’re the most beautiful woman I’ve ever seen,” Becky said.

She smiled. “Lorenzo liked to tell me I was ugly and stupid all the time.”

“Really?” Becky asked in shock.

“Yes, so unless you think he didn’t lie to me, then he also lied to you.”

She loved the way the girls’ expressions lightened, and they smiled. “Between the three of us, I always thought he looked like a goat.”

The girls laughed and nodded.

“Good. You better go back in. Tell Maddie I kept you out here.”

“Yes, ma’am.” They both curtsied, grinned, and ran off.

“You know, Trent, sometimes I think our woman can’t get any better, and then she pulls this shit on us. She’s doing it on purpose to keep us on our toes.”

She laughed and sat back down. “Stop.”

Mateo picked up her hand and kissed her palm. “I’ll never stop, baby.”

She leaned forward and kissed him. “I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

She giggled when Trent lifted her away from Mateo and into his lap.

“Now it’s my turn,” he said and took her lips. When she was breathless, he raised his head. “I love you so much, pet.”

“I love you, too.” She never thought she could love anyone as much as she loved her daughters, but she was wrong. What she felt for them was a different kind of love but deeper since they’d bonded with sex and loving.

## Chapter Ten

Aria walked into Mateo's office, where he and Trent were talking.

"Hi, guys."

"There's my pretty woman," Mateo said.

"No, she's my pretty pet," Trent said.

She rolled her eyes because they both liked to argue about her sometimes.

"I have an idea, and I want to know what you think about it."

"All right," Mateo said.

"I want to have a large dinner party or a ball here at the house."

She watched as both men seemed to think about it for a moment.

"Devon will love it," Trent said sarcastically.

Aria laughed. Devon was obsessed with keeping them safe, so he vetted everyone who walked onto the property to ensure they weren't a threat.

"I know it will be a lot of extra work for him, but I've never been to a dinner party with you or my daughters, and I want to celebrate our lives and the fact we're all finally happy."

"I think it's a great idea, baby. Who would you like to invite?"

"Our whole family, meaning the Macleans. The people who manage our businesses, and a few of the other mafia families in the area we're on good terms with."

"Do you want your daughters involved with the planning?"

"Absolutely. The girls and I can find decorations online, a caterer, and flowers. Should we consider having a DJ or hiring a small band or quartet to play?" Since meeting Alastair's woman, Beth, Aria had taken her under her wing and made her

one of her daughters. She was not only beautiful but also the sweetest person she'd ever met.

"Good question," Trent said. "Let's think on that for a bit. When would you like it to happen?"

"We could do a holiday one at the beginning of December."

Mateo nodded. "That would work. It would give us five months to set it up. The first order of business is to get the guest list, and then we'll review it with Devon to see if there would be any problems. When we have that done, you girls can send out invitations with RSVPs."

"We'll want to know exactly who will be here, so we'll have to state if they have not RSVP'd by a certain time, they cannot come."

She nodded. "We could have a list at the front door of those who RSVP."

"What about that and sending them something like a golden ticket? That would get them through the gates, and then they'd have to give their names at the front door. It would be the second level of security."

Trent nodded. "I like that. Let's discuss it with Devon."

"I'll call the girls to see if they can come for lunch and party planning," she said.

"We'll go talk to Devon," the guys said and walked out.

Aria was just going to call Faith and get her to round up everyone, but since hearing about Beth's insecurities, she was going to make Beth the monarch of the family so she should take on those responsibilities.

"Macleans," a voice answered.

"Yes, this is Aria Moretti. May I speak to my daughter Beth, please?"

"Yes, of course."

A few minutes later, Beth answered.

"Aria?"

“Hello, sweetheart. I have an idea and a few favors to ask.”

“I’ll do whatever you need,” Beth said.

Aria smiled. She was so sweet. “I want to have a holiday party with the two families at the beginning of December.”

“Oh, well, I’m the wrong one to ask—”

“Beth, do you think my guys and I are less of a unit because we don’t have a piece of paper saying so?”

“No, of course not.”

Aria smiled. “Do you think you and Alastair are a couple?”

“Oh, well, I would say yes, maybe. We’re together.”

“What makes you different from me, sweetheart?”

“You’re the head of the Moretti family, for one, and I’m a nobody. You and your guys have discussed a future and marriage, but he hasn’t.”

“Have you talked about this with him?”

“We’ve tried, but we just end up having sex, so nothing gets discussed. He says he loves me and that he will always want me, so that’s enough for me.”

Aria sighed. She wanted to kick Alastair in the ass for being such an idiot. This woman, more than most, needed security, and he wasn’t giving her any. “We’ll talk more about this later. I consider you to be the monarch of your family—”

“Oh, God, no.”

“Beth, being with the head of the household makes you the monarch.”

“Only if we were, you know, together.”

“But you are.”

“You know what I mean.”

Aria could hear the panic in the young woman’s tone, so she backed off for the time being. “Let’s talk about the party. Can you round up the other girls and get them here? I need all four of you for this.”

“I can find the girls for you.”

“Good. Can the four of you come over today? We need to get started on it as soon as possible. We’ve only got five months to plan it.”

“I’m sure they can. I’ll have to ask Alastair if I can go.”

“If you can’t, we’ll just meet at your place.”

“I don’t want you to change anything for me,” Beth said.

“I damn well can. My final plea and favor, now tell me if this is offensive in any way, but I want you to call me Mama like the other girls.”

There was a moment of silence.

“Are you sure? How will the other girls feel?”

“They’ll love it. They have all talked about you as a sister, sweetheart. Any way you try to fight it, we’re still going to shove our way into your life.”

Beth giggled. “I’d like that very much.”

“Mama.”

Beth giggled again. “Mama.”

“You’ll get used to it. Whenever you forget, I’ll just kick you.”

Beth gasped and then burst into laughter. “I am very lucky to have a mama like you.”

“And I’m lucky to have four beautiful, sweet daughters. Don’t tell the other girls, but you are my sweetest one.”

Aria smiled when Beth laughed again.

“I’ll call you right back,” Beth said.

“I’ll be waiting.”

## Chapter Eleven

Several months later, Aria turned one way and then the other in the large mirror in her bathroom. The silver sequined dress fit her perfectly. Thin straps held up the dress that hugged her figure and barely touched the ground, so she wouldn't have a problem tripping and falling.

The party that night had taken all five months to plan and execute it. She had no idea so much went into having a party. They were glad they'd done it but didn't plan to have another one anytime soon.

She put on the diamond earrings and choker the men got her and looked to see how it went with the dress. She decided the jewelry was perfect for the dress.

"Jesus Christ, woman."

Aria spun around to see Mateo in a tux.

"Oh, my. Look at the handsome man I've got."

Mateo walked to her and pulled her into his arms. "You are so damn beautiful. I love you so much."

"I love you so much."

He bent and took her lips in a kiss that never failed to make her head spin.

"Baby, we have to stop, or I'll have you stripped out of that dress and we'll be late to our own party."

She sighed, but she knew he was right.

"But later, Trent and I will take you together."

"Yes." Oh, hell. She loved it when they were both inside of her, stretching her and making her feel both submissive and powerful at the same time.

He wrapped an arm around her waist. "Come on, Trent is downstairs waiting for us."

Aria was glad to see her children already there with their family. There was enough of them alone to make a party, but Aria and the girls had invited over two hundred people, and amazingly, all but a few RSVP'd to come.

A buffet was set up in the formal dining room with dozens of tasty appetizers, and two different bars were set up on either side of the living room. Fortunately, the weather was cooperating, and they had all the doors to the back garden open so people could have space. They had put several seating areas on the patio and in the corner of the rooms for people to rest. Waiters walked around the room with appetizers and glasses of champagne for the people.

They were thrilled when Angus decided to come and had made a point of putting him in an area where he could see everything, and people could come to talk with him easily. He was close enough to enjoy the band, and they'd appointed a maid just to serve him. Aria had the maid dress up so she didn't stand out. Aria knew his family would be around him all night, so she wasn't worried about him enjoying it.

"Hot damn," Trent yelled when he saw her.

She smiled, met him halfway, and fell into his arms.

"I have a notion of lifting you over my shoulder and taking you back upstairs."

She laughed. "You can't. Maybe later."

"Oh, definitely later."

"Mama," Faith said and ran to her and hugged her tightly.

"You look absolutely gorgeous."

"Oh, baby. I think you are. All my girls are so beautiful."

Hope and Angelica came to her and hugged her. Aria looked around to see Beth standing by Alastair with his hand on her upper arm as if to keep her next to him.

She walked over to them and pulled Beth from his grip, biting back a smile at the scowl on his face, and into her arms.

"Baby, you look amazing. You seem to glow, and every man is walking around is staring at you."



Beth smiled. “No, I think they’re staring at you. You look beautiful.”

“You’re so sweet. I have got the prettiest daughters in the world. You all look like princesses.”

“Doesn’t that make you the queen?” Mateo whispered in her ear, making her snort, and he laughed.

