



RORY IRELAND

WOODSBORO

IF WE BURN,
WE BURN TOGETHER.

WOODSBORO

THE COMPLETE DUET

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RORY IRELAND

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*For Steph, Thank you for always coming through and helping
me shine*

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Also by Rory Ireland

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WOODSBORO

This is the complete Woodsboro Duet featuring Twisted in Flames and United in Ashes.

A bonus epilogue is at the end and I hope you enjoy it.

xoxo Rory

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PLAYLIST

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CONTENT TROPES & TAGS

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Violence

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TWISTED IN FLAMES

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KB, I can only hope that these books live up to the gorgeous covers you created for Woodsboro. They'll forever be my favorite.

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Fate! There is such a thing as fate, but it only takes you so far. Then it's up to you to make it happen.

— THE ANGEL, CAN'T HARDLY WAIT

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SEBASTIAN

“You’re late, McCoy,” Talon, the president of Kappa Alpha, calls over his shoulder when I walk into the formal dining room of the fraternity house. He’s extinguishing the flames on the candles lined across the marble mantle that overhangs on the ancient stone fireplace. This whole school is so pretentious, between the way they make us dress, speak, and act. It’s like we’re living in archaic times, despite the fact that when we go home on term breaks, we all drive fucking Maserati’s, get tattoos and trash our parents’ mansions with wild parties. But it’s a rite of passage for the wealthy in Faircliff, and I’m fairly certain none of us would be here if our trust funds weren’t on the line.

“When the president addresses you, it’s polite to respond,” Talon brushes his hand through his blonde hair and gives me a shit eating grin. He’s baiting me. I can feel the fucking tension between us, and it’s more intense than usual. But that’s more on me than him. He’s always a pretentious douchebag. I can’t remember the last time I slept more than an hour or two, and I’m hanging on by a thread. And if anyone is going to make me snap, it’s Talon Sanderson.

I’ve wanted to kick his ass since the first time I heard him open his mouth freshman year, but I haven’t because his dad is the Dean of Woodsboro University, and my father’s best friend. So, instead of knocking him out and crushing his windpipe with my foot on his throat, I settle for flipping him off. I don’t want to be part of this stupid fraternity, but I don’t have a choice. My brother, Blaine, and I are legacies. I clench

my jaw as the thought runs through my brain. *Were*. Past tense. We were legacies, until he was found dead on the cliffs around the perimeter of the Woodsboro campus last month. No one is acting like it's a big deal. Just a horrible accident, is what every adult in this hellish school is saying. There are some whispers from students about whether it was self-inflicted, or if our stepsister Carrington was involved. No investigation, nothing but a shitty vigil and an even shittier tombstone in the cemetery near the old church on campus.

I glance around the room, and I realize that I must be further behind schedule than I thought. Besides Talon, there's only four guys still in the room which means I've completely missed the meeting. They're pretending to be bored and unbothered, but they're aware of the fact that I'm not in any mental state to be dealing with this asshole. Wilder has swiped one of the leather-bound books off the built-in bookshelf and is reading it upside down as he grins at me. He's always looking for a reason to get into a fight, and he's waiting for me to start it so he can get in on the fun. Nathaniel and Cruz are fucking around with the gold encrusted globe that's probably worth more than all of our lives together. And Declan is sipping whiskey and watching Wilder with an amused expression. He's the most reserved, never one to spout off in anger, but if I could only pick one person to have my back, it'd be him. The five of us are like brothers, and I'm not surprised that they're waiting around to see if I'm going to lose my shit and burn this motherfucker to the ground with Talon still inside. I notice that Jesse, my brother's best friend, hasn't waited around for me. I don't need a babysitter, but he's usually Mr. Nice Guy just like Blaine was, and wouldn't chance leaving me alone with Talon with four witnesses who would swear on their grandmothers that he bashed his own skull into the cement. We're all grieving though, so I don't blame him for being distant.

“Having trouble hearing, Bash?” Talon taunts me again and I can feel the reason leaving my body. I need to get some of this pent-up anger out and he's looking like the easiest target right now. There are no rules for him because of who his father is, and he knows it.

“I’m not in the fucking mood. Put on whatever grand performance of bullshit you’ve got planned for my benefit. Mark my fucking name down now on your precious little attendance sheet, and then shut the fuck up.” I glare at Talon and stomp over to make myself a drink. I bite back the bitter taste of the whiskey and tug my tie loose. I feel like I’m being strangled, and the tie has little to do with that.

Wilder snickers, and I cut my eyes at him because I’m not in the mood to play around. I used to think his dumb ass was funny, but now everything annoys me. I’m late because I’ve turned into a fucking stalker, following my stepsister, Carrington, everywhere. I want to know what she knows about Blaine’s death, and she’s hellbent on taking their secrets to her grave. He told me he was going to be with her that night, and yet she wasn’t with him when he died apparently. She won’t say where she was or how he ended up on the cliffs that night. She knows more than she’s telling me, and I’ll squeeze every last breath out of her until she breaks. We’ve always had a tumultuous relationship, and that’s mostly because she’s the only thing I’ve ever wanted that I wasn’t allowed to have.

Carrington is a good girl, or so she pretends to be. I know the truth about her and Blaine, even if she wants to pretend that they were *just friends*. I know my brother better than anyone, and Blaine McCoy was not just friends with girls who look as good as Carrington Jane does in a fucking skirt. She’s a liar, and I’m the monster that wants to corrupt her, own her, bring her down to my level. But she always preferred Blaine’s company over mine, probably because he’s the good McCoy brother. The kind one. The one who put everyone before himself. They were always whispering about some shit, giggling, and going on walks down to the cliffs that overlook the ocean. He claimed that he loved Carrington, but only as a sister. He lied to my face when he said he didn’t have the sick thoughts I did, do...always will.

I feel my heart clench when I think of my brother, and if it’s the last fucking thing I ever do, I’ll find out what happened to him. I have my moments when I snap and start ripping everything apart. In the last month, I’ve destroyed my room more times than even I’m proud of, and that’s a big fucking

deal because I have no conscience. It's like I black out because I never remember any of it. I'm just left with the damage I've caused. I never remember yelling for Carrington either, but I do. Every fucking time.

Declan stands, moving to lean against the fireplace. He must sense that I'm hanging on by a thread, and if anyone gives me a reason to snap, I'll gladly take it.

"I need to mark down why you missed the meeting. Were you too busy trying to fuck your sister?" Talon taunts as he stands by the door leading out to the ice. "Oh that's right, Blaine was the sister fucker, but now that he's dead, who knows what the family tree will look like." He snickers, and all the rage I've barely been able to keep inside for the last few days erupts. I throw my glass, letting it shatter against the stone wall. I zero in on Talon. He's a fucking dead man. I might treat Carrington like garbage, but I'll fucking slaughter anyone else dumb enough to say her name. Talon smirks, seemingly unaffected as I stomp toward him. He either wants to feel me choke the life out of him or he's dense enough to think that his status at this college is enough to save his life.

I'm absolutely feral when it comes to Carrington on a good day, but today? After all the fucking shit with Blaine? I'm murderous.

"Bash, don't," Declan's voice stops me mid stride, but my eyes don't leave Talon even when Declan bangs his fist on the ancient intricately carved wooden cart that the liquor is on. "Shut the fuck up, Talon. He's here. Say what you need to say, and I'll make sure you walk out of here tonight." Declan's poised tone, the one they've shoved down our throats since kindergarten, does its job of masking his anger. His tone is cold and even. I know I can count on him if I need backup, but I won't need anyone to step in. After seeing Carrington today, watching her walk around campus pretending to be sad, pretending that she doesn't know why my brother is lying lifeless in the cold ground, I'm looking for a reason to fuck someone up. And Talon just gave me several.

Talon ignores Declan and starts in on me again. "Since the golden boy is no longer with us, and she clearly doesn't want

anything to do with you. You won't mind if I take my turn with her?" I've beaten the fucking breath out of guys for talking about Carrington, but I've never felt this sort of unbridled rage. I'm going to kill him. I'm going to watch his eyes go blank and feel his last breath. He's grinning at me when he says, "Don't worry, I'll give her back to you when I'm done with her."

Before anyone can blink, I'm on him. I don't even know what my fists are connecting with, and I can't feel the pain that I know should be there. It takes both Declan and Wilder to pull me off of the motherfucker. Minutes that feel like hours pass, and when my vision isn't blurry, I see Nathaniel and Cruz yanking Talon up off the floor and onto the long wooden table that has been the center of Kappa Alpha meetings since Woodsboro has existed. His mouth is bleeding all over his Woodsboro issued, white button down, and I'm glad to see the fear flicker in his eyes for a moment before he masks his feelings.

I stalk over to him but allow Cruz and Nathaniel to act as a buffer. "If you even think about touching her, you won't have enough strength to even beg me to put you out of your misery." *She's mine*, I want to add, but have enough sense to know that'll just give him the satisfaction of knowing he's right on target with the jabs he's throwing my way.

"Now see, all this time I thought you were thinking with your dick, because who wouldn't want a piece of sweet little Carrington Jane? But you clearly care what happens to her, don't you?" he laughs, but I can hear the way his voice is shaking, and that makes my lips tip up into a demented smile like the psycho I am. He has no fucking clue who he's messing with when it comes to Carrington. "That's a slippery slope, don't you think? Let your brother rest in peace and keep your nose out of places it doesn't belong. I wouldn't want anything to happen to anyone else you care about." I'm about to snatch him up, but both Nathaniel and Cruz stop me.

Wilder jerks his shoulders as if he's itching to grab Talon, but Declan presses a hand to his chest, anticipating his movements and stopping him before he does something to get

himself in trouble. Declan and Wilder have a different kind of friendship than the rest of us. It's like they're brothers or can feel what the other one is feeling. I didn't even have that with my own brother. We were polar opposites and rarely ever agreed on anything. Except we did agree on one thing. Carrington Jane is McCoy property and always will be.

Declan moves to stand between Talon and me and he plucks his black pea coat that all of the Kappa Alpha's wear from the back of the chair he must have been sitting in during the meeting. "Next time he wants to kill you, I won't stand in his way." Declan's voice is controlled, almost bored. "Am I making myself clear?"

Talon only grins, and satisfaction courses through me when I see his bloody teeth.

"Answer him." Wilder stands shoulder to shoulder with Declan, fumbling with the buttons on his own coat, making his demand seem less intimidating. I watch as Declan brushes Wilder's fingers away and takes over, fastening the buttons for him with a practiced ease. It's those sort of small gestures between the two of them that makes me wonder if there are things that happen between them that the rest of us don't know. When Talon doesn't respond to the demand, Wilder adds, "If you don't play nice and answer Declan, we're going to tag-team your mom. We all know Mrs. Sanders prefers frat boys over your father."

Declan doesn't react, but Nathaniel and Cruz snort out a laugh when Talon snaps, "Shut the fuck up. Leave her out of this." Talon finally stands, and he'd do well to remember that he's only able to do that because we've allowed it. "I'm warning all of you to stop snooping around campus looking for shit that isn't any of your business."

"My brother is my business. And I will find out who is the reason he ended up on those cliffs with a broken fucking neck." I fight to control my temper, and I'm barely successful. I lean in and angrily whisper, "When I find out who is responsible, they're going to get it ten times worse than what Blaine went through that night." I watch Talon closely as my words sink in, and I realize that the quiet promise is more

intimidating than anything I could angrily yell at him. Without another word, I turn and head toward the heavy wooden door that leads out into the stone corridor. I need to get out of here or I'm going to kill him, and he clearly knows something about Blaine's death, or he wouldn't be fighting so hard to keep me from shaking shit up around Woodsboro. I need to keep him around until I can unravel the truth. After that, if he dies a slow horrible death. I don't give a fuck.

“Does your mom like it in the ass? I'm asking for a friend.” I hear Wilder taunt, and I roll my eyes because even though I don't turn around to see it, I just fucking know he's wiggling his eyebrows suggestively as Declan rolls his eyes. I know what he's doing, and that he's doing it to help me, but his antics only ebb my frustration a fraction.

“Fuck off!” I hear Talon's rage filled voice just as I'm about to shove the door open, but I turn when I hear a scuffle. Talon scrunches up his bloody face in anger and shoves Wilder who continues laughing, not budging an inch.

Declan waves me off, letting me know he has it under control, and I don't argue. Once I'm outside, I look up at the foggy sky and try to gauge if the rain is going to hold off. This is the exact type of weather that Blaine and Carrington loved, and the reason they'd go down to the cliffs and sit for hours. I wonder what they talked about. Did he fuck her out in the open where anyone brave enough to venture down the cliffs could see them? Jealousy rages through me at the thought of her with someone else. I treat her like trash because I'm so fucking angry at her, but she's mine. I need her, and that makes me hate her even more. I know I need to stay away from her, for her sake and for my own sanity. I head toward her dorm anyway, because I don't give a fuck about either of those things.

I'm going to ruin her life.