“Come on, more people are coming, and we must greet them.”

Aria grinned at the pained looks in her men’s eyes. She hadn’t demanded that her daughters stand with them, but she wanted all of them close so she could introduce them to a few people.

The monarchs of another mafia family walked in. It was a much smaller, less wealthy one, but they were good for some things, so Aria and the men hadn’t wanted to insult them by not inviting them.

Aria had talked to the wife, Helen Carmichael, a few times on the phone, and she seemed very nice. With her first glance at her husband, Aria instantly tell he was full of himself, and she hated how he ignored his wife who stood submissively behind him.

Aria walked past the husband, pretending not to notice when his mouth dropped open when she hugged Helen. “Helen, I’m so pleased you were able to come tonight.”

“You know Mrs. Moretti?” her husband asked in shock.

Helen blushed. “Oh, well...”

Aria took over when she floundered. “We’ve talked a few times on the phone, but we really hit it off, and I hope she feels the same way. We’ll have to plan to have lunch soon.”

Helen smiled. “I’d like that. I enjoyed talking to you, too.”

“Come, I’d like you to meet my family. These two are my men, Trent and Mateo.”

“Both of them?” Thomas Carmichael asked.

Aria raised one of her brows. “Yes. Is there a problem?”

“Oh, what, no. It was just a shock,” he said.

She took Helen's arm and pulled her over to her family.  
"Helen and Thomas, I'd like you to meet my daughters and their men." She pointed to Beth. "That is Elizabeth and her man Alastair Maclean."

"Yes, yes, we've met before," Thomas said and came forward and energetically shook Alastair's hand.

"It's nice to see you again, Thomas."

"You too, Mr. Maclean. You have a beautiful wife."

"Thank you."

Aria flinched inside at the shadow that blinked in Beth's eyes for a moment.

"Here is another daughter, Faith, and her husband, Graham."

It took another five minutes to introduce them because Thomas was all over them, acting like they were fast friends. The pained look on the Maclean men's faces almost made her laugh.

She walked back to the door where the line continued for another hour.

"This feels like more than two hundred," she said to Trent.

"You're just not used to crowds."

"That's true."

"Hey, baby, here's a glass of champagne."

She was grateful. "Thank you. I needed this."

"I think most everyone is here, so we can start moving around the room," Trent said.

Aria had been excited about the party but was so out of her comfort zone that she felt insecure. Looking out into the living room from the foyer, she felt like she was in a different world. Fortunately, one of the men was always by her, so she could handle anything.

## Chapter Twelve

Before they had taken a step away, they all turned to the door as it opened.

Aria's brows snapped together and then smoothed out, and she smiled and held a hand out to the man who walked in.

"Welcome. I am Aria, and these are my men, Trent and Mateo. I'm sorry, and I don't mean to be rude, but what is your name? You look so familiar."

The man smiled, but she could tell it wasn't one that she'd describe as happy.

"My name is Dominic Russo, and we did meet a long time ago."

"I'm so sorry I can't remember." She shook his hand.

"That's fine."

She nodded. "There is a buffet in the dining room and two bars set up. I hope you enjoy your time tonight."

"I'm sure I will." He nodded and then walked off.

"What's wrong, pet?" Trent said.

"I'm not sure. There's something about him. He just looks like someone I've known and known well, but I can't place him."

"We'll talk to him some more tonight. I wonder how he got an invite to the party if you didn't know him."

Mateo squeezed her waist. "Maybe one of the girls does."

"We'll ask them. Right now, we have to mingle."

"I'll keep my eye on him. I didn't get a violent vibe from him," Mateo said. "But I also won't take any chances with you."

"I'll watch, too," Trent said.

"I love you guys."

One after the other bent and kissed her, and the world seemed to fade for a moment.

“Mama, I’ve got someone I’d like you to meet,” Hope said.

“All right,” she said.

“I’ll stay with her,” Mateo said.

“Okay, I’m just going to check in with Devon before I look around.”

Aria kissed Trent before being led away.

For the next few hours, she talked with everyone, ate a bite her men shoved into her mouth, and sipped the champagne. She caught sight of the young man she’d met and found him mostly pressed against the wall like he was afraid someone would come up behind him. He seemed to feel as out of place as she did in a room with so many people.

Beth and Alistair walked up to her.

“Aria, the man by the piano. Do you know him?” Alastair asked.

Aria looked over to see the man again. This time, he was watching them intently.

“I’m not sure. He looks familiar, but I can’t place his name or where I would have seen him. Why?”

“He cornered Beth and asked her a bunch of questions about you.”

“That’s odd.” She watched as he walked up to Faith and talked. The resemblance was remarkable. They could have been twins. She wracked her brain, trying to remember some distant relative she or Lorenzo had that had the dark features, but she couldn’t think of anyone.

Then she watched as Trent walked up to Faith and the man and spoke with him. At first, Dominic scowled and then nodded and followed Trent toward her.

“I think the four of us need to go into the office,” Trent said. “I can tell this is bothering you, pet.”

“I think that would be good.” She turned to Faith. “We’ll be out in a bit. Can you guys take care of any problems?”

“Of course, Mama.”

Aria looked at Dominic. “Please come with us.”

In the office, she stood between her men and faced off with the young man. “I have been told you’re curious about me,” Aria said.

The man stayed mute.

“You can ask me anything, Dominic. I’m sorry I can’t place you, and it’s driving me crazy.”

“We met a long time ago,” Dominic said.

“When?” she asked.

“The day I was born.”

Aria didn’t understand. “I don’t remember being in with a woman in labor. Are you a distant cousin?”

“No. You’re the one who gave birth to me,” he said.

Both of her men stiffened, and she became lightheaded.

“What? How? I only had four children, and one was stillborn.”

“Father told me you couldn’t stand the sight of me and told him to take me away. I’ve lived with an aunt about an hour away from here.”

“But...” She pressed a hand to her stomach. “You’re telling me Lorenzo took you from me? He’d lied to me and then took you away?”

“Yes. He told me that you despised boys.”

“Oh, God, that’s the furthest from the truth, honey.”

“Don’t call me honey,” he yelled.

God, the hatred in his face was like a fiery spike through her heart. She pressed a hand to her mouth. Her stomach was one big ball of pain, and she didn’t know if she’d make it to a toilet in time. “I ... I have to use the restroom.”

She ran into the nearest one, closed the door behind her, and vomited everything she had in her stomach. The waves of pain clashed with the pure fury racing through her.

“Oh, baby, it’s going to be okay,” Mateo said, wiping her face with a wet washcloth. “Here, rinse your mouth out.” He handed her some mouth rinse, which she used before slumping against his chest.

“I don’t know what to do.” She looked up at him. “Mateo, that bastard took my son from me. He never gave me a chance to even hold him.”

She sobbed uncontrollably, and she didn’t think she’d ever be able to stop.

## Chapter Thirteen

Trent listened to Aria cry and wished he could get his hands around Lorenzo's neck. He looked at Dominic and saw so many different emotions: anger, pain, regret, and something that looked like hopefulness.

"Where do you live, son?"

"In my aunt's house. She passed away a few years ago."

Trent needed to get to his woman, but he first needed to get this young man settled in the house.

"Can you stay the night? I'm sure she has questions she'd like to ask you when she feels better." He could see the indecision on the man's face and waited.

Dominic sighed and nodded.

Trent nodded. "Thank you. I'll be right back."

Trent walked into the bathroom to see Mateo wrapped around their woman.

"How's she doing?"

"Not good. She wants to hug him so much, but she's afraid he'll push her away."

"I think we should wait until tomorrow after everyone's had some rest," Trent said. "Can you take her up to our room? Go up the back stairs, so no one sees her. I'll take care of everything down here."

"Yes, but she's going to need you, too."

"I'll be there as soon as I can."

Trent walked to Aria and tipped her head up. "Baby, your son is staying here, so you can see him tomorrow. I'm going to give him a room that will be his. Would you like that?"

"Yes, thank you."

“I’ll be up soon.” He gently kissed her before he walked out of the room. “Come with me, please,” he said to Dominic.

Trent went up to the room at the end of the wing on the right side of the house. Their bedroom was in the left wing. He thought that was far enough away from them, and if he stayed, it would give the young man some privacy. This room had been a guest room, but now it would be Aria’s son’s room. God, just thinking about how she was feeling drove him crazy. He wished he’d have time to go down to the basement and pound on the punching bag, but he had several things to do before he could be with Aria, so he needed to keep going.

“This will be your room forever. You can change anything you want. I can have some clothing brought up tomorrow morning for you. Would that be okay?”

“Yes,” Dominic said as he looked around the room. “Thank you.”

“Is there anything you need right now?”

“A bottle of scotch,” Dominic said.

Trent chuckled. “I’ll have someone bring one up to you. Did you get a chance to eat?”

The young man shook his head. “I didn’t have a chance.”

“I’ll have them bring up snacks, too. Dial zero if you need anything.”

Trent went into the kitchen to order Dominic to be sent up with the bottle of booze as soon as possible. He was surrounded by the girls right away.

“Where’s Mama?” Faith asked.

“It’s a long story, and we can’t talk about it right now. Just know she’s resting in our rooms, and she’s okay.”

“Can we go up to see her?”

Trent shook his head. “I’m sorry. I don’t think it’s a good time. I’ll let her tell you what’s going on, but let’s do it tomorrow. I think after the shock, you’ll be pleased.”

He looked around to see the party breaking up.



“Why don’t you girls go home and come back tomorrow morning?”

Graham wrapped an arm around Faith. “Let’s go, baby.”

Faith nodded, and the rest came up to get their women. Trent noticed Beth stood off to the side, looking worried but trying to put space between herself and the family again. It was something they still needed to work on, but later.

The last guest had gone within the hour, and the staff was cleaning up. He had no idea how often he answered people’s questions about where Aria was. He just told them she had started to feel ill, so she went up to their room to rest.

Trent ensured security was in place before making his way upstairs to his woman. He thought about all the possibilities that might happen the next day, and very few of them were positive, considering the young man’s attitude.

He walked into their bedroom to see Mateo and Aria in bed, in each other’s arms, talking. He locked the door behind him. “I’ll be right in, guys.”

Mateo nodded.

Trent showered and wrapped a towel around his waist. He turned off all the lights except for one by the bed, then tossed his towel aside and slid into bed behind Aria. He curled his body around her and kissed the back of her neck.

“How are you doing, pet?”

She sniffed. “I don’t know. On the one hand, I’m numb, but on the other, there’s a ball of fiery pain in my heart, and I know it’s just going to get worse.”

Fuck, he wanted to kill Lorenzo in the worst way. This woman had been through enough. “How about we take it minute by minute right now? Your son is here in the house, and you’ll see him tomorrow. You’ll be able to talk to him then.”

She squeezed the arm that he wrapped around her waist.

“I won’t be able to sleep unless...”

“Unless what, pet?”

“She needs a hard loving with both of us at the same time.”

Trent kissed her ear. “Are you sure?”

“Yes. It’s the only thing I can think of that will help me feel anything but misery and fury right now,” she said.

“We’ll give you whatever you need.”

She turned her head and kissed him.

As soon as he wrapped her in his arms, his whole focus was on her and making her feel better. At the moment, she needed the bonding to help her feel more centered and in control, and they would give her whatever she needed.

## Chapter Fourteen

Mateo had carried Aria up to their rooms and stripped them both. Then he helped her put up her hair and then pulled her into the shower, where he bathed her thoroughly and gently as she stood almost frozen, all the while keeping up a conversation about anything but her son.

After the shower, he dried them, and they brushed their teeth. In bed, he sat her in between his legs and brushed her hair until it crackled, and she seemed to have relaxed a bit.

Finally, he got them arranged in bed and talked softly, telling her she wasn't alone and that they would make everything better.

"Mateo."

"What, baby?"

"I need you both tonight at the same time. Do you think that would be okay?"

"Baby, we'll do whatever is going to make you feel better."

She sighed and nodded. "Okay, thank you."

He nuzzled her forehead. "We'll always be here, love." He started to play with her breasts while kissing her with a passion that always surprised him. The way she writhed against him showed that her need was great and would need to be taken care of if he wanted her to get any sleep.

Mateo was relieved when Trent entered the bedroom because he was running out of things to say, and he didn't want to go further than he already had, making her feel good.

"How is she doing?" Trent asked.

"She needs us both tonight."

"Then that's what she's going to get. Let me go shower."

Mateo nodded and went back to making slow love to their woman.

When Trent came back and slid into bed behind her, Mateo let them have a moment before he moved down the bed.

He sucked first one nipple and then the other, slowly descending until he pushed in between her thighs. Using his thumbs, he separated her cunt lips and blew on her achy clit, knowing it would drive her wild.

“Oh, God, Mateo,” she screamed.

He chuckled. “What, love?”

Her fingers slid into his hair as he started to lick her cunt, darting his tongue inside before circling her clit and then back again.

“Please,” she begged.

“We want to make sure you’re ready,” Trent said

“I am.”

Mateo grinned at the disgruntled tone in her voice and looked at Trent. “What do you think? Should we keep torturing her?”

Trent laughed when Aria growled and then smacked Mateo’s shoulder.

“Check and see how red, swollen, and wet she is,” Trent said.

“My pleasure.” Mateo used two fingers on her. They usually started with one, but she needed an extra bite tonight.

“Ahhh,” Aria yelled.

“What’s he doing, pet?” Trent asked.

“He’s stretching me.”

“Is it good?” Trent asked.

“Yes.”

“How about while he’s playing with your cunt, I start stretching your ass?”

Mateo grinned and moved over to give Trent space to reach her ass.

He felt Trent’s finger as it pushed into her. He pulled out and then shoved in two.

“How is she taking your fingers, Trent?”

“She’s tight, but she’s already sucking me in.”

“Are you ready?” Mateo asked Trent.

“Yes, dammit,” she griped.

Both men chuckled.

“I was talking to Trent, baby.”

“I don’t care.”

Mateo rolled his eyes. She always got a bit pissy when she was at this level of desire.

“I’ll go clean up and be right back.”

Mateo nodded. “I’ll have her ready.”

Mateo rolled onto his back and lifted her to sit astride him.

“Lift up a bit, love.”

She rose enough for him to get his cock lined up to her cunt.

“That’s good. Now, come on down on me.”

Before he could catch her, she slammed down, taking every inch of his cock in one brutal thrust.

“Don’t you ever do that, baby. You could have hurt yourself,” Mateo said.

“What did she do?” Trent asked.

“She dropped down on me.”

Trent scowled at her. “Does our baby need it a little rough tonight?”

“Yes, please.”

Trent nodded at her and then pulled a condom and lube from the drawer. Mateo held her steady as Trent got up behind her.

Mateo smoothed the hair from her beautiful face and felt his emotion climb when he realized he’d be able to have this woman for the rest of his life, and she couldn’t be more perfect. He gritted his teeth when he felt Trent work his cock into her ass, making her stretch and moan.

Fuck, nothing in the world felt better than this.

With a grunt, Trent pushed the last few inches into her, making the three as close as they could ever get.

“Please move. I need you guys to ride me hard.”

“We’ll take care of you.” He looked up at Trent. “Let’s do this.”

Trent nodded and pulled out. When Trent pushed into her again, Mateo pulled his cock out. They did this see-saw kind of action, thrusting harder and harder the more she begged.

“Let me come,” she cried.

“Are you ready, Trent?”

“Yes.”

Both men gripped her hard enough that Mateo knew there would be little bruises on her hips and ass. They tried to hold her steady when she went wild. Mateo pulled her down and kissed her, trying to soften her screams so people didn’t come running thinking they were under attack.

Trent’s groan mixed with his as one of the hardest orgasms hit him. Mateo kept pumping into her until all the cum he had in his balls was inside her. Trent finished right after. The three stayed still together as they tried to calm their breathing and hearts.

When Mateo had some semblance of control, he looked at Aria to see her passed out.

“She’s out.”

Trent grinned. “We did our job. It almost killed us, but she’s sleeping, and that’s what she needed. I’ll wash up.”

Mateo nodded and waited for Trent to pull out of her before he turned them to the side and cuddled her against his chest. He was just starting to sleep when he felt Trent spread her legs.

“Pull out, man,” Trent said.

Mateo removed his soft cock from her cunt, and Trent wiped her clean.

“I’ll be right back.”

Mateo nodded and then drifted again. He was aware of when Trent turned off the light and came to bed but was too tired to talk.

Aria woke up once in the early morning hours, crying, but the men were able to settle her down and get her back to sleep. He wasn’t looking forward to the next day because he knew it would be so hard on the woman they loved, but they’d get her through it.

## Chapter Fifteen

Aria took extra care with her appearance before she headed downstairs. One maid had called her room to tell her that her men would be with her son in the family dining room. God, she couldn't quite believe it. She had a son. The one she had thought died twenty-five years before. The one she mourned every day of her life.

He was actually here in the flesh, and he hated her immensely. How was she going to get through to him and find a way to show how despicable his father was and how much the bastard had lied?

Aria sighed. She couldn't hide up here in her room all day. She was tougher than this. If she could put up with Lorenzo for over twenty-five years, she could deal with anything.

She stood outside the dining room, took a deep breath, and straightened her spine.

Trent immediately got up when he saw her come around the corner and came to her to pull her into his arms. "Everything's going to be okay," he whispered to her.

She nodded and tried to smile. He sat her down.

"Thank you."

Trent kissed the top of her head. "You're welcome, pet."

Aria slipped the napkin over her lap before her gaze went toward her son. "G-good morning, Dominic. I hope you slept well?"

They talked about the room he was given and that it was his forever. Each moment that went by grew tenser. When he said he would leave, she felt her heart break inside of her chest, and it took all her strength not to beg him to stay.