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CARRINGTON

“Has Declan said anything to you about me?” The words are spilling from Ella’s mouth before she can pull the chair out across from me at the oversized wooden table in the dining hall. I’m eating alone per usual now that Blaine is gone. But it hasn’t escaped my attention that Sebastian has Nathaniel spying on me. It’s like his crew takes shifts, watching my every move, and they’re too self-involved to realize how noticeable they are. They’re all over six-foot, and have the worst reputations on campus, and they silently demand attention when they enter a room. When I thought they couldn’t get any douchier, they started calling themselves the fucking Wolves of Woodsboro. Yet, here Nathaniel is, the sleeves of the hoodie he’s not supposed to be wearing during school hours pushed up to his elbows and the way he’s holding his spoon to shovel cereal into his mouth is reminiscent of a toddler. As he grins at me, indicating that he thinks the fact that Ella has me cornered is hilarious, milk dribbles down his chin. The fact that he’s one of the few guys on campus that the female population would claw each other’s eyes out to date makes me want to hurl myself down a flight of stairs and put myself out of the misery of existing in this world.

Ella waves her red folder in front of my face, and if I cared enough, I’d comment on a senior in college carrying folders around in the dining hall. Instead, I pull my glare away from Nathaniel long enough to snatch the folder out of her hands and lay it flat on the table where it won’t slice my cornea if she makes any wild movements. I cut my eyes at Nathaniel when I hear him snort at my precautionary display, and then I flick my

middle finger up at him to show him I'm not afraid of him looming around. Sebastian, on the other hand, scares the shit out of me when it's just the two of us, but that's mostly because he seems to want to seduce me and kill me all at the same time. Sometimes, I feel like I want to hang around to find out which side of him will win out. "Are you even listening to me, CJ? I slept with them." I give her my attention

"Who? One of Sebastian's little psychotic friends?" I spoon mac and cheese into my mouth and squint my eyes at her in confusion. I'm not sure why she's talking to me anyway. We're not friends for a lot of reasons with the main one being that she spends her days drooling over my stepbrother and I spend my days trying to avoid being confined in whatever small space he tries to back me into. He has an affinity for chasing me, and I'm not stupid enough to think that he couldn't catch me if he really wanted to. He likes my fear, and if I'm honest, sometimes the thrill of his torment is the only thing that makes me feel like I'm still alive. Sebastian and I have never gotten along. He didn't want my mother to marry his father, and I assumed it was because his father cheated on his mother. Since day one he's made it a point to torment me in one way or another, but since Blaine died, he's gotten worse. If he thinks he's going to bully me into spilling Blaine's secrets, his head is further up his own ass than I originally thought.

He'll have to kill me first.

Ella scoots her chair, and the scraping noise on the stone flooring brings me out of my thoughts. I realize then that Ella is teary-eyed and I feel like I need to pretend like I care which one of Sebastian's friends flashed her some abs to get her into bed and then tossed her out like the garbage they think she is. She doesn't have to tell me what happened for me to understand. The five of them have been wreaking havoc on the female population of Faircliff since high school.

I shove the rest of my food toward the middle of the table and run my hand through my ponytail, checking to see if the ribbon is still sitting correctly. Woodsboro University is strict about, well everything, but especially the dress code. It's not

like we have to wear uniforms, but we might as well. My ribbons are the only fun thing I get, so I wear a different one every day. I sigh when Ella tucks her short red hair behind her ears and snuffles. “Which one of them?” I ask, leaning in to speak softly. I’m not Ella’s biggest fan, but I also don’t want to embarrass her in such a public place, and clearly she doesn’t want to talk to her snotty girl clique, or she wouldn’t be crying all over my mac and cheese.

“I said I slept with them. *Plural.*” Her condescending tone almost makes me want to tell her to fuck off, but my curiosity outweighs my annoyance. I quirk an eyebrow, silently coaxing her to spill the details. “Declan and Wilder. *At the same time,*” she whispers the last few words and lowers her eyes in what I assume is shame, which is weird to witness from someone like Ella.

“Hey, that’s nothing to be ashamed about. We’ve all been there.” I mean, I haven’t, it’s hard to have a twosome, let alone a threesome, when the McCoy brothers have threatened a slow, but certain death on anyone brave enough to ask me on a date. Blaine meant well, and even apologized for treating me like property. He cared about me like a sister and didn’t want me to end up crying in someone’s dinner because of a poorly executed sexcapade. Sebastian on the other hand just wants to make me miserable, and I’m pretty sure if the words ‘I’m sorry’ ever passed his lips, his tongue would catch on fire. I lean back, and tug at the Woodsboro pin on the collar of my white button-down shirt out of pure nervousness. I’m not sure how to navigate this situation, because everything I say sounds like I’m just sugarcoating it. She’s a grown woman and can do whatever she wants with her body, but she clearly regrets it. “I mean, as far as fuckboys go, Declan and Wilder aren’t so bad. I mean it could be way worse. It could have been him,” I jut my thumb at Nathaniel and shrug. She laughs through her tears as we watch him fiddle with his chestnut-colored hair and narrow his unapologetic stare on us.

“I really like Declan,” Ella finally admits, and then looks up at me pleadingly. “He wouldn’t come back to my room unless Wilder came too. During...while we were...it was like they were fucking me, but they wouldn’t even look at me. I

practically begged Declan to stay the night, but it was like he couldn't hear anything I said. It was so embarrassing. I just sat there naked on my bed and watched them get dressed." Her lips start trembling again, and it's so strange to see someone as cold and heartless as Ella be this emotionally distraught. At the same time, I'm not sure how she could be this surprised that they're like this. The Wolves are known for treating girls this exact way. I mean not the threesome thing, I think that's specific to Wilder and Declan, but still, they have no empathy. That's why they rule the campus, everyone is afraid of them. "You're sure he didn't say anything to you about me?"

"Ella, since Blaine..." I avert my eyes because I don't want to cry myself. I've been faking my way through the last few days, trying not to show how gutted I actually feel, but Blaine was my only real friend, literally the only person I trusted with all of my secrets. He even knew my complicated feelings for Sebastian. I still can't believe he's gone and for such a stupid reason. He swore me to secrecy and his reasons were valid, but I'm still not sure he told me everything which makes the wound of losing him sting even more. I'll keep Blaine's secrets, though, even if it makes me a target. I swallow back the emotion I'm feeling and continue, "Sebastian and I don't get along. So his friends aren't really staying over in my dorm and telling me about their threesomes or why they're such assholes." When she purses her lips in disappointment I add, "I think you should stay away from them. All they do is party and run through girls like it's their fucking job." I also think Declan is never going to love anyone the way he loves Wilder, and I think Wilder hasn't quite caught on to the fact. That's just my gut feeling, and I'd never say it out loud, especially to someone like Ella. It's not my place to tell her that she's fighting a losing battle.

"I thought you and Sebastian were good now," she crinkles her eyebrow and adjusts her navy-blue headband that matches the blazers and cardigans we're required to wear. We're not allowed to have our hair up completely during school hours along with a long list of other don'ts that are too tedious to mention. We all typically go wild when we sneak off campus, which is sometimes entertaining to witness. We're in college,

and I get that our pretentious parents are doing their best to turn us into their brainless clones, but even for a place like Woodsboro, the rules are ridiculous.

“Why would you think that?” I ask, pushing my chair back to leave. I’m done with classes for the day, and I really don’t want to go back to my room where all I’ll see are things that remind me of Blaine. I suppose that’s better than what I’m dealing with now. I glance over and Nathaniel is gone, and all of the trash from his dinner is left haphazardly on the table. Asshole. My attention snaps back to Ella when I realize she’s gathering my plate and cup from the polished wood table. “Oh, you’re coming with me.” Of course she is. Clearly Blaine is haunting me because I know he’s floating around somewhere wheezing with laughter. Dealing with his brother wanting to strangle me and his asinine friends not-so-covertly stalking me wasn’t enough, but now I’ve got wolf groupies following me around.

She waves her hand at me dismissively, and I realize now that she knows exactly how uncomfortable this whole interaction has been for me. “Everyone’s talking about how Sebastian beat the shit out of Talon because of you.”

“No they’re not.” I roll my eyes and start packing up my backpack. “I mean, no he didn’t. He might’ve beat Talon up, who is also an asshole you should stay away from, by the way.”

“Literally every person I’ve talked to today, and you *know* how socially active I am,” she says it so seriously that I have to fight to keep back the laugh that wants to bubble out of my chest. She can’t be this up her own ass, and yet here we are, having a conversation about how many snotty friends she has. “The Wolves are a really big deal, CJ.” She looks at me expectantly, like I’m supposed to gush over how godlike they are. Sure, Sebastian looks good with his shirt off, and his blue eyes have this piercing quality that feels like he might cut me right in half just by looking at me. Even so, that’s no reason to let him and his friends treat everyone like garbage. They’re brutal, psychotic, and everyone would be better off if they’d just stay in the graveyard behind the church on campus where

they like to play their fucked up little games. “Everyone says Sebastian is obsessed with you, and that’s why he acts the way he does.”

“Well that makes it okay, then, doesn’t it?” She either doesn’t pick up on the sarcasm in my words or she doesn’t acknowledge it, so I return her fake smile as we begin walking through the cobblestone courtyard. It’s overcast today, like most days around here, but it’s not raining yet, so I’ll take that as a win. The tall, stone buildings create even more of a shadow on the courtyard, and as a chill rips through me, I regret not pulling my jacket out of my backpack before we left. The dark clouds that seem to be visibly moving don’t look promising, so I’m hoping once I ditch Ella, I can figure out where I’m going to hide out tonight before the downpour starts.

I’m walking quickly, when I realize she’s matching me step for step without any sign of going her own way, I ask, “So where are you headed?” I cringe at the way the sentence comes out, she’s mean...not stupid, she knows I’m trying to get rid of her without causing her to have a temper tantrum. I don’t need another person to publicly humiliate me, the Wolves have that covered.

Ella grabs my arm just as we get to the end of the courtyard, my eyes zero in on the library. Declan’s older sister, Delaney is one of the librarians. She’s technically probably too young to get a job like that if we didn’t live in the Woodsboro bubble and if her last name wasn’t St. James. She’s always been really nice to me, even though Declan probably told her that I’m currently public enemy number one right now. She’d probably let me hang out in the library tonight after hours, throw Sebastian off my back.

“He can’t blame you forever, you didn’t even do anything. Blaine’s death was a horrible accident. He was drunk by the cliffs and fell.” I pull my arm away and frown at her words. She doesn’t know the whole story, and I want to keep it that way. She moves with me, not letting go. “Are you afraid of Sebastian’s attention because you’ve already hooked up with his brother? He’s gone so...”

I go still when her long pink nails, which are also against Woodsboro dress code, dig into the skin of my forearm. “Why would you ask me that?”

“I just thought maybe that’s why you avoid him, loyalty to Blaine.” She shrugs and I’m starting to wonder how much of her carrying on was real and how much was a performance to see if she could get any information out of me. I see Talon jogging toward us, which is very unlike the polished fraternity president I’ve been avoiding since middle school. Sure enough, he’s sporting a busted lip, and a bruised jaw. Ella tips her head up with a close-lipped smile that can only be interpreted as ‘I told you so.’

I would run away, go hide out in one of the buildings, but I’ve learned the hard way that the only thing that will stop Talon, is one of the Wolves, and they’re not exactly team Carrington Jane right now. I wonder what he could have said to cause Sebastian to punch him, I mean, not that I think it would take much these days to make Sebastian snap. I scold myself silently as my mind wanders, wondering if what Ella said was true, had he really attacked Talon over me? Heat pools in my stomach at the thought, and I’m thankful that no one knows my secret thoughts, or that despite our rivalry, Sebastian’s aggression turns me on in ways I know it shouldn’t. He’s toxic, unhinged, psychotic, and I’m fucked up for the things I want him to do to me.

I try to control the distaste I know is pulling at my features when Talon smiles widely at us, holding a hand up for us to wait for him to catch his breath. Ella is beaming at him, and my facade falls instantly. I narrow my eyes and look from her to him. She’s in on whatever he’s got up his sleeve, and I’m an idiot for thinking she was really sad over Declan and Wilder. In my defense, I’ve seen my fair share of girls sobbing in the dorm bathrooms at 2 AM because of the Wolves.

Talon flashes his bright white smile at me and begins unbuttoning the black pea coat the Kappa Alphas always wear. “You look cold, here take my jacket,” he says gently, slinking it off his shoulders and offering it to me. I sigh, dropping my backpack to the ground and I lift my arms to take my ribbon

out of my hair. It's well after school hours, and my scalp is starting to burn with a migraine. I look him dead in the eye as I wordlessly pull my long hair up into a high ponytail and quickly tie the ribbon around the elastic band. "Come on, CJ. I don't bite. Unless you want me to. What's your deal?" He winks and I want to puke all over his expensive coat.

I cross my arms over my chest to show that I won't be taking anything from him, and it's only then that he pulls his arm back. He's still smiling though, so I say, "My problem is that I would rather freeze to death than take a coat from someone I don't like. It's who I am as a person, so I don't see that changing." I tilt my head to the side and wrinkle my nose in disgust, but it only makes him smile wider. "Anyway, if we could make this quick, I really have to get going. You're not the only asshole stalking me today, and unfortunately I'm all booked up for the foreseeable future. So maybe check with the Wolves and see if they have any time slots you can take. They've sort of cornered the market," I chirp, already turning to the left to head for the library. I'm only two steps in, and Talon is in front of me, blocking my path.