His stare was unnerving, and she relaxed when one of the maids walked in.

"What can I get you this morning, Miss Aria?"



“Good morning, Tami. I’ll just take coffee. Thank you.”

“With toast and a scrambled egg,” Mateo said.

She looked at him and saw him raise a brow.

“You didn’t really eat last night, and I don’t think I saw you eat after breakfast yesterday.”

She knew he was talking about how she vomited up anything they had gotten her to eat during the party.

“There was a lot to do. I’ll do better. I promise.”

“Oh, we know you will because we’re cracking down, love,” Mateo said.

Things in the room suddenly got out of hand, but she was able to calm everyone down. She knew her son was lashing out because he was angry, but everything he said to her felt like a stake shot through her heart. The men went after him at one point, but she stopped them from beating her son.

“Trent, I want him to be able to express himself. Please.”

Trent nodded, but she could tell he wasn’t happy.

She looked back at Dominic. “We’re you able to spend any nice time with your father?”

Dominic laughed, but there was no humor in it. It didn’t sound like they spent any time together, and that both saddened Aria because a son needed his father and made her glad because Lorenzo didn’t get a chance to influence him.

“The one thing Father did say that I liked was that this was my destiny, and everything was mine.”

Aria agreed and looked down at her lap. She screamed when her son threatened her again, and her men went for him.

When everything settled down once more, she tried to stay calm. He was such a cold man, and she didn’t know if she’d be able to get through to him, but she wasn’t going to give up.

“I know you don’t mean that.”

One of his brows lifted. “Oh, really?”

“You’re angry, and you have every right to be.”

“Don’t fucking tell me how I feel. You know nothing about me.”

Aria nodded. “You’re right. I’m sorry.”

The tension in the room grew as she tried to find things to talk about. “Your aunt. Was she a nice person?”

He shrugged. “She didn’t beat me, if that’s what you mean. She knew I was her meal ticket. For as long as she had me, Father paid all her bills.”

“Where is she?”

“Dead. A few years ago.”

“I’m sorry.”

“I’m not.”

“Were you able to go to school and have friends?”

“Yes.”

“Did you enjoy it?”

“Yeah. I played football and baseball.”

“Oh, that’s wonderful. I don’t think I could run if I had to.”

The atmosphere got tense until she heard the front door open, then her daughter’s voice.

She didn’t know how much more she could take.

## Chapter Sixteen

“Mama?” Faith yelled.

“We’re in the dining room,” Aria called out.

All three girls walked in with Graham right behind them. The girls hugged her.

“What happened last night, Mama? You left so suddenly?” Angelica asked.

“I happened,” Dominic said.

The girls turned to him, confused.

“Who are you?” Faith asked.

Aria stood and grabbed the table to steady herself when it felt like her legs would give out. It helped when Trent took hold of her arm.

“Girls, I’d like you to meet your b-brother, Dominic.”

Their mouths dropped open.

“Wait, he’s the child that was born before me and was stillborn?” Faith asked.

Aria pressed her lips together and nodded. “Your father took him away from me and told me he had d-died.”

Her girls were clearly upset, and she hated that they had to be a part of this, especially since Dominic didn’t seem to care about any of them.

“I wish you had come sooner,” Hope said. “It would have been nice to get to know you.”

He shrugged, and Aria stiffened at the hurt in her girl’s eyes. He could mess with her all he wanted, but never her children. For some reason, her son kept pushing, and she knew her daughters would only take so much.

“You come into our home...” Faith said.

“Actually, it’s mine.”

“What?” Faith asked.

They all turned and looked at Aria for an answer.

Aria sighed. “When I pass away, the estate goes to Dominic. You three will have inheritances that we can go over later.”

“I don’t want to deal with the business side of things,” Faith said. “I’ve got enough to deal with my husband.”

“Watch it, babe,” Graham said.

“Who are you?”

“I’m Graham Maclean, your sister’s husband. The other two are also married to a couple of my brothers.”

“How cozy, keeping it in the family.”

Aria saw the light grow in Graham’s eyes, and his jaw hardened. “Listen to me, punk. If you dare hurt this family, you will have the Macleans all over you. I guarantee you won’t survive, so show some fucking respect.”

Her son stiffened but didn’t say another word.

“How long are you staying?” Faith asked.

“A few more minutes,” Dominic said.

“Will you come back?” Angelica asked.

“There’s nothing for me here until your mother dies, so why would I?”

Aria screamed again as her men went for him. Trent got in a few good punches before Graham, Mateo, and she could stop him.

“Please, just stop—no more fighting. Please,” she said.

“Then he needs to show some fucking respect,” Mateo said. He looked at Dominic, who was dabbing his lip with a napkin.

Mateo got Dominic’s attention. “You need to realize something, boy. Do you think you had it rough? I’d love to see how you act when you know how they were all treated.”

Dominic snorted. “What? They didn’t get a pony?” he asked sarcastically.

Hope snorted. “Did he keep you locked in your room the majority of the time?”

Dominic rolled his eyes.

“She’s not kidding. These four women were in their rooms most of the time and could only come out when Lorenzo wanted to show them off or had something for them to do. He rarely allowed them to be together. There weren’t holidays, birthdays, or even family dinners. He took them out of school when they were in eighth, seventh, and sixth grade, brought in a tutor who did a half-assed job for a year, and then quit,” Trent said. “You think you had it bad, but I’m telling you that you got lucky not having to be around him all the time.”

“I’d like to get to know you,” Angelica said. “Can you, my sisters, and I go into a room and talk? I want to ask you so many questions, and I’m hoping you’ll want to get to know us.”

Aria waited to see what he said and exhaled when he shrugged and nodded.

“Follow us,” Angelica said.

Faith patted Graham on the chest. “It’s okay.”

“I’ll be outside the door,” Graham said.

“What, you don’t trust me not to hurt my sisters?” Dominic grinned.

“Fuck no. I don’t trust you. You come in and judge them by what your father told you even though you know what a bastard he was, and you act like a spoiled child,” Graham said. “Remember what I said. I won’t hesitate to put a bullet in your fucking brain if you hurt one of them.”

Aria gasped and pressed her hands against her mouth, leaning back against Trent’s chest as her children walked out of the room.

When she heard the door down the hall close, she turned in his arms and sobbed. Her men sat her down and got her to settle and drink some water.

“Everything is going to be okay, pet,” Trent said.

She nodded. "I hope he'll give us a chance."

"He's just an angry young man right now," Mateo said. "Give him time."

She nodded and waited. It seemed like hours instead of minutes before she heard the front door open and close, and her daughters walked back into the room. They all three came to her and hugged her tightly.

"I'm so sorry, babies."

"You're not the one who should be sorry," Faith said.

"Why don't we all sit down?" Graham said.

Aria watched her children pour some juice on the sideboard and sit around the table.

"What did he say?"

"He's a jerk," Angelica said.

"I think he's hurting," Faith said.

## Chapter Seventeen

Aria was a little surprised. Her youngest, Angelica, tended to have a softer heart.

“What did you see?” Mateo asked.

“He reminded me of a little boy who was looking in the window at a family that was happy and smiling, and he wanted to be a part of it. If he’d had more information about us, I bet he would have come sooner,” Faith said.

Aria nodded. “I really think he has a good heart.”

Trent snorted, and Graham shook his head.

“What, you guys don’t think he’ll come around?” Aria asked.

“Maybe eventually,” Mateo said. “But something will have to happen to give him an excuse to return. He’s got a lot of pride.”

“And resentment,” Graham said.

“He’s got a right to resent the situation,” Aria said. “Should I reach out to him?”

Trent shook his head. “No. Let him be for a few days, pet. I’m guessing he’ll come around soon.”

God, she hoped so. She wanted her son home where he belonged.

“Mama, why don’t we go out into the garden?” Faith asked.

Aria nodded. “I’d like that. Some sunshine sounds good about now.”

Her men hugged her. “We’ll be in the office.”

She nodded and watched the three men walk out before she turned and followed her daughters.

An hour later, they were sitting at a white iron table with glasses of lemonade.

“Where’s Beth?” Aria asked.

The girls looked at each other.

“Alastair wouldn’t let her come,” Faith said.

Aria sighed. “Did he have a reason?”

The girls shrugged.

“He doesn’t need a reason,” Hope said.

“Should we go there? I hate to invite myself, but I’m worried about her.”

“We are, too,” Faith said. “She always acts happy, but I can see the sadness in her eyes when she doesn’t think anyone is watching.”

“What are we going to do about it?” Angelica said.

“Maybe we need to kidnap her and bring her here. She’ll have me on her side when he comes to get her,” Aria said.

The girls looked at each other and smiled.

“That would shake him up,” Faith said. “We can’t say anything to anyone else because our men wouldn’t let us help.”

“Let’s make a plan for tomorrow. I’ll come over for lunch, and then I’ll take her back with me,” Aria said.

“Do you think she’ll go?” Hope asked.

“I’ll figure out something before then. Someone needs to write Alastair a note. Do any of you know how she writes and can duplicate it enough to pass?”

Hope raised her hand. “I can try.”

“Good. Just tell him that she’s tired and wants to have a life,” Aria said. “Any other things she should say?”

“We’ll come up with something. Our men aren’t going to be happy that were involved,” Faith said.

“Are you afraid?” Aria asked.

Her daughters snorted and shook their heads.

“Hell no. In fact, I love this idea,” Angelica said. “Something needs to get Alastair’s attention.”



“Ladies?” Graham called from the doorway. “Come on. I have work to do.”

The girls stood and hugged her.

“We’ll see you tomorrow,” Faith said.

“Should we warn Beth?” Aria asked.

“No,” Hope said. “She couldn’t lie to save her, and she hated going against Alastair.”

“I’ll leave it up to her if she wants to come, but let’s have everything in place just in case,” Aria said.

She waved as the girls walked off.

Aria tilted her head back and let the sunshine warm her face. The feeling was something she’d missed when she was a prisoner in her own home.

“Pet, how are you doing?”

She turned to see her men with their hands in their pockets and smiled.

“I’m okay.”

“Do you need a nap?” Mateo asked.

“No, I have things to go over in the office. I’m still looking for the code to get into the safe. Any ideas?”

The men shook their heads.

Trent sighed. “We’ll come up with something. Just keep trying dates of birthdays or important things that happened to him.”

Her eyes widened. “Oh, my God, the code is Dominic’s birthday.”

“Fuck. It would be perfect because you thought he was gone and never spoke of him, and he is the only son that bastard had,” Mateo said. “Let’s go try it.”

In the office, they locked the door, pulled the picture off the wall, and stood looking at a silver metal safe.

“Tell me the date, pet,” Trent said.

She gave him the numbers, and they waited. She growled in frustration because she would have bet Dominic's birthday was the combination.

"Do it backward," Mateo said.

Trent went slowly and put in each number. All three were shocked but excited when they heard the click, and the door swung open.

"Oh, my God. We did it." Aria laughed. "What's in it?"

The men brought out everything and set it on the desk.

There were stacks of hundred-dollar bills, a few files, a gun, and papers with names on them.

"Oh, my God. Is the money real?" she asked.

Trent held a bill up to the light. "It looks real."

"How much is there, you guys?"

"Fuck, I would say several hundred thousand."

Her eyes widened. "What are we going to do with it?"

"Keep it in the safe for now," Mateo said. "It might come in handy down the line."

"Okay. Let's go through the papers and files."

## Chapter Eighteen

The next day, Aria sat in the back of the car on her way to the Macleans, thinking about the papers and files they found. It was interesting information about several officials in the community. The files even had pictures of a few in compromising situations. The three decided they'd keep the information to themselves and locked it in the safe because they could potentially use it for things they needed down the road.

She glanced out her window when the car pulled into the circle drive and parked. Her house was huge, but this place was massive.

"Here you go, Miss Aria," the driver said as he opened her door.

"Thank you, Jackson. I shouldn't be too long," she said.

"That's all right, miss. Take all the time you need."

Angelica met her in the foyer, and they hugged.

"Where are the other girls?"

"They're in the back already. I told them I'd wait up here for you," Angelica said.

Aria wrapped her arm around her daughter as they walked outside. She hugged the girls and came to Beth last. She gripped the girl's shoulders. "I missed you yesterday."

A blush covered Beth's face, and she looked down. "Alistair needed me to stay here."

"May I ask for what?" Aria asked.

"He just needed me close. He doesn't like me to be away from home."

Aria couldn't take it another moment. They had planned to kidnap Beth, but she didn't like the idea the more she thought about it. Mainly because it might hurt Beth. Aria decided to go

straight to the source because someone had to get Alastair's head out of his ass.

"Girls, the plan has been aborted. I forgot something inside."

Her three daughters nodded, and Beth looked confused.

Aria hugged her. "It's all right. Girls, will you tell her the plan? Then I'll tell you why I changed it when I get back."

"Sure, Mama."

Aria walked into the house and straight to Alastair's office, where she knocked on the door.

"Enter."

Aria opened the door and then closed it behind her.

"Ah, Aria. It's nice to see you. What can I help you with?" Alastair asked.

"It's actually something I'm going to help you with."

"Oh?"

"I'm going to be blunt."

"All right."

"You're losing Beth."

Alastair straightened. "What the hell does that mean?"

"You can only neglect a person so long."

"I'd like to remind you, Aria, that what's between Beth and me is our business."

Aria walked up to stand in front of his desk. "You love her, yes?"

"More than anything in this world."

"Then why in the hell haven't you married her?"

He scowled. "I don't like to be questioned, Aria, but I've asked her a few times, and she always says no."

"And that's stopped you?" Aria asked and raised a brow.

"Only because she starts crying," Alastair said.

“Would you like to know why she says no?”

His eyes narrowed on her. “Yes.”

“She doesn’t think she’s good enough to be your wife.”

He growled. “Where the fuck did she get that stupid idea?”

“I think it’s a lot of little things, but the longer this goes on, the further she gets from you.”

“I’ll never let her go.”

“You might not have a choice, Alastair. I’ve got to be honest. I’ve given her a bedroom of her own in my house, and she knows to come to me if she’s ready to leave you.” Aria gritted her teeth when Alastair stood suddenly. From the look on his face, she knew this was the closest she’d ever been to dying, but she wouldn’t back down.

Alastair finally spun around and looked out his window. He was quiet for a long time, and she waited.

“What do you expect me to do?” he asked without turning around.

“I think you should surprise her and just marry her.”

He snorted and turned. “And how will I do that without her knowing?”

“We tell your father, a few of your brothers, and my daughters to set up a wedding. She won’t know about it until she walks down the aisle to you.”

He stared at her. “You think we can pull it off?”

“I know we can.”

“What do I need to do?”

“Have your tux clean and pressed and her wedding ring ready.”

He nodded. “I already do. I’ve had the ring since a month after she moved in.”

Aria smiled. The man did love her. He was just an idiot like all the others. There was no way she'd say that to his face.

"Let's call it a family dinner just in case she gets wind of something being planned. I bet your dad and Graham can set it up like they did the others."

"When?"

"How soon do you think they can make this happen?" she asked.

"Give us five days. I'll talk to my family and the kitchen. You take care of the flowers and dress."

"We can do this."

"I hope we're not making a mistake," he said and wiped a hand down his face.

"Do you want her to continue to think she's not worthy of you?"

"Fuck no. If anything, she's too good for me."

Aria smiled again. "I'll call you later this afternoon."

"Okay."

She got to the door.

"Aria, if we can pull this off, I'll be in your debt for the rest of my life."

"Just make my daughter happy. That's all I'll ever ask of you."

Alastair nodded, sat, and reached for his phone.

Aria didn't say anything during lunch but called her daughters—besides Beth—later that day and gave them the news. It made her smile at how happy they were.

"I'll have the gardener bring fresh-cut flowers to my room early that morning, and the three of us can make bouquets," Hope said.

"How are we going to get her in a dress?" Aria asked.

"We can find a white dress that will pass for a gown," Faith said.

“I think I have one in my closet.”

“We’ll all have to wear similar dresses so we can look like her bridesmaids,” Hope said.

“Yes. You’ll be the bridesmaids because we know Beth would want that, and I’ll walk with Angus as he walks her down the aisle,” Aria said. “I want to make sure she doesn’t run.”

The girls laughed.

“Okay, girls. We’ve got five days. Let’s get this done.”

## Chapter Nineteen

Five days later, Aria and her men walked into the Maclean house and were met by Graham.

“The girls are up in Faith’s room. Beth thinks she’s getting ready for a dinner party. The flowers are ready, and a maid will bring them to you when we get Beth down here.”

“Good. My guys and I will wait for you to get us in the dining room.”

Graham nodded and walked off. She turned to Trent and Mateo. “We’re doing the right thing, aren’t we?”

Trent pulled her into his arms. “Yes. She’ll be shocked at first, but she’ll be happy.”

“I hope so. I just hate seeing her insecure and sad. That woman deserves everything.”

“And Alastair will definitely get it for her,” Mateo said and pressed a kiss to her temple.

Aria got more nervous as the minutes passed. She heard the family sitting in the back solarium, ready for the wedding to begin. They had turned the room into a fairytale scene, and she couldn’t have been more pleased.

It seemed like everyone was in on it because they wanted Beth to be an official part of the family.

The four girls came down. Angus and Aria were standing outside the room, waiting. When she caught her first glance at Beth, she felt tears fill her eyes.

Her daughters had put flowers in their hair, but they put a ring of flowers on Beth, and she didn’t seem to realize it. The white dress she had on was perfect for the occasion.

She hugged all of them and then put an arm around Beth’s waist as the music started.

“What’s going on?” Beth asked as each girl walked around the corner as bridesmaids.