"Not so fast." He doesn't touch me, and I suspect that's because he doesn't want the Wolves to decapitate him, but he uses his hand to indicate he isn't going to let me through.

"Talon I..."

"I just want to talk." I move to push my way around his large frame, and I can see the exact moment he loses the last fuck he had to give. He reaches out, grabbing me firmly by the shoulders and pulls me to stand in front of him. We're in broad daylight, which should make me feel safe, but that's not how things work around here. Talon Sanderson's parents practically own the university, and not even the Wolves can stop that. Well, without committing crimes, and I know them well enough that none of them are afraid to go to prison. We have the weirdest dynamic. They're the ones who should scare me the most, but they're the ones I have the most faith in when it comes to my safety.

"What do you want? Spit it out, and don't fucking touch me again or I'll cut your dick off and shove it down your

privileged little throat,” I snap, but I don’t shove him like I want to. Instead, I yank away from him, and put a few steps of space between us. Maybe if he just says whatever it is he wants to say, I can get to class without a gigantic scene. I glance over at Ella, and I see that she’s whispering to two of her mean girl friends who have walked up from the other side of the building. I see them in my peripherals watching intently as Talon crowds me. He straightens to full height, and I know he’s trying to make me feel small, but I refuse to show him it’s working.

“You and I both know Blaine’s death wasn’t an accident.” He tilts his head to the side in mock sympathy, pouting his full bottom lip in condescension. “Why haven’t you told Sebastian what really happened?” I feel bile rise in my throat. I don’t know what happened, but I do know the things Blaine was doing are what most likely got him killed, but he’s an idiot if he thinks I’d be gullible enough to tell him what I know. This is how Talon always has everyone by the throat, he gets information and uses it against them.

I take a deep breath before I say, “Well, holy shit, it’s almost as if you used critical thinking skills.” I roll my eyes, praying that he can’t tell how rattled I actually am. “Of course it wasn’t an accident, but this school covers up anything that might be a blemish on their pristine reputation.”

“I see everything coming and going on this campus, and I could ruin lives if I wanted to,” he says softly, leaning in. “Never forget that.”

My stomach coils at his threat, but instead of backing down like I want to, I reach out and pat his inflamed cheek roughly. “Doesn’t look like you saw Sebastian’s fist coming.” I smirk, turning on my heel and getting a few steps in before he grabs me by the back of my neck so roughly that I bite my lip, so I don’t cry out. I taste blood in my mouth, but I remain rigid.

“Come to the Kappa party this weekend.” He grips my jaw so hard that I turn to face him. He leans back, out of my space and his smile doesn’t reach his cold, dead eyes. He’s really enjoying this, toying with me.

“You’re delusional.”

“You act like you have a choice.” He reaches out to touch my cheek, but I wrench my head back. “I’ll be looking for you. But I guess if you don’t show up, I can always spend my time talking to Sebastian. I’m sure we have a lot to catch up on.”

I feel the anger bubbling up through my chest and just as I’m about to lose it, I feel someone wrap an arm around my shoulder.

“I need to borrow CJ, I’m sure you don’t mind.” I know it’s Declan before I look up to see his angry green eyes. He’s normally the polished one, the one who doesn’t show how he’s feeling, including his anger, but right now I feel like he might crush every bone in my body if he pulls me any closer to his ribcage. I guess he’s on stalking duty right now.

“We were having a discussion.” The glee that is clearly written on Talon’s face is annoying. “CJ was just asking about the party this weekend, she really wants to come by and get wild. She’s been through a lot lately.” He pouts his bottom lip again, mocking me and Blaine. Declan doesn’t give him the response he’s looking for, but instead reaches down to grab my backpack and then puts a protective arm around my shoulders. This is what Sebastian’s touch should feel like. It should make me feel protected, not like my whole body is on fire and I never want the flames to be put out.

“I don’t think you’ll have to worry about parties after Bash sees these marks you put on her face and neck,” Declan says smoothly, and without another word leads me away and toward the dorms. I’m not sure where he thinks he’s taking me, but my mind is already racing with how I’m going to get out of his hold.

“You’ve gotta stay away from Talon,” Declan says, taking off his coat that is identical to Talon’s and draping it over my shoulders. I don’t argue with him because I’m freezing and it’s starting to rain. “He wants to mess with us and he’s going to use you and Delaney to do it.”

I stop abruptly to ask, “Is Delaney okay?” His eyes soften for only a fraction of a second as he nods, and then he’s back in rich prick mode.

“Talon has a lot of power around here, and he knows that you and Delaney are the only weak spots we have.” He rubs a hand through his black curls. Talon does run the show, just like his brothers before him. But if everyone keeps letting him get away with it, it’ll never end.

“Why am I a weak spot? The five of you hate me. Talon wouldn’t be after me if he knew you guys don’t care what happens to me.” I look at him expectantly, but he doesn’t comment. His lips press into a thin line, indicating that he knows something he’s not going to tell me. “I get that Delaney is your sister and all, but she’s also a Woodsboro staff member. Talon can’t be that stupid to mess with her.” A gust of wind blows my ponytail around in my face and I shrink down into his oversized jacket as we get to the front entrance of my dorm.

Declan sighs as if he doesn’t have time to deal with messy things like feelings and psychotic stepbrothers. “Don’t underestimate Talon. He *is* that stupid,” Declan’s tone is so bored it almost makes me laugh. “Now go inside and stay in your room for the rest of the night.”

I take his jacket off and offer a trade for my backpack. “Yes, sir. Whatever I can do to appease the wolf gods of Woodsboro,” I mock salute him and it’s the first time in a long time I’ve seen Declan smile. It’s small, no teeth visible, but I’ll take it.

I watch as he puts his coat back on and heads off into the fog. I dig my coat out of my backpack and wait for him to be out of sight before I head back to the library. There is no way I’m going up to my room where Sebastian thinks I’ll be.



It’s nearly eight PM, and Delaney St. James and I are the only ones left in the library. I watch as Delaney packs up her things

and realize that I've never truly looked at her before. She's beautiful and albeit sarcastic, she's also really kind if she likes you. She bleaches her hair platinum and it's always pin straight, not a lock out of place. If it wasn't for her green eyes framed in square black glasses, I wouldn't see the resemblance between her and Declan. "I'll guard it with my life," I say teasingly as Delaney hands me an old skeleton key that works on all the exits of the library.

"Don't," she shrugs unceremoniously. "I hate it here. I kind of hope I get fired," she says smirking. "But they'd never do that to a St. James, now would they?" She winks and swipes a couple leather bound books off the counter. I tilt my head to the side to read the faded titles when she says, "I do love the books though." She brings one up to her nose and breathes in like someone has handed her a bouquet of the finest roses.

"Greek mythology," I say. "Just doing a little light reading this weekend?" We both laugh as she straightens her navy pencil skirt and pulls on her coat. It's a lot like my school issued peacoat, but hers has an oversized hood and the vibrant berry color pops against her pale skin.

"Thank fuck I'm too old to get an invite to the *super cool* and not at all emotionally stunting frat parties," she rolls her eyes at her brother's expense, and I absolutely love that about her. She's only a couple inches shorter than me in her four or five-inch stilettos, so that probably lands her at just about five feet. The funny thing is, I've seen her reprimanding Declan and Wilder in various places around campus. Despite their size, I'm not at all convinced that she wouldn't win in a 1v2 match if she was fired up enough.

I nearly jump out of my skin at the loud bang against the glass of the front door. It's locked, and I'm thankful for that, but my stomach drops when I see Cruz Hayes glaring at us. I step closer to the bookshelf that is across from Delaney's desk and silently pray I've been out of sight from his line of vision the entire time.

"Shit. How did they know I'd be here?" I whisper mostly to myself, clutching the key in my hand so hard that I think it

might leave an imprint in my palm.

Delaney sighs, putting her hands on her slim hips. She scrunches her nose up in distaste when she says, “He’s here for me.” She pivots effortlessly on her heels and gives me an exasperated look. “I fuck a frat boy *one* time and now I’ve got a fan club.”

I clear my throat and I can’t help but let my eyes flicker to the sizable diamond ring on her left ring finger. “You...and Cruz?” I can’t even form the sentence I’m trying to ask her.

“No, me and Nathaniel. Cruz just watched.” She huffs as if this is public information and that I need to catch up. “You’d do some pretty stupid things too if your parents were trying to marry you off to some awful old man.” She holds up her hand, and the diamond sparkles brighter than it has any right to while being worn by such an unhappy bride to be. “Just hang back until you hear me leave, I’ll get rid of him.” She pulls her hood up before pulling an identical key to the one she gave me earlier out of her pocket. She’s already at the door when she calls back to me, “Don’t lose that key, CJ, you can’t open the door without it to leave.”

“Thank you again,” I whisper-yell even though I know these old buildings are soundproof and there’s no way Cruz could hear me. I hear the heavy door swing open and the muffled sounds of Cruz’s deep voice and Delaney’s soft one as the door slowly swings shut behind her. I wait a few seconds, listening closely to make sure they haven’t come back inside. I only plan on staying for a few hours, until Sebastian has given up looking for me

I toss my bag on her chair and a giddy feeling rushes through me as I let my eyes wander the expansive building. Usually when I’m in here, I’m hustling back and forth between classes or trying to avoid my evil stepbrother. I let my hand trail along the dense wood of the bookcases that have to be twenty feet tall. They’re not practical, but not much is at Woodsboro. It’s all about how things look, how we’re perceived from outsiders, and everything has to be expensive.

I don't pluck any of the books off the shelf because my mind is too scattered to even focus on the titles. If I don't go to the party tomorrow night, Talon is going to broadcast whatever he knows about Blaine, which will rile Sebastian up and only get him into trouble. That's the very thing that Blaine never wanted to happen. Even though everyone knew Blaine as the good-natured, gentlemanly McCoy and Sebastian as the wild and reckless brother, Blaine had his fair share of darkness. He just hid it well. On the other hand, if I do go to the party, I know Talon is only going to use me to keep the fight Ella mentioned going.

Before I decide which classic novel to pull from the shelf, I reach up and grasp Blaine's chain that holds his legacy pendant. I'm not sure why my step-father offered it to me when he and my mother came to visit Woodsboro for Blaine's burial, but I wasn't about to say no. It's all I really have left of my best friend, and it's something he wore almost all the time. I undo the clasp and slide the key to the library onto it so that I don't lose it. I click the clasp back into place just as I hear one of the heavy doors of the library opening. I cover my mouth with my hand and stoop down to hide between the bookcase and the large table meant for studying. It could be anyone, and they're probably here for something harmless that has nothing to do with me.

My heart practically leaps into my throat when I hear Sebastian's bitter voice call out, "Come out, come out, wherever you are." I'm the first one to admit that I have a soft spot for Sebastian when he's having a panic attack induced by night terrors. I want nothing more than to console him when he's angry and crying over the loss of his only brother. This version of him though? I hate him. I hate him so much. I'm not sure where he is, so I'm not sure which direction I should go. I can hear the edge in his voice. He's out for blood tonight, and he wants mine. "I can hear you breathing, panicking. I love the sound of your fear. Are you going to run, Carrington? You know how much I love to chase you."

Flight overtakes the portion of my brain telling me to show myself and fight him. I take off running in the dimly lit library. I find the grand staircase that leads to the second floor in

hopes that I can get to the top, find the back staircase, and flee the library before he can catch up to me. I've only made it up three or four steps when I'm yanked backward into the hard chest of my stepbrother. He's wound my hair into his fist, and he leans in close to my ear when he whispers, "I'll always find you."

I try to wrench out of his arms, but his grip is too tight. His abdomen feels like a brick wall when I yank my arm back and make contact with my elbow. He acts as though he feels nothing, and his chuckle is raspy as he lets me go without warning, causing me to stumble and fall on the stairs. He reaches down and nudges me over on my back like I weigh nothing at all to him. I watch his eyes seem to darken as they rove over the form fitting dress I'm wearing. My nipples harden instantly beneath his lustful gaze.

I stand, but I don't try to run from him. He'd enjoy that too much. "Why are you here?" I cross my arms over my chest, and glare at him when he shakes his head and he grits his teeth. Clearly he's realized how he's looking at me, and I'm not sure why that brings me satisfaction.

"Looking for you, of course." He reaches out and holds a piece of my long black hair between his fingers almost as if he's inspecting it. I like to think that I'm strong with most people. I don't trust easily, and I'm not a people pleaser, but I've never been strong when it comes to Sebastian and the way his eyes light me on fire and his touch twists me in flames. I know all it will take is to feel his hands on me, and I'll melt in his arms without provocation. He hides his beautifully straight teeth by pressing his lips into a smooth line before he says, "I always seem to be looking for you, Carrington."

His hand moves higher to tunnel through my hair, but I've fallen for that before only to have him yank my hair and say something demeaning while he peers into my eyes. He's either a really good actor or sick with conflict because he can't seem to make up his mind if he wants to caress into submission or inflict pain until I no longer matter to him. I swat his hand away, and his eyes light up when my palm cracks against the bone of his wrist. "I don't want to be caught, *stepbrother*." I

narrow my eyes to glare right back at him and he leans in so close that his straight nose brushes the tip of mine and I think, for only a fraction of a second, that he might claim my lips with his.