Angus took her hands in his. “Today, the family is binding you to us for the rest of your life.”

“What!” Beth exclaimed.

Aria saw the panic on the girl’s face and turned her to face her. “Do you trust me?”

Beth nodded.

“Good. Angus will walk you down the aisle where Alastair is waiting for you.”

Beth tried to pull away and cried. “Wait, no. It’s not right.”

“Beth!” Alastair barked. “Come to me, now.”

Angus snorted. “He always was an impatient boy.”

“There’s nothing to be afraid of and everything to celebrate. His family wants you and loves you, and we know you love the family. Do you want to tell them no?”

Beth shook her head.

“Good. Are you ready?”

Beth inhaled, smiled, and nodded.

“Let’s go.” Angus took her hand. “I’m honored to be able to walk you, or rather roll with you, down the aisle. You’ve been my daughter from day one.”

Beth nodded and wiped the tears that ran down her face.

Aria handed Beth a bouquet, kissed her on her cheek, and then walked down the aisle and sat between her men. She turned when the music got louder to see Beth and Angus. She looked at Alastair and was shocked by the emotion in the man’s eyes.

Beth kissed Angus on the cheek before Alastair pulled her to his side. He never let go of her for a second, and Aria found that incredibly sweet.

The ceremony was beautiful, and Aria couldn’t have been happier. The party lasted for hours, and she was exhausted when she and her men got home.

“Let’s get you into bed, pet,” Trent said.

She nodded and leaned against him. “Yes, please.”

Mateo kissed her forehead. “We’ll get you in between us where you belong.”

It was her favorite place on earth and the only place she felt truly safe. “That would be wonderful.”

## Chapter Twenty

The next few weeks flew by, and she grew unhappier every day because Dominic hadn't called or come over, and she'd left messages that were unanswered twice now.

Mateo came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her as she stared outside.

"Baby. Give him time."

She nodded and then rested her head against him. "I know. I keep thinking I've already lost twenty-five years of his life. I don't want to lose any more."

He pressed a kiss to the back of her head. "I'm sorry. I wish I could fix this for you."

"I know."

They both turned when her office door closed.

"You guys, I think I've either found a safe room or another secret passage," Trent said.

"Really? Where?" she asked.

"I've been going over the blueprints."

Trent spread it across her desk and pointed to her office. "See this right here?"

Aria looked closely at where he was pointing. "What am I looking for?"

"This here is that wall." He pointed to the wall behind her.

She nodded.

"I see it," Mateo said. "There's space between that wall and the foyer."

Trent nodded. "Exactly. It's got to be something. We just have to find the way to get in."

She studied the blueprints and then the wall. There was the door to the bathroom and then paneling. She walked over and

examined the wood. It was beautiful and one of the things she had kept when she had redone the office.

All three started pushing or trying on parts.

They'd been at it several minutes when she found something. She gasped when something clicked, and the paneling cracked open. "I've found it."

The three opened the door. It was one piece of the paneling, and it was hidden extremely well. They pushed the door inward and then felt around for a light.

Trent found it and switched it on.

Her mouth dropped open. The inside looked like heavy metal, and then there were a few chairs and a back shelf with guns, ammo, bottles of water, and what looked like military meals. There was an intercom system by the light, but they had no way of finding out what it did.

"I wonder if the meals are still good," she said.

"Yeah, they last for decades."

She smiled at the face he made. "You've eaten them?"

"Yes. They weren't horrible. I'd eat them again if I were starving, but only then."

Mateo went over the guns, taking a few apart, and then he studied the thousands of bullets.

"Let's get out of here," Trent said. "And I want you to practice getting in here if there's trouble."

They watched her try a few times until it came easy to her.

"Good girl." Trent rolled up the blueprints. "I'm going to study these more and find the other rooms and stairs I know are in the house."

"Good. I've got some work to do," Mateo said.

Aria sat at her desk and stared at the wall. How many secret rooms and passages did this house have? She knew her men wouldn't stop looking until they found every one of them.

## Chapter Twenty-One

The next day, Aria sat at her desk with her office door closed, reviewing some of her late husband's books.

She jumped when she heard the tap, tap, tap of an automatic gun outside of the house by the front door. She knew better than to run and see what was happening without a weapon, so she hurried into the safe room, closed the door behind her, and started loading a few guns.

The front door was thrown open.

“Where is that cunt?”

There was more gunfire, and all she could think was that her men weren't there to get hurt.

The person crashed into her office and threw things around, cursing and screaming. She listened until he started to leave the office.

“I'll find you, you whore.”

The voice sounded familiar, but she couldn't place it. It amazed her that she felt steady and calm. She couldn't wait for help as it sounded like the guy was opening the office door.

Then she heard him mumbling by her office door and decided it was the best time.

She cracked the saferoom door and saw him with his back toward her, peeking out of her office door.

She stepped out and closed the safe room. As she aimed the gun, she cleared her throat.

The man spun around and stared at her in shock. “Where the fuck did you come from?”

“I didn't think I'd ever see you again, Mitchell.”

“Well, you thought wrong, bitch.”

“I thought you were smarter than that,” she said. “Put the gun down.” He still had it in his hand, but it was down at his side

while hers was aimed at him.

“No fucking way. I know I’m going down, and I’m taking you with me.”

“Wrong. You forgot my warning. You fuck with my family, and I kill you.” Her first shot hit the arm he held the gun with, then she hit his shoulder and chest, and the bastard still stood staring at her.

One last shot in the middle of his forehead took him down.

Aria exhaled, kept her gun in her hand, and walked around his body to the door to open it. She saw several of her guys bearing down.

“He’s down, guys.”

They rushed her way.

“He’s dead?” one of them said.

A few of their mouths dropped open.

“Yes. I warned him I’d take him out if he messed with my family. He just didn’t believe a little woman like me could do it.”

One of the guys chuckled. “Yeah, no one will make that mistake again.”

“Are any of our men hurt?” she asked.

“Minor injuries. We can patch them up here.”

“Good.”

“Where the hell is she?” Trent yelled as he ran in the front door.

She sighed, handed the gun to one of the guys, and walked toward Trent. He swept her up in his arms and held her tightly against his chest.

“Jesus Christ, I lost it when I got the call.”

“Everything’s okay.” She rubbed his back.

“What the hell happened?” Trent yelled.

A guard said, “The fucker came in Jason’s car and waited for the right time to come in the house. We started firing at him, but he got in.”

“I want to talk to Jason,” Trent said.

One of the guards spoke up. “I have to tell you he didn’t know. He’s freaking out about it and ready to take Mitchell out. He finally calmed down when they told him you were okay and Mitchell was taken care of. He’s now getting the men that were hit medical treatment.”

“Who took him down?” Trent asked.

“Miss Aria.”

Trent grasped her shoulders, bent down, and looked into her face. “What the fuck have we talked about? Were you in your office?”

She nodded.

“Did you have time to get where we wanted you?”

She nodded again.

“This won’t ever happen again. Do you understand me?” Trent said.

They always told her to hide until the threat was taken care of. Hell, she knew she was in deep shit. She’d never heard that tone of voice from him before, and it sounded deadly. He didn’t scare her, but she just knew she’d be getting punished later.

Mateo raced in and skidded when he saw them. He walked over and wrapped his arms around her. “Are you okay, baby?”

“I am. Everything is okay now.”

“She’s the one who shot him,” Trent said.

Aria felt Mateo stiffen, and then he leaned back. “Do you want to tell us why you put yourself in harm’s way?”

She wanted to roll her eyes but knew better. “Can we talk about this later? There’s a dead guy in my office. What are we going to do about it?”

Neither man seemed thrilled with her blasé attitude.

“Guys, I want a few of you to roll him up in a tarp. We’ll take him to the lake after dark, weigh him down, and let him sink,” Trent said.

“No police involvement?” she asked.

Mateo shook his head. “No, it will just mess things up, and he didn’t have a family. It’s better this way.”

She nodded. “I think I’ll go to our bedroom and shower while the mess is cleaned up. I hope he didn’t ruin the rug I just bought.”

The men looked at her like she was crazy, and it took all her strength not to laugh.

“We’ll be up in a bit.”

She nodded and walked up the stairs.

After her shower, she pulled on her robe, sat in bed, and rubbed lotion over her legs. She looked up when the door opened, and her men walked in.

*Here it comes.*



## Chapter Twenty-Two

Mateo exhaled when he entered the bedroom and saw Aria sitting on the bed, looking beautiful, sexy, and like the queen they'd always considered her.

"I'm going to shower," Trent said.

"I'll wait until you're done." Mateo started getting undressed. When he was down to his boxers, he sat on the edge of the mattress next to her hip.

"How much trouble am I in?" she asked.

Mateo exhaled. Trent and he had talked about it downstairs and couldn't agree on a punishment.

"I think we're just going to hold you right now. Our emotions are still pretty tense. Make no mistake. You will be punished."

Aria nodded. "I figured."

He could tell she was anxious, but he saw no fear in her face.

"Are we going to go to bed for the rest of the day?"

"No. We'll be up here for a bit because we just need to hold you, but then we have some things to do."

She nodded. "I have some work to get done."

Fuck, they had talked about making her stay in their room, but it was too much like what Lorenzo had done to her for so long that they couldn't bring themselves to do it.

He cupped her face in his hand and kissed her with the passion and residual terror of losing her.

"I'm done," Trent said behind him.

"I'll be right back," Mateo said.

He washed quickly and wrapped a towel around his hips. He didn't want to spend another moment away from her.

Trent had her naked and already had a hand between her legs.

"Hey, I thought you were going to wait."

He heard her laugh and lay down on her other side, turning her head toward him. He gave her a long and hot kiss before he moved down her body and started to suck on her tit.

Mateo smiled when she moaned as Trent got between her legs. He devoured her cunt like it was water, and he hadn't had a drink in weeks.

"Ahhh," she yelled and bowed off the mattress.

"What's he doing, baby?" Mateo asked.

"He's got fingers in my ass."

"He does love your ass. We both do."

Mateo went back to loving her.

\*\*\*\*

Trent couldn't get enough of her. The fact that he could have lost her was driving him insane. He needed her in between them. He needed to feel the bonding they only got when they were both fucking her. "I'll be right back."

After he washed, he came back in with a condom on and a tube of lube in his hands.

"Mateo, man. Move down to the end of the mattress with your legs over the edge and get her on you with her knees against the side of your chest, so she's open to me. I need her ass."

"You got it."

Mateo maneuvered them in place, pulled her down onto his chest, and entered her cunt with one strong thrust, making them all moan.

Trent just about lost it when Mateo reached down and separated her ass cheeks for him, showing him her tiny, beautiful asshole.

"Fuck. I could live in your body, woman."

"Please," she begged.

He could tell she was right on the edge, but he was close, too.

"Hold her."

"I've got her."

Trent pressed the head of his cock to her anus and started pushing into her. He didn't stop until he bottomed out inside of her.

Fuck. He dug his fingers into her hips and started riding her. He vaguely heard Mateo whispering to her, but his focus was on her tight grip. "I'm not going to last," he said.

"I don't think she's going to either. Make her come," Mateo said.

Trent rammed into her at a fast pace, making them all pant. "Come for us, pet. Let yourself go."

He gritted his teeth when her body clamped down on them, and she screamed. The men fought to keep moving inside her to give her the most pleasure they could.

When she relaxed, Trent pounded into her a few times and then felt himself erupt. It was so intense he saw black dots in his vision, and his heart felt like it had doubled in size and was about ready to rip from his chest.

He sagged forward and braced himself on his hands by Mateo and her shoulders.

He drew in air and concentrated on calming enough to pull out of her and go clean up. "Fuck, I'll be right back."

Trent walked into the bathroom and cleaned up before returning to the bed to see Mateo had moved them up with their heads on the pillows. Trent crawled in behind her and wrapped an arm around her waist. "I love you so much, pet."

\*\*\*\*

She turned her head and kissed Trent. "I love you, too. Both of you so much it sometimes scares me."

"I feel the same way."

She closed her eyes and rested. It felt like she was floating and surrounded by a hot blanket. This was the time and place in her life when she felt the best and most loved.

"What are we going to do with you, pet?"

"Love me until the end of our lives," she said.

Mateo snorted, but Trent growled.

“I’m not kidding. You can’t take chances like you did today.”

“You guys take chances,” she pointed out.

“Fuck.” Trent wiped a hand down his face.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t do it intentionally,” she said. “But I saw an opportunity to save our people with minimal threat of harm to me—”

“You don’t know that,” Trent said.

“Yes, I do. Listen, I have more chance of falling down the stairs and breaking my neck than I did getting hurt today.” She knew she had made a mistake when both men tensed.

“Don’t you dare start worrying about me on the steps, guys.”

“We want to protect you from harm. What’s so bad about that, baby?” Mateo asked.

“Nothing. I want to do the same for you. I know I’m smaller and weaker, but I know how to use a gun, and I don’t have to have muscles to do that.”

“True, but—”

Aria sat up, faced them, and crossed her legs. “Listen to me.” She knew her voice was stern when it made Trent’s eyebrows rise and Mateo’s eyes narrow. She held up her hand. “Look at it this way. The three of us are the head of a mafia family, right?”

They both nodded.

“That means we all have to be tough. Not just the men. I had a chance to take control of a situation with minimal risk to me, and I took it. And I better warn you I’ll do it again.”

Trent leaned up on his elbow. “Now, wait a fucking minute.”

“No.” She knew she was pushing it, but this was the perfect time to get the men to see her side of things. “Listen, our men would have looked down on me if I had let a few of them get killed, and I could have done something. Just like you, I have

to be strong not only for the family but myself. Please don't try to change that."

Trent sighed, and Mateo reached out to her and set his hand on her thigh.

"I'd feel better if we trained you in a few self-defense moves and you practiced your shooting," Mateo said.

"I'd love that." Her gaze went to Trent. She could tell he wanted to fight it, but he couldn't.

"We'll do what Mateo suggested. But, please, I'm asking you to take every precaution because the thought of you being taken away from us drives me stark raving mad."

"I promise, guys. You have to promise me, too."

"We do, baby. We always have guys with us."

Aria nodded. "Good. I'd like to point out something. I've seen loyalty and affection from our men, but today was the first time I saw the look of pride and respect on their faces. You guys call me the Mafia Queen. Well, today, I acted like it."

Mateo looked at Trent. "Fuck. Will we ever win an argument with her when she's this logical?"

"As much as I hate it, she's right. I don't want anyone to think she's weak because there's not a weak bone in this perfect body."

She smiled. She loved how they understood her so well and accepted her for the person she was and wanted to become.

"We've got a problem," Trent said.

"What?" Mateo asked.

"When will we be able to punish her?" he asked.

Aria's smile widened. "Oh, I'm guessing you'll think of something."

A scream tore from her throat when they abruptly pulled her down between them.

"You better believe it, pet."

"I love you guys."

“We love you, too, baby,” Mateo said.

Aria cuddled against them and thanked God for the life she had. She went through hell to get there, but she’d do it again if she knew this was the prize.

## **Epilogue**

Aria stood in front of her bedroom window and looked out into the backyard. She couldn't get over how her life had transformed in just a short amount of time.

Everything had changed for the good, and she was truly happy for the first time in her life. The only thing that would make it perfect was if her son, Dominic, would come home where he belonged.

She didn't want to get her hopes up, but she felt it in her gut that he would come around and give her a chance and a place in his life.

Only then would her world be perfect.

## **The End**

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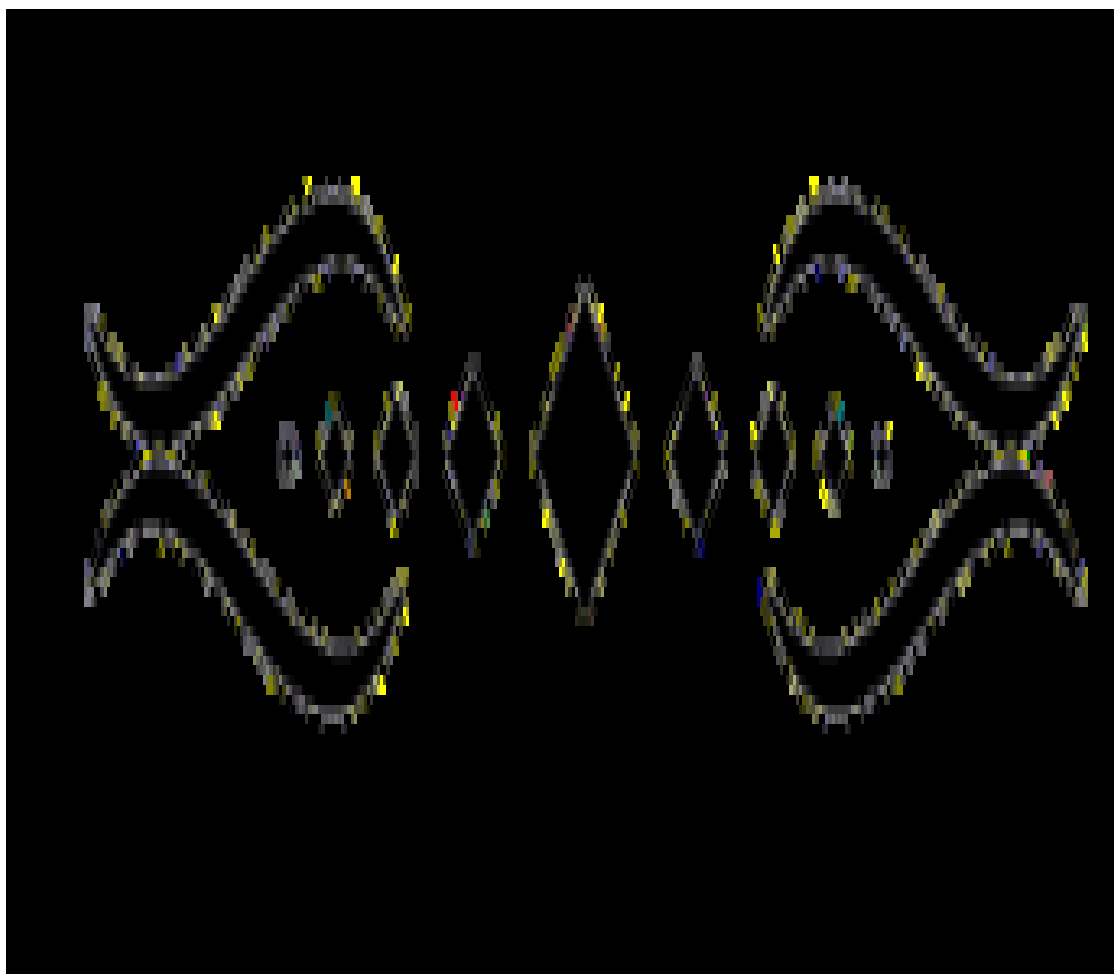
# **BONUS SAMPLE CHAPTER**