My eyes take him in quickly. He's not dressed in his usual Friday night attire of jeans, hoodie and sneakers that aren't permitted on campus. Our headmaster says they're sloppy looking, and casual dress should still be classy. Sebastian must have been looking for me since he got out of his last class which gives me conflicting emotions. I both loathe and enjoy being the object of his attention. "Who are you meeting here tonight?" He bites out the question, taking a step toward me, causing me to move up two stairs. I'm at eye level with him this way, and it makes me feel less vulnerable.

"No one." I roll my eyes and take two more steps, and he follows suit. Leading the villain up the staircase isn't the smartest thing to do, but I can't get around him, and he looks like he wants to devour me. "I was avoiding you. Why else would I be hiding out in the library with most of the lights off?"

"You weren't waiting for Talon?" He doesn't move a muscle, and his stare is nothing but accusatory. I need to gain some control back. It's fine if he hates me, but I can't keep letting him make me feel like this.

"Why the hell would I meet up with Talon alone? I barely made it out alive in the middle of fucking campus." I point my finger at him because there isn't anything else to do at this point. I don't get why he's here asking me who I'm having a secret rendezvous with. He hates me, he's made that clear, and I thought that's why he was looking for me tonight. I figure he'd grill me about Blaine, see if he can squeeze any secrets out of me.

"Declan told me everything." He moves closer, his blue eyes simmering with something akin to anger. Raging, unabashed hatred that he's saved up just for me.

I laugh, but there's no humor to be found. "If he told you everything, why the hell would you think I'd go anywhere

near Talon?” I turn away from him and begin walking up the rest of the marble staircase. The top floor of the library is completely dark, but anything is better than standing so close to Sebastian McCoy. “You’re just mad that your second in command told me to stay in my room and I didn’t follow orders. When have I ever done anything your goofball friends told me to?” I laugh, reaching the top step, but it’s short lived because Sebastian’s hand cups the back of my neck roughly as he forces me to walk toward the marble banister that overlooks the first floor of the library and spins me around to face him. The cold slate bites as it presses into my lower back, and I try to steady my breathing. If I show him any level of fear, I might as well just sign my death wish right now.

Logically I know my Sebastian is sadistic and he doesn’t want me as anything more than just a toy to take out all his anger and guilt on, but I can’t quench the lust I feel when I look at him. I let my eyes take him in one last time, and I find myself itching to reach out and touch his unreasonably handsome face. When my gaze reaches his eyes, heat hits me right in the lower belly and my pussy clenches. His anger has evaporated and the only thing I see in his eyes now is desire. His dark lashes close against the panes of his cheeks when I give in and touch his face. He groans low with need when my hand travels to his neck and then downward. I brush his peacoat open, because I’m desperate to feel the hard lines of his chest and stomach beneath my fingers. “I thought you wanted to hurt me, Sebastian.” My voice sounds foreign even to my own ears, it’s husky, teasing, a tone I don’t use for anyone else.

“There are many ways I can hurt you, Carrington Jane,” he whispers as his thigh slides between my legs. This is the first time I’ve felt his hard cock pressing against me and even through his slacks and my dress, I can feel thickness. My nipples harden as he grinds his thigh against the apex of my thighs. Sebastian adjusts quickly, his hand coming out to cup the back of my head as it falls back from the pleasure flooding through me. I spread my legs wider and wrap my arms around his neck, grinding my pussy against him, gasping as more pressure is applied to my clit. “Fuccck,” he growls just before

his mouth is on mine. He's kissing me so deeply that it feels like he's breathing me in.

Sebastian is absolutely frantic as his lips devour mine, like he needs this from me. It feels as though he's missed having me like this, as if he's imagined what I'd taste like a million times before. His hand comes up to cup my breast and he pinches my nipple, rolling it between his fingers. He's impatient, groaning into my mouth as he lifts me to wrap my legs around his hips. He's hard, he wants me, and despite what I'll say when my panties are dry, I don't want to stop him. I want him to fuck me hard, fast, the way only Sebastian McCoy can. I want him to make me forget how sad I am, I want him to make me forget that he hates me even for just a little while. He uses his hips to press me against the railing and rips the back of my dress apart, causing it to slide down my shoulders. He wastes no time getting rid of my bra and then teasing and pulling on my nipples as his tongue slides against mine.

He finally pulls away from our heated kiss, and I feel his lips and tongue on the curve of my neck. I arch up, pressing my breast into his hand, and I feel him grip my hip with his other, pulling me up as he thrusts his cock against my wet panties. I can feel him throbbing even through his pants.

"I promised Blaine I wouldn't fuck you. He said I'd ruin you. But there are so many ways to ruin a girl like you, Carrington," Sebastian's voice is laced with anguish, but the bite of anger is back. I stiffen in his arms as his mouth begins to trail down from my neck to my chest.

"Stop it! Sebastian, let me go!" I cry out when he glares at me, the passion completely gone from his eyes. He complies, or at least I think he's going to when he lets my feet touch the floor, but he yanks my dress all the way off, leaving me standing in front of him in nothing but lacy pink panties, my shoes, and the necklace I'd tucked away.

"Would Blaine really want you wearing this while you were straddling my dick? He was always looking out for you and look where that got him." I suck in a breath when I feel him roughly grasp the pendant between his fingers, the same fingers that were kneading my breasts so gently moments ago.

“You’re going to tell me where he was supposed to be that night eventually and why you weren’t with him like he said you would be.”

I feel the burn of the chain rubbing against the sensitive skin of my neck just before it snaps, and I have to stop myself from grabbing for it. If he realizes that I need the library key to get out tonight, I’ll be stuck here until someone comes to set up for the early riser students. My stomach drops when he pockets the chain, pendant, and key. He grins so evilly; I realize he’s caught on. He slides off his pea coat and tosses it at me before he picks my dress and bra up off the floor. “Enjoy your night of solitude, Carrington.” He grabs me by the throat and his gaze sweeps my body one last time before our eyes meet again. “Remember, all of this will stop when you tell me what I want to know. So think about that while you’re walking back to your dorm tomorrow wearing nothing but wet panties and a coat with my fucking name embroidered on it.” He squeezes hard enough for me to make a choking noise, and I see the delight in his eyes at the sound. When he finally lets me go, I slide to the floor, gasping for air as I watch him head for the stairs. It feels like I don’t get a full breath until I hear the heavy door to the library close behind him. He thinks he’s breaking me, and that he’s winning.

But the games have only just begun.

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SEBASTIAN

“Give me some,” Wilder says to Declan who has just taken a hit from a blunt he spent twenty minutes meticulously rolling. I expect him to hand it to Wilder, but instead he leans in and exhales the smoke into Wilder’s mouth. Their lips nearly touch, but not quite and I must look as confused as I feel because Wilder offers me a toothy grin and says, “Want some?”

“No fucking thank you,” I snap, which causes Declan to smirk and Wilder to laugh. I’m not in the mood for their games. I shove Wilder off the couch when he blows smoke in my general direction, and he lands on his drunk ass. He gets to his feet, only to stand behind the couch. He’s talking to Nathaniel, but the music is so loud, I can only hear a few words they’re saying. They’re talking about the note that was on my door this morning, a knife holding it to the wood. In short, it said that if I didn’t stop trying to uncover what happened to my brother, my *pretty little girlfriend* would meet the same fate. It doesn’t take a fucking rocket scientist to know they’re talking about Carrington. My first thought was obviously Talon, but Declan couldn’t sleep last night and stayed in the common room until sunrise playing chess against himself. He said Talon didn’t leave his room until noon, and there’s no other way out.

I take a sip of my beer and try my best to relax. It’s bad enough that I’m here in the first place. It’s not like I can get out of a Kappa Alpha party, and I know someone here is responsible for that note. And when I find them, they’re going

to regret having Carrington Jane's name in their mouth. She's mine to torment, and everyone knows that.

I pat the front pocket of my jeans where I've kept Blaine's necklace since I ripped it off of Carrington's neck. I gave Declan the key to return to Delaney, mostly because I wanted to be spared the lecture I knew she'd give me, and she scares the shit out of me with those pointy ass heels and the rage of a fucking mountain lion. I let the chain slide through my fingers and my dick hardens instantly as I remember ripping it off of her delicate neck. The look in her eyes when I did that, was bittersweet. I love having control over someone as headstrong as Carrington, but I wanted nothing more than to bury my cock deep inside her. She's mine. Every fucking part of her. The way she responded to me last night, it took every ounce of will power not to fuck her right there in the library. She would have given herself to me, and that was equal parts thrilling and anger inducing. How many men has she given herself to that way? Did her body melt when Blaine touched her the way she fell apart in my arms? I'm fucking angry at her, but the magnetic pull between me and Carrington just won't break. I have to fight it every day, and I know deep down that it'll never dissipate.

"Who the fuck invited her?" Nathaniel laughs, leaning over the back of the couch. No one's taken Wilder's spot next to me. I'm in a fighting mood and they know not to get in my way when I'm like this.

I look up and see Ella, Talon's little bitch perched up on the handcrafted bar. She's slept her way through the fraternity, including some of the Wolves, which isn't why I don't like her. She's always in everyone's business, and she's a fucking snake, always talking out of both sides of her mouth. She's shoving her chest out while she stares at Declan who is in a deep conversation with Wilder.

"The thought of closing my eyes around that bitch is terrifying," Cruz chimes in, walking up and handing Nathaniel a beer.

"She looks like she's about to pull out my voodoo doll," Wilder yells loudly, jumping over the couch and flopping next

to me. He's clearly starting to feel the weed because I'm glaring at him and he's not phased. "We fucked her the other night," he juts his thumb toward Declan who looks bored, but I know him well enough to know he's uncomfortable with Wilder putting their business out in the open.

"I would rather take a hammer to my dick than put it anywhere near that bitch," I say and Wilder winces.

"We don't all have hot stepsisters to fuck around with," Nathaniel snickers and I glare, turning around to look him in the eye. "It was a joke, motherfucker. Calm down." He backs up because he values his life, and I relax my spine only a fraction.

"Don't fucking talk about her."

"Look, man." He leans back in. "I know you blame CJ for what happened to Blaine. I can't even imagine going through that shit." He backs up again when he sees my jaw clench. "I just think maybe you're taking shit out on her for other reasons. She was fucking close to Blaine, I don't think she would have put him in danger."

"Shut. The. Fuck. Up. And don't say her name." I can feel my entire body tensing. Before Carrington, I'd never had any use for girls except for when I was horny. Nathaniel is pissing me off with the way he's talking about her, because I realize how transparent I really am.

"I'm just saying C-" Nathaniel catches himself and doesn't say her name but continues his thought. "She loved Blaine." He must see the anger etching into my face because he backtracks on his words. "She loved him like a brother. Declan and I were talking about it the other day. Shit doesn't add up. She wouldn't lure Blaine down to the cliffs knowing he was in danger."

I'm quiet. The rage funneling through my chest is only dampened by the truth in his words. She did love Blaine more than anything, and he loved her. He swore that it was only platonic, but I don't believe that shit. What has bothered me is that Carrington clearly knows something, but she refuses to tell me anything. She never denied anything, never explained

where she was or why Blaine told me he'd be with her that night. Blaine told me they wouldn't be coming to the Graveyard fight that night because he and Carrington were working on a project for one of her classes. I was pissed that night because I hated the idea of them spending time alone in her room. I'd never admit that, not even to Blaine, and especially not to Carrington.

Carrington never had to say where she was that night because everything was swept under the rug, and she was never questioned by the school or the police. Jesse was the one who found him and immediately called for help, but it was too late. Surviving a fall from the jagged cliffs surrounding Woodsboro would have been a miracle. When I found Carrington, her story didn't add up. She was shaking, sobs racking her body as she clung to me. I was cruel, demanding answers that she couldn't give me. She wouldn't tell me why she wasn't with Blaine; she couldn't tell me why he was at the cliffs alone. I asked her point blank who she was with that night, and she wouldn't respond. When I find out who she was fucking the night Blaine died, he's as good as in the ground next to my brother.

“Carrington is a lying bitch.” The words taste bitter in my mouth. All of the things Carrington has done since Blaine died don't add up to what I know is true. The way she sobbed at Blaine's funeral and consoled my grandmother. After everything I've done and said to her, she still drops everything the moment Declan tells her I'm having a panic attack. She comes to see me, to comfort me, knowing I'm going to lash out at her. I can't think about that because I've gotta focus on finding out what happened to Blaine and all Carrington does is scramble my emotions. Talon might not have left me that note, but I'd be willing to bet he was behind it. The thought of him approaching her, even publicly, makes jealousy rage through my entire body. I feel psychotic, like I'm one step away from actually killing someone for touching what's mine. I'm going off the rails, I can feel it, and I need to focus my energy on something other than some girl who can never be mine.

Nathaniel claps a hand on my shoulder. “Just don't do anything you can't take back.”

“You know what I miss?” Wilder blurts out, grinning. “When CJ would make us breakfast to help us sober up.” Wilder holds a fucking wine glass up filled with beer to Nathaniel for a toast. Nathaniel is sober enough to see that I’m about to lose my shit and swipes his hand across his own neck trying to convey to Wilder to knock it off.

“Enough.” I go to stand up, but I’m pushed back into the couch by a feminine hand.

“I was just coming over to talk to you.” Ella giggles obnoxiously and climbs up on my lap.

“Get the fuck off of me,” I snap. She tries to grind her ass against my dick that isn’t hard by a longshot. She cups her hand against the side of my face, her long fake fingernails scratching at my jawline in the most irritating way

“Aw come on. Aren’t you tired of following that whore around like a little lost puppy? Isn’t that what got your brother killed?” She pouts as she giggles as I try to move her off my lap without touching her exposed skin. She’s fucking gross.

“Bro.” Nathaniel taps me on the shoulder, I look up at him and I follow his eyes. I immediately stop fighting Ella and rage fills my chest. I’m going to fucking kill someone.

Carrington’s looking right through me and the disappointment is palpable in her green eyes. Carrington is standing at the bar wearing my coat. She raises an eyebrow as if in a challenge and opens the coat, showing me and anyone who’s looking at her that she’s wearing nothing under it except for a black lacy bra and matching panties.

This is how she’s paying me back for getting her worked up and then leaving her to stew in the library overnight with nothing to wear except my coat. The urge to stab every motherfucker in this room who’s looking at her, including my best friends, is way too intense.

“Oww, you asshole!” I toss Ella off my lap, and she lands on her ass. I see Talon approach Carrington and stand next to her at the bar. He’s offering her a drink and I could snap his neck in that moment.

Did she come here for him?

Before any of the Wolves can talk me out of it, I'm stomping through the crowd of people I can't fucking stand with one thing in mind. I don't grab Talon, because at this point if he so much as makes eye contact with me, I'm going to murder him in front of all these witnesses and I couldn't give a fuck if I tried. He wants to get a rise out of me, and despite how hard I've tried, I can't hide the desire I have for my own stepsister, so he knows she's the way to do it. I turn sideways and rudely force my way between them, facing her, my back in his face. My coat is closed over her lingerie now, and part of me is thankful for that and the other part of me wants to put her up on this bar and lick her pussy until she comes all over my tongue.

She lifts her shot glass in mock salute before she downs the clear liquid. She's not a big drinker, and if she keeps going, she's going to be throwing up all night. I've got other plans for her, so I snatch the glass out of her hand and level my fraternity brother who is playing bartender with a look before saying, "If you give her anything else to drink, I'll break that fucking bottle in your hand and slit your throat with it." He holds a hand up in surrender and moves along to the other side of the bar to serve someone else. I turn back to Carrington and loom over her. She's about average height for a girl, but I dwarf her significantly with my 6'4" frame, but she looks unaffected, unafraid. And I fucking hate that.

"I told you not to come here," I practically bark the words out, and her stare is hard and full of hurt for only a moment before her eyes glaze over, hiding her feelings. "You're coming with me. We're going to figure this out one way or another."

"And I told you that I'm not taking orders from you." She keeps her expression even, and I love and hate that about her all at the same time. She's so strong and soft, the exact balance I crave. I hear Talon chuckling behind me, but I ignore him. This is a game to him, and I'm going to annihilate him if he fucking touches what's mine. He pours his drink down my

back before he shoves into me and I turn around, shoving him back into the bar.

“I’m sure our fathers will be pleased to hear about this.” Talon grins at me, adjusting the collar of his baby blue polo shirt.

“I’ll fucking kill you in front of your stupid ass father if you touch her again. I. Do. Not. Give. A. Fuck.” I don’t get to tell him that she’s mine, because Carrington is curling her fingers around my forearm, her touch bringing me out of my rage.

“Sebastian, it’s okay. Stop.” She looks panicked, which is a rare occurrence from her. “We need to get out of here.” She’s pulling on me like her small frame could possibly move me if I didn’t want her to.

“Aren’t you embarrassed?” Ella cackles, walking up next to me and hopping on the bar. I feel Carrington tense even as I back away from Talon. “You’re chasing a man who clearly doesn’t want you. Everyone knows what happened between you and Blaine.”

Carrington doesn’t respond, but I don’t expect her to. She’s not one to lower her level just to argue with the trash. But I’m already six feet below basement level, so I oblige.

“Put your tits away and go find a cock to suck. You’re not adding to anyone’s conversation here.” I furrow my brow, looking her up and down with disgust. “Don’t fucking talk to her again.”

A tight grin flexes Ella’s cheeks, I know I’ve hurt her, but she won’t show it. She thinks she’s valuable because she’s fucked her way through the fraternity, but really, I can’t imagine ever being drunk enough to stick my dick anywhere near her.

“Let it go, Sebastian. None of these people are worth this,” Carrington says to me, looking up at me from under thick dark lashes. She isn’t weak, she’s focused and all she seems to care about is getting me out of here before I commit a homicide.

Blaine always told me that she cared about me in a way I'd never understand, but I never believed him.

“Do you stay up at night CJ, wondering if you could have saved him if only you'd been around? Wasn't he waiting for you? Why won't you tell anyone where you were that night? I heard you were whoring around Faircliff, but you know how rumors spread around here.” The dumb bitch sneers and before I can snap, Carrington's arms are around my neck, pulling me down to her height. I can feel the curves of her full breasts pressed against my chest and I hate that she can make me rock hard when I was just ready to rip someone's head off a second ago.

I only realize that the guys have migrated over to us when I hear Wilder chime in, “They spread almost as easily as your legs, Ella.” And Nathaniel's laugh booms because the two of them are fucking kindergarteners.

Carrington pulls me down to her level so she can whisper in my ear. “She's making shit up and you know it. We need to leave so we can talk. I was being petty showing up here like this because you pissed me off leaving me stranded in the library half naked.” I swallow hard remembering how she looked and felt last night and my dick twitches in my jeans when I think about her walking across campus in just panties and my coat. “When I got back to my room this morning there was a threatening note on my door.” Her green eyes bore into mine and I see the panic swirling there.

I grab her chin roughly because the thought that someone was that close to her, could have even done something to her had she been in her room instead of in the library makes every muscle in my body strain. “What the fuck, Carrington. Why are you just now telling me that?”

She gives me a questioning look before jerking her face out of my grasp. “We're not exactly friends, Sebastian. We just coexist in the same family, and even that is a fucking shitshow. Why would I tell you?”

I want to shake the attitude right out of her body, even though everything she said is true. “Did you tell anyone?”

She shakes her head. “I don’t trust anyone except for…” she trails off, but she doesn’t have to say my brother’s name for me to know what she’s going to say. Subconsciously, I’m wrapping an arm around Carrington, pulling her close to my side where she belongs. I feel her stiffen in my arms, and I don’t care. She can fight it all she wants; she’s coming back to my room tonight where I can keep an eye on her until we figure out who is fucking with us.

I turn my attention to Ella and then I tilt my head toward Talon, and I know the grin spreading across my lips looks absolutely psychotic. Because that’s how I feel right now, unhinged. “Keep your bitch in line. And if I find out you’re the one who left the note on Carrington’s door, you’re fucking dead.” I don’t miss the confused look that crosses his face before he tries to cover it with a smug smile. Maybe it wasn’t him, but it has to be someone close to him.

“Is that a promise McCoy? Are you going to beat me up in one of your little graveyard fights?” He laughs, and it takes everything in me not to tackle him to the floor. Carrington’s soft hand is sliding up my chest and cupping my face. The feeling of her hands on me is so magnetic that I don’t realize I’m not looking at Talon anymore, but instead, I’m watching her.

“I don’t think it was him. He’s too pompous to do something like that and not broadcast it across campus. Please, let’s just go,” she whispers against my ear after she pulls me down to her again. I can’t explain the intense feelings of possession that I feel for her, and it fucking wrecks me. She’s the last person I should want, and the only person I can’t have.

I need to get out of here before I do something stupid. I scoop her up and toss her over my shoulder, my eyes trained on Talon. He needs to see this. He needs to see that Carrington Jane is and always will be McCoy property and that I’ll end his life if he tries to bring her into whatever little fucked up game he’s trying to play. I wasn’t around to protect Blaine when he needed help and I sure as fuck will not let anything happen to Carrington. Just because I can’t trust her, and just

because I like to torment her, doesn't mean I'll let anyone else near her. She's my toy, mine to play with.

"Put me down, Sebastian. I feel woozy." Carrington kicks her legs, but I plant my hand on her ass and that makes her settle for a moment.

"That's from all the liquor you downed, slugger," I say dryly, letting my hand slide down her leg and then back up under my coat she's still wearing. The panties she's wearing only cover part of her firm ass, and I use that to my advantage. I let my fingers dig into her skin, because I've never been in a position where I could get away with it before. I make it to the stairs and look over my shoulder to see where the Wolves have migrated to since we left the bar.

Wilder has found his way back to the couch the Wolves usually claim, and there's a girl with curly red hair on top of him. Her long hair is covering his face, but if his hands on her ass are any indication, he has a mouth full of her tits. Nathaniel holds up a beer, a smile on his face as he sees that I'm taking Carrington up to my room. It's not until we get up the stairs that I see Declan coming out of his room. He looks upset, but doesn't say anything. He adjusts his glasses and opens my bedroom door for me, probably so I don't try to kick it open.

I toss Carrington on my bed and she squeals, pulling herself up on her hands and knees before collapsing face down on my black satin pillows. Declan is still standing in the doorway, his eyes bouncing back and forth between me and my stepsister. He knows exactly what I want to do with her, and exactly why I shouldn't.

"Do you want me to take her back to her dorm? I'm going for a walk down to the cliffs." I know he's being logical, he's worried that I'm going to do something to fuck everything up worse than it already is. I'm aware of it, but the jealous streak in me hates the fact that he's looking out for her in any capacity. I'll do whatever I want with her.

"I'm not staying here." Her voice is hard, but I ignore it. Carrington stands up, but loses her balance quickly. I push her

back on the bed. She's not safe without me, and the sooner she realizes that, the better off she'll be.

"The fact that you think you have a choice is insane." I put my hands on my hips and she scowls up at me. "You're going to tell me what you're hiding about Blaine."

"You'll have to kill me before I tell you any of his secrets. He was my best friend and you're just some asshole who hates me," she snaps. "It's fucking hot in here," she breathes the words and shrugs off my coat before sprawling out on my bed and letting her eyes flutter shut.

I move to stand in front of her and Declan as if he had any control over what just happened. He clears his throat and moves further out into the hallway.

I move toward the door and block anyone's view into my room. Declan buttons his coat and says, "I've gotta get out of here. I can't listen to that music or the asshole banging some girl on the other side of my wall." He's a few feet down the hallway when he calls back, "Don't do anything I wouldn't do."

I flip him off and shut the door behind me and stalk over to the chair in the corner of my room. I can't trust myself on the damn bed with her wearing a few pieces of lace. I wouldn't stop even if she screamed, begged me not to. The urge to shove my dick deep inside her pussy and watch her eyes roll back is overwhelming. I pace around my dark room for what seems like hours while she sleeps and I know it's not just because I'm worried about who is targeting us. I'm trying to fight the urge to touch her, taste her and fuck her for hours. My mouth practically waters as she shifts, bending one of her legs at the knee. The black lace panties shift and I feel like I'm holding my breath, waiting to see if she'll inadvertently expose her pussy to me. I've imagined what she looks and feels like a million times, but nothing has prepared me for this moment. I've fucked every girl I've ever wanted to fuck, but being inside them is nothing compared to even just watching her. I tip my head back, closing my eyes and one of my hands finds its way down my jeans to grip my cock. I'm aching and

hard, and all I can think about is how soft and wet her tongue was last night.

“Sebastian.” My head snaps to look at her when I hear the muffled plea. She’s still sound asleep, but one of her hands is rubbing over her panties. She’s fucking dreaming about me and touching herself. “Mmm, harder. Fuck me harder.” I watch as her leg twitches as her fingers rub circles over her panties.

I don’t think twice about it. I’m climbing on the bottom of the bed, parting her legs wider and pulling her panties to the side.

Her pussy is as pretty and pink as I imagined it would be. I lean in and brush my mouth along her inner thigh as gently as I possibly can as I stretch out on my stomach and look up to see if she’s going to stir. I won’t stop if she does, the need to taste her is far greater than anything that she could say or do.

She moans in her sleep, and that just makes my dick harder. I can’t hold back, so I hook my arms under her hips and curl my left hand back around to keep her panties pulled to the side. I flick my tongue out and I’m pleasantly surprised that she’s already wet, her slit glistening as I spread her open. I keep my tongue buried in her pussy as I look up at her sleeping form. Her lips are parted and she’s lifting her hips up to grind against my tongue and mouth. Her pert tits are still encased in her bra, and not ripping it off is my only regret right now.

“Sebastian,” she says my name again, and that’s when I lose it.

“That’s my girl,” I growl out the words. “Even in your dreams you think about me claiming you. You’re mine. I knew you’d be so wet for me.” I don’t give a fuck if she wakes up. I roughly lick her slit, flicking my tongue out, devouring the sweet arousal that now coats her pussy. I move my mouth up to suck her clit and I groan when her hips jerk when my tongue begins lapping at the hard little button. I nudge her legs open wider, giving me the space I need to pleasure her. She cries out and I look up, my mouth still sucking and licking on her clit, and to my surprise her eyes are still closed, but her

mouth is parted in pleasure. Her hips try to wrench up, begging for more when I stop, letting my mouth hover over her clit, my breath puffing teasingly against her sensitive skin. I groan at the sight before me. She's so fucking perfect, and tastes just like candy.