## **HER MAFIA DESTINY**

### ***Macleon Mafia Men, 1***

**Lila Fox**

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## Sample Chapter

“Yo, brother, I think you need to go back home and mellow out.”

Alastair turned abruptly to face his brother, Calum, getting in his face and gritting his teeth. “Would you like to say that to me one more time?”

“Jesus Christ.” Calum raised his hands and took a hasty step back. “Man, it’s just that you’re really pissed off....”

“Aren’t you usually like this after talking to your mother?” Alastair asked.

“She’s your stepmother. That counts, nut fuck. But yes, I do. The woman’s a viper. It’s just when you’re pissed like this, someone usually ends up dead.”

Alastair rolled his eyes, turned, and walked down the long hallway. The woman, Calum’s mother, was his fourth stepmother. Alastair’s mother died a few days after giving birth to him, which ruined his father. From what his family had told him over the years, they had been passionately in love, surprising because of their lifestyle.

Being a part of the mafia was not easy. You had to be cold and vicious to survive. It was especially hard for the women. The wives and mistresses had to deal with a lot.

His father had married four more times, trying to find the love he’d had with Isabella, Alastair’s mother, and it had never happened. This last one, Una, Calum’s mother, was the worst.

The first three stepmothers had died of surprisingly natural causes and not murder like one would expect living with the mafia—one in a car accident, one in an accidental drug overdose, and an accidental fall down the steps.

Alastair had liked that one the most. Nessa had been Logan, Ewen, and Rory’s mother and had been sweet as can be. It had hit his father hard when she passed away. Not as hard as Alastair’s mother, Isabella, but it took a while for him to want to have another woman in the house and in his life.

This last wife was a viper, and Alastair hated her, but he had to get along with her because his father was alive. After the stroke, his father had been unable to lead the Maclean clan, so Alastair had

taken over the whole operation then, which was fine because he ran most of it anyway.

He shivered inside. Two minutes with his stepmother was torture. The woman was as mean as they came, and he couldn't understand what his father saw in her. She might have been attractive if not for the permanent sneer she had on her face.

His brother was probably right, but he couldn't stand the thought of going home to the same house his stepmother lived in, knowing she'd probably try to hunt him down to talk some more because he'd walked out on her tirade. The temptation to just kill her was too strong, and he didn't know if his father would ever forgive him.

"What exactly are we looking at?" Calum asked.

"Our strip joint in Newport needs new women, and I sent out some of our guys to find ones who were attractive and loved being a stripper. Most of the ones we have now are getting old and tired, so we'll get them other jobs in the business."

"Cool. Maybe think about taking one of them home," Duncan, another brother, said. "It might help your disposition."

"Fuck off," Alastair said without turning around.

Alastair opened the door to what could pass as a conference room. It had a long table and chairs and a small bar off to the side. Some meetings went late, and the guys were more pleasant if they had some alcohol in them. But not too much, or they started killing each other.

The women were already there waiting. The ones that noticed him stood as seductively as they could, begging for his or his brothers' attention. Being one of their mistresses was sought after not only for their good looks but mainly for the money.

"Hey," Stuart, one of his best men who had been with him for years, said and walked over to shake his hand. "I think we did well."

"You checked for diseases and made sure they had no children?"

"Sure, boss. I know what you like."

Alastair nodded. "Where's Ross? He was supposed to be helping you."

"He's coming in with the last one or two."

Alastair turned to Calum. "Can you get me a bourbon on the rocks?" He wouldn't admit it to his brothers, but he did need to mellow out,

and a nice drink helped every time.

“Sure.”

The first drink went down smoothly and helped calm his anger a bit as he talked to Stuart and ignored the women trying to vie for his notice and interest. He shook his head and snorted when his brothers did give the women their attention and had girls all over them.

“Craig is going to take these women to the club if you’re okay with them,” Stuart said.

Alastair turned and whistled for Duncan. “I’m going to put you in charge of this. Take them to Speedy’s, get the women who will live in our apartments next to the club moved in, and take the rest back to their place but tell them they have to be at work tomorrow. If they are late, they’re fired. There are no second chances.”

“I got it,” Duncan said.

His brother and a couple of the men rounded up the women and took them out a back door to the vans waiting.

“Are you going to wait for the last of them?” Stuart asked.

Alastair looked at his watch and sat down. “I’ll give them a few minutes.”

He hadn’t finished with his second drink when a side door opened and Ross, one of his guys, walked in, dragging a woman. She was crying and fighting to get away from him.

“Shut up, bitch,” Ross said and shook her.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Stuart yelled.

Alastair held up a hand, set down his drink, and stood to face Ross. He walked to stand in front of the man and crossed his arms over his chest to keep from strangling the man, trying to ignore the woman’s pleas and cries. “Tell me.”

Ross stuttered. “Oh, well, her uncle owed us some money, and I was supposed to get it, but he didn’t have it, and so I thought we could use her as collateral until he pays up.”

Calum, Stuart, and the rest of his guys cursed, and the tension rose in the room.

Alastair just stared at the woman. She was tiny but had curved hips and larger breasts. She was dressed in a long white nightgown with lace. Her dark hair was tousled like she’d been pulled from bed.

“Who gave you permission to do that?” Alastair asked when he turned back at Ross.

“Well, no one. I just thought...”

“Is it your job to think?” Alastair asked.

“Well, no.”

“Jesus Christ, you dumbshit,” Stuart said.

Alastair walked up, cupped the woman’s chin, and raised her face. His breath stalled in his lungs because her eyes were the most beautiful he’d ever seen, even when they were red and swollen from crying. They were light blue in the middle and green on the other part, and they seemed to look right through him.

“Who is your family?” Alastair asked her.

She sniffed. “I don’t have one besides an uncle I haven’t seen in years.”

“No husband?”

“No. Please, let me go home. I won’t tell anyone. I don’t even know you,” she said.

For once in his life, he made a decision with his heart instead of his head. He pulled out a gun and shot Ross in the forehead in one smooth move.

Everyone in the room stood frozen and in shock until the woman screamed.

Alastair put his gun away and reached for her when it looked like she was going to faint, only to have her flinch in horror away from him. He knew why, but it still pissed him off, which was ridiculous. Of course, she would be terrified of him. He just murdered someone in front of her.

He didn’t like the blood that had been sprayed over her from Ross’s head, and he wanted her clean as soon as possible.

He kept a few feet away from the woman and waited for her to be calm enough to hear him. “My name is Alastair Maclean. We’re the mafia in this part of the city.”

Alastair heard his brother curse behind him and ignored him.

The woman was hunched against the wall. Tears mixed with blood and brain matter ran down her face. “Why are you telling me this? Are you going to kill me next?”

Alastair shook his head. "I'm making sure that you won't be able to go anywhere, ever."

"I don't understand. I've never done anything to you or anyone."

"I know. Sometimes your life takes a path you didn't expect." No kidding. He never predicted he'd kidnap a woman and plan to keep her forever. "My advice is to make the best of this. I'll treat you like a princess as long as you're loyal to me. Do you understand?"

"No, I don't. I don't understand any of this."

He sighed. "That's okay. We have plenty of time." He held out his hand and waited.

She shook her head.

"You can either take my hand and walk out of here with some dignity, or I can have a few of my men carry you out. Choose."

She studied him for a moment and before she reached for his hand. He could see how much she was trembling, but he would take care of her as soon as they got home. When her shaking, tiny cold hand slid into his hand, something inside of him settled, and a warmth filled him.

"That's good, baby." He pulled her along and looked at one of his men. "Take care of Ross."

"You got it, boss."

As he led her out to his car, he felt something shift in his universe, and he knew he'd forever be changed. He just didn't know if it would be for the good or bad. Only time would tell.

End of sample chapter

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