"Please don't stop," she breathes out the words and I look back up to see her green eyes focused on me, watching my mouth descend on her soaked pussy. I'm not gentle because I'm at my breaking point. I have to have her. She's intoxicating, and I can't get enough. I move my hands from her hips to her thighs, adding enough pressure to make her cry out as I stretch her muscles. I fucking love the way her body fills my hands like she was meant for me to touch her and no one else.

"Pull your bra down. I want to see what's mine," I say against her slit, causing her to moan and her body to jerk in pleasure from the vibrations of my voice against her. I tug her clit between my lips, sucking hard and flicking my tongue repeatedly. A groan escapes my lips when I look up and see that Carrington Jane, the girl who does the opposite of everything I tell her to do, has not only pulled her bra away so that I can see her, but she's playing with her nipples and her eyes are staring into mine. I use my hands to spread her pussy apart and dip my tongue into her tight hole which causes her to throw her head back against my pillows. Her long black hair is splayed out on my pillow, and I've never seen anything more gorgeous in my entire life. This picture of her, naked and agreeable in my bed is something that will be burned into my memory until the day I die. I move back up to her clit and move my tongue in circles until she's crying out and she brings her legs up over my shoulders to dig her heels into my back. "That's it baby, come for me. Come all over my tongue," I say before flicking the end of my tongue back and forth over the bundle of nerves that has her hips jerking wildly as the orgasm rips through her.

The need to feel more of her overwhelms me and before I realize what I'm doing, I'm hovering above for only a moment before I lower my hips to hers. Even with my jeans between us, my cock hardens even further from the warm wetness of

her pussy. Her hands are in my hair, and I feel her nails scrape against the back of my neck when I roughly take one of her nipples in my mouth. I roll my hips against hers, and I know she wants more. I know she loves how fucking hard she makes me by the way she hooks her feet around my back and pulls me further into her, grinding her sweet cunt against my length.

I suck her pink bud between my lips and twist and tug on the other one while I buck my hips against hers. I've never been this frenzied for a woman before, never this feral. I have to be inside her, or I might lose my fucking mind. I sit up on my knees, practically hissing at the loss of contact, and when I look down at her silhouette, I can't help but run my hands over the length of her body as she stares up at me with raw need.

My hands explore every curve she has, and despite this being the second time I've had her this close, she feels so familiar. I think I've studied her body, every inch of her for so long, that she feels just the way I imagined she would. She's so soft and small in my big hands and conflicting emotions rage inside me that I'm not used to feeling all at once. I feel possessive, protective even, I want to fuck her until she doesn't remember anything except that she belongs to me, in my bed, and with my come filling every hole she has.

I shove my jeans down and kick them off and by the time I'm back between her legs, she's half sitting up and lays her palms on my chest and abdomen. I flex the muscles under her fingertips and the way her green eyes light up with lust as she takes in my body does nothing but fuel my desire for her. Before she can even gasp, I'm back on her, my mouth tugging a hard nipple between my teeth because I can't get enough of the way she tastes and feels. I need to feel her, all of her, all at once. I feel like I've been deprived, and I can't ever remember feeling this frenzied in my life.

I slam my hips against hers, letting her know that when I shove my cock inside her for the first time, she'll forget anyone else she's done this with. I will fuck them right out of her mind. The thought that she's been with other men, even my brother, has anger building up inside my chest and I reach up, wrapping my hand around her throat. I grind my cock

against her harder while I glare down at her, applying more pressure to her throat. I'd rather fucking kill her than let another man see her like this, and to my surprise, she lifts her hips and rubs her sweet pussy up and down the length of my cock.

“Stop overthinking it, Sebastian. Just fuck me. Just take what you want. We'll both feel better,” she gasps the words out and her eyes roll back when the tip of my dick grinds over her clit. I keep up the same movement over and over, my fingers still claiming her neck while my dick coaxes her into another body shaking orgasm. “Don't stop. Please. Please.”

“Beg me, Carrington. Beg your stepbrother to fuck your wet pussy.” I use my other hand to spread her perfect little pussy open. My hips jerk at the sight. “Tell me what you want.”

“I want your cock inside me. Please, Sebastian,” her voice is husky, and she practically breathes the plea out from the orgasm that just overtook her and the way my fingers are tightly holding her neck. “Fuck me like you've always wanted to. I want you to make me forget everything. Just make me forget.”

I move up to swallow her whimpers between kisses and grind my hips into her again. One of her hands circles around my bicep, squeezing, pulling me closer, and I realize that I've fucking missed something I've never had before. When I've fucked other girls, it's always just to get off, I've never even come inside them, and it's always with them facing away from me. I don't like them touching me with their hands or mouths unless it's strictly on my cock. But this, this feeling of her soft hands and the way she slides her legs down my sides to hook around my hips will never fucking leave my mind. Her skin is silky and feels entirely too perfect for my rough hands to touch. Her lips are plump, and her tongue moves against mine like we've done this our entire lives.

Removing my fingers, I place my lips on her neck and I can feel the beasts roaring inside me. One wants to hurt her and the other wants to soothe the marks my fingers have left. I'm the only one who can do this to her. I'm the only one

she'll let control her, and I'm the only one who can soothe away the ache left in my wake. I love hearing her breathing accelerate, coming out in little puffs of air. I want to savor the moment, but I can't slow down. I need to feel her, I need to be inside her. I need her to understand that on the most basic level she's mine, and she'll never be anyone else's. I groan against her neck, scraping my teeth against her sweet skin.

"I need you to lie to me again. Tell me I'm the only one who's ever touched you. I want to see your blood coating my cock, Carrington Jane. I want to hurt you in a way that will bind you to me. I want to own you like no one else ever will," I'm the one pleading with her now. "We can go back to hating one another tomorrow but give me this fantasy tonight."

"I've never wanted another man, Sebastian. I want it to be you. I want you to claim me, even if you won't want me in the morning," She's a good little actress because her words have my dick throbbing in my boxer briefs that are soaked from her pussy. I smile against the curve of her neck when she arches her back and lets out a surprised gasp when I press just the tip of my finger inside her pussy. If I push too far in, it'll ruin the illusion that she's only ever been mine, and I want to bask in it for a little while longer before I shove my dick inside her and punish her for giving what's mine to other men. I'm impatient, and I need to see her coming undone beneath me. I've already made her come twice, and I think she's got one more in her before I can't hold back any longer.

She reaches up in the dark, palms on my face, pulling me down to kiss her. I rub the little bundle of nerves at the top of her pussy. Pride fills my chest when I feel her body jerk under my weight just before moving back to her hole and this time press two finger tips inside, but not far enough to ruin my little fantasy. I growl at how tight she is, and the way her pussy strains to stretch around my thick digits. The urge to slide them all the way in, curling at my knuckles overwhelms me, but I hold back.

"Come for me, baby. Come on my fingers so I can fuck you. Do you want that? Do you want me to fuck you until my come is dripping out of your pussy?" She moans as I keep up

the shallow strokes, and I swallow the sweet sounds rolling off her lips as I kiss her roughly and deeply.

“I need you,” she whispers against my lips before her voice breaks off in a sigh. She arches her back, one of her hands leaving me as she reaches for the sheet, gripping as tight as she can manage. I feel her tighten around my fingers, and I know she’s so close.

“What do you need from me?” I demand, I need to hear her say it. I need these moments, these words, her pleas burned into my memory so that I can replay them over and over. Nothing will ever top tonight while I have my stepsister lying beneath me, begging me to shove my cock inside her tight cunt. “What is it that only I can give you?”

She opens her mouth, but nothing but a gasping moan leaves her lips. I let my fingers sink just a fraction deeper, and she must still be playing along because she cries out as if it’s hurt her. Despite the fact that I’ve asked her to lie to me, it makes me angry when her pussy clenches tight around the first knuckle of my fingers. One of her hands flies up and presses on my chest, silently asking me to slow down, and the pained look on her face only adds to my anger. Such a good little actress. “Do I make you feel better than Blaine? Did you imagine me when his cock was inside you?” I grit out the words.

I pick up the pace as I finger fuck her but don’t increase the depths of my fingers inside her. If I slide them all the way in and feel no resistance, I don’t know what I’ll be capable of. I need to be more in control when I fuck her. “He never touched me because he knew I’ve always belonged to you, Sebastian.” My eyes bore into hers, trying to detect any sort of deception, trying to find a reason to call her a liar again but I find nothing. Her words hit me hard in the chest, and it hurts me and makes me roar to life all at the same time.

I take her nipple in my mouth, sucking hard as my fingers work on her. I feel her legs stiffen, and when I hear my name fall from her lips over and over like a prayer, I know she’s

falling over the edge. I move to sit on my legs and tug my boxers down so there's nothing separating us. Her legs spread around me, and I have to bite my lip as I rub the head of my dick all over her wet pussy. It's the best fucking sight I've ever seen in my life. I slap my dick hard against her clit, causing her to cry out my name and her whole body to jerk. I rub just the tip of my dick against her opening, letting her anticipate what I intend to do once she recovers from the orgasm that still has her legs quivering.

I lean in and kiss her, softly this time, rubbing my thumb across her soft, flushed cheek. She brings a gentleness out in me that I did not know I possessed. I want to remember the way she looks right now sprawled out beneath me, waiting for my cock to rip her in half. Her eyes are heavily lidded and her lips are flushed from battling my own in fervent kisses that are born from a deep-seated need and passion that I know she'll never have with anyone else.

"Ask me again," I demand, pushing just the tip inside her and then pulling back out. She cries out for me, and I'm not sure if it's because she craves the way my cock stretches the entrance to her tight little pussy or because it hurts her. I hope it's both.

She bites her already red bottom lip and I'm even fucking jealous of that. I reach up and smack her mouth gently so she stops. "Only I can do that," I growl the words and I feel my dick pulse as my hand tightens around it when she nods, lips parted and her little soft tongue darts out to soothe the place where her teeth were digging in.

She sits up, her eyes begging me before her mouth opens. She cups my face in her small hands and she says, "Please fuck my pussy, Sebastian. I want to feel your come filling me up." My eyes roll back for a moment at her words and my breathing accelerates. I need to fuck her so fast and hard that I collapse on top of her smothering her with everything that I am.

I'm about to give her just what she needs, what we both need. But loud banging on the door startles us both and instead I lean forward, letting my head fall to her shoulder as I let out

a long-agitated breath. I hate that I seek comfort from her, but I do. My lips brush across her shoulder and I realize that she's the only thing that makes me feel calm even though she's the only person who can make me feel like a jealous, obsessed psychopath.

There's another round of loud banging on the door and my back stiffens, and I'm up and across the room, flicking the light on. As soon as I hear Wilder's obnoxious voice, annoyance takes over all the desire and lust that was just coursing through me. I see Carrington groan and swaddle herself under my thick comforter and then hide her head under one of my pillows while I pull on a pair of sweatpants.

"Do not move from under those covers." I sound like a demanding asshole because I am one. I'd kill someone, friend or not, for seeing her the way she is right now. She's sated from the pleasure I gave her, and despite the fact that I still have not been fully inside her, she looks freshly fucked.

"Anything for you, Sir," the sarcasm practically drips from under the pillow and her voice is muffled, but I can tell she's not really upset. Judging by the things she said while I was toying with her body just a few minutes ago, she likes when I take control of her. The same things that turn me on, light her on fire too. I always thought she'd be amazing, that if she loosened up, let her walls down, she'd be my fucking queen, matching me in every way.

I stalk over to the door and swing it open, my eyes still stinging from not adjusting to the light properly.

"What the fuck is so important that you're willing to risk getting killed right now?"

Declan is with him, holding a note that he seems to be studying, so I immediately push past Wilder and snatch it out of Declan's hands.

Are you just going to let the little bitch cause another McCoy to die?

"Where did you get this?" I hold it up to Wilder in agitation.

“Jesse got home tonight and it was stuck to his door with a knife, just like all the other ones,” Wilder says. “He looks really bad, he hasn’t been showing up to frat stuff and he’s the VP.”

“Well, he did just lose his best friend,” Declan says dryly, taking the note back out of my hands. He’s insisted on keeping all of them so that we can compare them and hopefully find a clue as to who is taunting us. “I’ll check in on him tomorrow when I have a few minutes,” he murmurs, his eyes back on the note.

“Jesse said he went by Carrington’s room to check on her when he got the note, but she wasn’t there. So we figured maybe she was still with you,” Wilder bounces his eyes suggestively. “Did you fuck her? Come on man, you can’t keep that shit a secret. It’s like a God damn television show that we’ve all been watching for the last fucking billion years waiting for something to happen.” He laughs, holding his hands up to block any punches I might throw his way before he grabs Declan by the bicep and drags him down the hall toward his room.

I slip back into my room and shut the door and lock it, which I never used to bother doing, but with Carrington here, I’m not taking any chances of someone coming in while we’re sleeping. I move the pillow from over her head and see that she’s fallen into a restful sleep. I lift her head and slip the pillow under her neck and walk around to the other side of the bed and climb in. I hate that I have the urge to pull her to me and fall asleep with her hair in my face. Tonight was a fantasy that can never be real for either one of us, no matter how much we both want it. She’s still the only thing I’ll never really be able to have in the way I want, and I’m still her tormentor, the monster who loves to see her cry. I lie on my back, staring at the ceiling and thinking about the note. I hate that the only thing I can focus on is the fact that Wilder said Jesse went to Carrington’s room to check on her, just like Blaine would have done. She’s not his to check on, and I’ll make sure he knows that the next time I see him.

I stir the next morning, feeling like I've slept a thousand years. I haven't slept this well since before Blaine died. I reach out for Carrington in my half-sleep, half-awake state. I want to feel the weight of her body curled against my chest. All I find is an empty space beside me and the ribbon she had in her hair last night on my pillow.

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CARRINGTON

“You can’t be serious,” I say as I walk out of my dormitory nearly a week later and see Cruz looking like he’s just as excited to see me as I am to see him. Last Sunday morning, I woke up in Sebastian’s bed and he had me curled against his chest while he was sprawled out like a king. I snuck out without waking him because I didn’t want to ruin the memory of the night prior with whatever hateful things he was going to say to me once he came to his senses. It’s Saturday night and I’ve spent most of the week cooped up in my room and scurrying back and forth to my classes, trying to avoid the Wolves, and I still haven’t seen Sebastian, but without fail, any time I need to walk anywhere one of the other Wolves pops up. They usually don’t talk to me, but instead they just walk nearby and watch to see I’ve gotten where I’m supposed to go.

“Look, I don’t really want to spend my Saturday night babysitting you, so can you just make this easy?” Cruz huffs.

“How about you let me take care of myself and you run off and stalk Delaney instead. I think she likes it,” I say playfully, but his frown deepens. I can’t fight the smile that breaks out on my face. Hawthorne Cruz Beckett IV has a crush on Delaney St. James and that’s just the funniest thing I’ve ever heard. She’ll chew him up and spit him *and* Nathaniel out, and I just hope I’m somewhere nearby to see it all go down.

“Sebastian is fighting tonight in the graveyard. The Wolves need to be there, and since we have to watch you, you’re coming too.” He crosses his arms, “Bash’s orders.”

I roll my eyes, but don't argue with him, because that's all I've been doing with them this week. I've tried causing a scene, running away, and straight up hiding from them, and nothing shakes them.

"So what's the plan? Babysitting me until...when? Until Sebastian loses interest in controlling me?" He stares at me blankly like he doesn't think what I've just said sounds absolutely insane.

"Yeah. Come on, walk and talk. It's getting late and it's a hike to the graveyard." He shrugs. "You haven't gotten any more notes on your door, right? You're stubborn enough to hide that shit." Cruz accuses me, shaking his head. I don't answer him. I haven't gotten any more threats, but that's none of his business.

"So are you in love with Delaney?" I tease him as we make our way across the cobblestone.

"Maybe." He doesn't miss a beat, and I look up at him, seeing the worried look on his face. "Look, you need to stop fighting us and let us look out for you. I know you and Sebastian have your differences, but he—"

I stop abruptly and raise my voice, shoving him hard, but not really expecting it to faze him. "You can't be serious. He hates me one minute and then has his tongue down my throat the next minute. And you know what the following moments entail? Him accusing me of either banging his dead brother or having something to do with his death. Why the fuck would I trust any of you?"

The wind whips around us and I pull my hood close around my ears as he moves to stand in front of me, blocking my view of anything but his large frame. The Wolves must take special classes on how to be fucking annoying. "Sebastian is a dick, right?" Cruz squints his eyes, as if he's trying to read my expression.

"I mean, I won't disagree." I regard him carefully because I'm not sure where he's going with it.

“Well if he’s a dick on a good day, can you imagine what he’s like when someone threatens what’s his? And then on top of it, you fight him on everything he says.” He says this so seriously that I almost feel bad when I burst out laughing. Then Cruz all but whispers, “He’s been unbearable all week. Can you just do what he wants for one night and let us have a break. We’re fucking tired, CJ. And it’s fight night.” He holds his hands out expectantly, like I should care about anything he just said. The fact that he’s one of the five most feared guys on campus and he’s practically begging me to *let them have a break* is priceless. Delaney would be proud of me.

“If I let him break me, it won’t solve anything. Someone is still out to get us. You guys and me by proxy. What is it you want me to do? Cheer you guys on as you beat up whoever is dumb enough to get in the ring with you?” I don’t mean for my words to sound so angry. But I am. I’m so damn angry, and the more time passes the more agitated I feel. With myself, the situation, and even with Blaine for the choices he made and the secrets I’ve been forced to keep to save his reputation and his family’s feelings.

He gestures for me to move in front of him so we can start walking again. The cemetery isn’t far from where we are, and the fight ring is just through the woods and down a small hill once we enter the graveyard. “I know Sebastian has a lot of things wrong. You and Blaine weren’t a thing.” His shoulders relax a bit as he glances around before making eye contact with me. “But you’re keeping something from us.”

“Blaine had secrets just like the rest of us do, and they’re not mine to tell.” I clench my jaw, swiping a loose strand of hair behind my ear. “If I did, it would only put Sebastian in danger. He’s a loose cannon, and you know it. It’s better if he takes his anger out on me until he gets tired of me.”

“You know that won’t happen. He thinks if he fucks you, it’ll get you out of his system, but I think it’ll just fuel his obsession even more.” The way his voice drops to a dark tone that I’m not used to from Cruz, makes me think he’s speaking from experience.

“How romantic.” I roll my eyes as we approach the black wrought iron gate at the entrance to the cemetery. My stomach sinks because this is where Blaine is buried, and I absolutely hate that. He hated Woodsboro and his father knew that and said legacies *have* to be buried here. Those are the rules. I’m so sick and tired of the McCoy rules. It will hurt my mother, but as soon as I graduate, I’m gone. I’m not sure where I’m going, but I’m getting as far away from Woodsboro and the McCoy’s as I possibly can. The longer I hang around, the more I let Sebastian in, only for him to throw whatever little bit of trust I’ve given him in my face. Did he give me the best orgasm of my life? Yes. Does he make me want to hurl myself off a cliff? Also yes.

“Why is he looking at you like that?” Cruz’s sharp tone pulls me out of my thoughts, and I follow his line of vision to Jesse, Blaine’s best friend, who is just inside the gate.

“I assume he blames me for Blaine’s death too, that seems to be a common theme lately.” I huff, seeing Wilder leaning against the gate and I don’t have to clarify that Cruz is handing me off for him. While it’s frustrating, I’m really only here because I want to be. Sebastian might be wrong about a lot of things, but someone is fucking with the Wolves and trying to use me to do it. My gut is usually not wrong, and I don’t feel like it’s Talon. I think he runs his mouth and tries to stir shit up to upset Sebastian, but I don’t think he’s threatening to kill anyone. He’s not ballsy enough to risk his trust fund for something so stupid. Whoever it is either feels invincible or they have nothing to lose. I’m hoping I’ll see something tonight that will tip me off on who is behind the notes.

“You got her? I wanna go see what Jesse’s problem is. He hasn’t been showing up to anything and now he’s watching CJ,” Cruz says to Wilder, and I glare up at him, but I don’t bother arguing with him for talking about me like I’m a fucking sack of potatoes. They’re not going to change, and I’d just be wasting my breath. Instead, I walk right past Wilder and head through the gate and straight for Jesse. If he knows something about who is trying to expose Blaine, then he can say it to my face instead of slinking around and watching me like a stalker.

“Jesus,” I hear Cruz hiss as he and Wilder catch up to me, steering me away from my intended destination.

“We’re going to be besties until after Bash’s fight,” Wilder says playfully, slinging an arm around my shoulders and guiding me toward the woods. He makes a point to rub his free hand over every raised tombstone that we pass. I can hear students chattering as they make their way to the fight ring. “If I die before you, make sure I don’t get buried here. I’d rather just rot in a landfill.” He lifts a shoulder as if to indicate he’s said something much less morbid.

I hold my pinky finger up to him, which he grasps with his own solidifying our deal. I decide to push my luck. “How about you let me go and tell Sebastian I ran off?”

“You’re trying to get me killed.” Wilder crosses his arms over his chest. “Look CJ, I don’t want to be mean to you, but I will be if I need to be. We can do this the easy way or the hard way.” He smiles wolfishly.

I glare at him just as we get to the tree line. “We can do it the hard way,” I say, mimicking his pose. I made a promise to Blaine at his funeral that I would do anything to protect Sebastian from the secrets he shielded him from. Blaine was also a big fan of me giving the Wolves a hard time, so I hope he can see me right now.

Wilder’s grin fades and he leans down to speak to me, his hands resting on the thighs of his jeans. “I think you should take what I’m offering because Sebastian hasn’t slept in a week. He’s going to be hyped up from the high of fighting. It’s hard to come down from that, CJ. And the only other alternative to you behaving is Sebastian hunting you down in these woods.” Wilder waves his arm out indicating the dense forest. “He’s barely hanging on, and if he catches you, I think whatever he does to you will make sitting with me during the fight seem pleasant.”

“Sebastian wants you to watch his fight,” Wilder says, rubbing a hand through his dark messy hair. “And that’s what you’re going to do.” He sets his jaw and for the first time I see why Wilder is a Wolf. All of his playfulness is gone, and the

glare he's giving me tells me that he wouldn't mind watching what Sebastian would do with me once he caught me.

I let out a slow breath, eyeing him, but ultimately decide to walk into the woods on my own. Wilder closely shadows me but doesn't say a word. I walk the well-worn path, and I'm thankful for Wilder shining his cell phone flashlight over my shoulder so I don't stumble. "So what did you mean that Sebastian hasn't slept all week? I thought he wasn't having panic attacks anymore. No one came and got me like when Blaine first..." I trail off.

Wilder is quiet for a moment before he moves up to walk next to me, silently signaling that we're on friendly terms again for this conversation. "The last night he slept a full night was last Saturday when you spent the night in his room. I don't know what happened between the two of you, but when we heard him screaming and ripping his room apart, he refused to let any of us go get you." His voice is tense, like he's not sure if he's saying too much or too little, or if he should be saying anything to me at all. Sebastian and I aren't just confusing to each other. I can only imagine what other people think when they try to figure out what's going on between us. I'm also glad to know that Sebastian didn't tell the Wolves, or at least Wilder, just how close we came to having sex that night. It feels private, like something I'd rather stay just between us, and not because he said it was a mistake, because I don't think he really believes that. "He needs you and he hates that." Wilder shrugs.

My stomach tightens, and a burning ache fills my chest as we approach the ring where Sebastian already stands poised to fight some guy I've never seen before. Neither of them have a mark on them so I know it's both of their first fights of the night. I see Nathaniel standing ringside, and Wilder smacks him on the back of the head instead of tapping him on the shoulder like literally anyone else would have done.

"I will knock you the fuck out," Nathaniel punches him, and it's clear that it's playful, but Wilder rubs his arm as if it hurt anyway.

“Can you watch her? I have to piss.” Wilder gestures toward me.

“I feel like a fucking football being tossed around,” I say, putting my hands on my hips.

“Don’t give me any shit, CJ. I’m the third fight tonight and I can’t be listening to you bitch about Sebastian. He’s a mean sonofabitch. We all know it, and we *all* love him,” Nathaniel says suggestively like he has any idea what I feel for my stepbrother. He offers me the bag of chips he’s shoveling in his mouth like he’s been starved for the last month. I swear every time I see him, he’s eating, and I have no clue how he’s not six hundred pounds.

“So you’re going to take turns babysitting me while you’re each fighting some asshole who doesn’t have a chance? Why does anyone even agree to come out here? None of the Wolves have ever lost, not even Wilder and I’d be shocked if Declan doesn’t tie his shoes for him.” I poke him in the arm, and he glares down at me for a moment, but ultimately can’t fight the grin that breaks out on his face. “Wouldn’t it be more practical to strap me to your back while you fight?” I roll my eyes but settle in next to him regardless. Any chance of having a say in this situation was diminished the moment I agreed to come with Cruz.

“Don’t give Bash any ideas,” Nathaniel says with his mouth full and all I can do is shake my head at him.

I feel eyes on me again and glance over to see Talon watching me. He’s letting some girl hang all over him, but it’s something about the way he’s watching me that prickles the tiny hairs on the back of my neck. He’s clearly not here to enjoy the fight, and there’s no way he’d ever be in a fight.

Nathaniel rubs a hand through his hair and regards me for a long moment before he says, “If you would just tell him what happened that night, he’ll stop tormenting you.”

I shake my head, and he continues his thought. “Okay, he’ll probably always fuck with you, but that’s only because he *wants* to fuck you.” He crosses his arms, and if it wasn’t Nathaniel, I’d be intimidated by his size and stance.

“I’m protecting him and the whole McCoy family, and you don’t have to believe me when I say that, but don’t you think I’d tell him what I know if I could?”

Nathaniel stretches his arms out, yawning and looks idly around as if he’s waiting for someone. “He thinks you were fucking Blaine. You and I both know that’s not true.”

White blonde hair flashes in front of my face as Delaney squeezes in between me and Nathaniel and points her finger up in his face angrily. “If you and Hawthorne do not stop fucking with me, I’m going to *take away your will to live.*” Even in the middle of the woods at an illegal fight club Delaney St. James is dressed to the nines in black heels and a fancy red coat with gold buttons. Nathaniel looks amused and grabs her arm to steady her when one of her heels sinks lower in the mud.

“The last time me and Cruz were fucking with you, you didn’t seem to mind.” I scrunch my face up in distaste at his words because *that* is not how you sweet talk someone like Delaney. I’m in awe of her smokey eye makeup that if I attempted, I’d look like I have two black eyes.

“Your makeup looks amazing. I nearly take my eye out every time I’ve tried to use mascara,” I tell her. She was so sweet to me when I told her what happened to the key she loaned me. She assured me that she’d get it back from Sebastian, and not to worry about it. She has this oddly comforting quality about her that isn’t obvious at first glance.

“I can totally teach you sometime. My nanny growing up was super into makeup,” she says offhandedly, but her voice is sincere. She doesn’t tear her narrowed eyes away from Nathaniel as she pulls out a wrinkled piece of paper from her coat pocket and slaps it against his chest. “If you two neanderthals think that leaving me threatening letters *stuck to my door with a fucking knife,*” she turns to give me a scandalized look when she says the last part before returning her glare to Nathaniel, “will scare me into climbing into your beds, you’re dumber than my brother told me you are.” She looks back at me, her voice raising another octave. “Declan told me they were bad news. He told me to stop flirting with

them. But did I listen? No. Why do I never listen to Declan, he's the only one who ever makes any sense." She huffs, and I'd think her exasperation was funny if it weren't for the situation. I only have to glance at the letter that Nathaniel is reading to see that it's telling her that if the Wolves don't mind their business that she'll be harmed. I realize now that when Declan said Delaney was a target, that he left out the part that she isn't aware that she's in danger.

"This isn't a joke, Delaney. When did you find this?" Nathaniel's voice is hard, but his expression is so soft when he looks at her, that I'm not even embarrassed that I'm watching them.

"Okay, I'm not going to waste my time playing whatever game this is." She snatches the letter out of his hands and pivots to storm off. "Bye CJ, come see me about the makeup any time."

"Fuck," Nathaniel mutters moving to stalk off after her, but must remember his babysitting duties because he turns to me. "Don't fucking leave this area, I'll be right back." And with that he's rushing off to find Delaney.

I glance around looking for the quickest exit, but I don't get the chance to plan my getaway because Talon has sidled up next to me and wraps his arm around my shoulder like he's been watching, waiting for an opening to move in on me.

Sebastian's eyes meet mine and then they zero in on Talon's hand resting on my shoulder. I shrug him off, but he replaces it immediately.

"Why do you want Sebastian to beat you to death so bad?" I yank his arm off of me again, but he's like a fucking octopus. As much as I'm annoyed with Talon right now, I don't really want to see Sebastian slaughter him either. There's too many witnesses and I don't feel like the headache of another cover up from Woodsboro.

"I'm just giving him a little rage to win the fight. He's tired, remember." Talon laughs, and lucky for him a whistle is blown signaling the start of the fight.

I watch Sebastian level a guy his same height who outweighs him by roughly fifty pounds in three punches and only catching one hit to the jaw himself. He yanks his arm away from the Kappa Alpha who is refereeing the fight tonight and hops off the stone platform they built specifically for these fights and heads straight for me and Talon.

“I think I miscalculated how much he does not like people touching you.”

Talon whispers to himself as Sebastian pushes his way through the crowd of people.

“Bro, don’t do it. Not here,” Wilder says as he swoops in to stand in front of me and I feel Talon move to stand behind me, hiding like the coward he is.

“Get the fuck out of my way,” Sebastian seethes at Wilder, and when he doesn’t obey immediately, he punches him straight in the jaw.

“Bro, I was fucking trying to help you. God damn,” Wilder chokes out and I shove on Sebastian, trying to get him to let go of his friend. Sebastian grabs me and shoves me into Wilder’s arms as he lunges at Talon, wrapping his arms around the blonde’s neck.

“Do not touch what’s mine!” Sebastian bellows and Talon is gasping for breath. I have the urge to bolt and run away from here, and Wilder must sense it because he grabs both of my forearms and twists my arms behind my back.

“Fuck. Are you okay?” I twist my neck to see Declan is inspecting Wilder’s face gingerly, with much more care than I would expect one of the Wolves to have especially with each other.

“Last I heard she belonged to your brother, and he’s somewhere over there rotting in the ground,” Talon grins, whipping his thumb toward the general direction of the cemetery.

“Do you really think I’m afraid to kill you? Do you really think I’m not that unhinged? My brother just died. I was defending my sweet little stepsister from you. That’s what

they'll say. They covered up Blaine's death just like they'll cover up yours. Just like they covered up when your bitch of a sister got sent away last year. Where did she go, Talon? Rehab or the psych ward?" Sebastian growls as he backs Talon up against a large tree, his back hits so hard that I hear the woosh of air rush out of his lungs. "And you know what? When you're dead and buried with your nice shiny Sanderson tombstone, I'm going to fuck her on top of it, so she remembers who put you there."

Talon tugs at the collar of his shirt when Sebastian steps back for a moment. Sebastian clenches his fists at his sides and I'm not sure which thing that Sebastian just said to him caused him to snap, but Talon lunges at Sebastian only to be shoved back against the tree harder this time. I hear the whistle blow again and realize the fights are still happening despite our little sideshow.

"If you want me to leave your *sweet little stepsister alone*, maybe Blaine should have left mine alone." Talon grins, but Sebastian isn't looking at him anymore. His eyes are boring into mine, confusion swirling in their icy blue depths. "Aw, they didn't tell you, did they? Always protecting poor Bash and his explosive temper, aren't you, CJ?" My eyes shift to Talon at the very moment his eyes widen, just before Sebastian's fist connects with his jaw. He's knocked out instantly and Sebastian lets him fall to the ground.

I realize he's conscious again when Sebastian lifts him back up by the collar of his shirt, blood is dripping down his pale face. "Keep my girl's name out of your mouth, motherfucker."

Sebastian stalks over toward us and Wilder says, "Don't punch me bro, I'm just holding her for you." I feel his body shaking behind me with laughter as Sebastian wrenches me out of his arms and then shoves him hard into Declan.

"Shut the fuck up, Wilder." His large hand grips my already sore arms and I wince, but he doesn't loosen his hold. He's too worked up, and I realize that he's not done being destructive tonight. We begin walking through the woods toward the cemetery and he pauses as we pass two of his

fraternity brothers who I recognize, but can't place their names. I see them with Talon around campus, which is why I don't know them. I steer clear whenever I see them in the same vicinity. He pulls me back tight against his chest as he pauses to look them up and down. Sebastian is methodical in his intimidation, and I guess it's good to know that he doesn't just use that tactic on me. There's a girl with them, but her eyes are downcast, and I should probably ask her if she's okay and if she wants to go wherever they're taking her, but I'm not okay and I don't want to go wherever Sebastian is leading me. Before I can decide if I want to speak to her, Sebastian snaps, "Go clean up your fucking trash president, he's bleeding all over the place."

"You need to get this shit under control, Bash." Cruz hisses through gritted teeth as he catches up to us. His eyes pan over to me when he says, "Fuck her if you need to get her out of your system, but this shit has to stop."

"He was fucking joking. It's *Wildier*." I realize Nathaniel is behind him when he chimes in and claps Sebastian on the back. I feel Sebastian suck in a sharp breath, trying to calm himself down. "You're gonna fucking kill somebody if you don't figure your shit out."

"Go get ready for your fights and collect the money I won tonight. I'm leaving," Sebastian says to the other two Wolves, but his eyes are trained on me. My stomach twists with something that feels like anxiety and excitement melded together. "And she's going to tell me everything she knows."

They leave without saying anything to me and Sebastian wastes no time advancing on me. "Talon likes to get shit started, you know that," I lie. I absolutely can't tell him what I know with the state he's been in. It'll only make things worse and make him want to do reckless things. "We need to focus on who is threatening us and take care of that first." I hold up my hand and press it to his bare chest. It's cold out, but he's burning up. The muscles of his abdomen tighten when I let my palm slide to his stomach, trying to keep some distance between us.

He drops his head so that his mouth is directly against my ear. “I’ve spent every night since I woke up without you in my bed thinking about how sweet that tight little pussy of yours tastes. If you don’t want me to fuck you in front of all of those people back there, Carrington Jane, you know what you need to do.”

I don’t intend to, but I gasp out the word, “What?”

“Run.”

Surprising even myself, I do exactly what he tells me, and I run as fast as I can through the uneven ground of the woods between the fight ring and the graveyard. I glance back and it’s dark, but I can see the outline of his tall, swimmer’s build walking slowly behind me. We both know he’ll catch me, and something about the idea of him finally catching me and making me do whatever he wants is both terrifying and freeing all at the same time. I won’t be easy prey for him, and he won’t hold back his hatred for me when he finally gets his hands on me.

“Be careful, Carrington Jane, monsters lurk in these woods at night,” he calls in what sounds almost like a sing-song voice coming from him. A shiver runs up my spine at the sadistic tone in his voice. Sebastian is a bastard, no one, not even he will deny that, but he reserves this unhinged side of himself just for me.

“Who were you with the night Blaine died?” He calls again, and even though I’m running as fast as my feet will allow and I’m already winded, narrowly missing tree branches and I run deeper into the woods where the path isn’t clear, he sounds like he’s closer and not even a bit winded. My coat catches on a thick clump of briars and instead of slowing myself down, I quickly rip the garment off and leave it behind.

“Clearly I must have been fucking the entire fraternity except for you, asshole.” I snap sarcastically, sucking in a sharp breath as karma catches up with my smart mouth and I trip over a fallen branch and slide down the slight incline. I hear his heavy footsteps closing in on me, but I refuse to be lying down when he catches up to me, and I’ll be talking shit

until he gags me. “I told you I was alone! I was always alone unless I was with Blaine.” I get to my feet and keep walking backwards, keeping my hand out to make sure I don’t back into any trees.

He’s right in front of me now, staring down and his breathing accelerates, and I take pleasure in the knowledge that it’s from my proximity. He might hate me but being inside me would be the single most pleasurable thing he’s ever experienced, and he hates that I’m aware of that. “Why would my brother lie to me then? Why did he tell me he was going to be with you all night?” He growls the words and I’m sure he does want answers, but his eyes are on my heaving chest, and I know he can probably see my hard nipples through the thin button-down blouse and unlined bra I stupidly chose to wear. My stepbrother is chasing his demons right now, and I think the only thing that will make him feel any sort of peace is hurting me.

He’s quiet for a moment, but then he moves his hand to my neck and squeezes hard enough to cut off my air supply. I gasp as he glares down at me, I see the pleasure in his light eyes as he watches the surprise in mine. “Fuck,” he groans. “Swallow. I want to feel you swallow,” he huskily whispers, and when I comply, he loosens his hold to move his hand to my ponytail, letting his fingers slide through the straight, silky strands. “Good girl.” I feel my pussy clench at his words and it’s the first time I realize I’m just as fucked up as Sebastian. A very basic part of me likes this side of him, and that I’m the only one he hates enough to show his most brutal perverse desires to. Some part of him knows I understand and that I want those things too.

“You need to trust me on this. Okay, Sebastian? Blaine wouldn’t have asked me to keep his secret if he didn’t think it was best for everyone.” He’s looking down at me, his blue eyes are icy and dark and everything I need them to be right now. I can feel the pull between us, he wants to believe me, but the anger takes over him. I see the moment it starts coursing through his veins, and that was when I mentioned Blaine’s name.

“Do you miss him?” Sebastian bites out, because he’s hateful and jealous and he wants to hurt me the way he thinks I’m trying to hurt him right now. “Do you wish it was him touching you right now instead of me?” Anger simmers in his eyes and I blink back tears, unwilling to let them fall. “You’ll cry for him, but not for me,” he grits out.

I don’t look away, and that seems to surprise him. He’s practically vibrating with the need to make me pay for what he thinks I did. No one else can take my place, and he won’t feel better until he has what he wants. I know exactly what I need to do. “Blaine will always be the best I’ve ever had. No matter who or how many come after him, he’ll always know my body better than anyone,” I lie, tipping my chin up defiantly, waiting for whatever is coming. But nothing does, it’s as if he’s stopped breathing, and the quiet calm as he stares at me is far scarier than any time I’ve seen him mad. He just needs one more nudge, and he’ll explode, and finally get me out of his thoughts. “I’ll think of him while you’re inside me, that’s the only way I’ll be able to come.” He narrows his eyes, and a crazed grin spreads across his face. I swallow hard when I realize that he’s caught on to what I’m doing.

“You’re trying to piss me off. You want this to hurt, and that makes my dick harder than it’s ever been in my life,” he says gravely, and I yelp as his large hand comes down over my mouth. He’s not wrong, whatever happens between us has to hurt so that we don’t stay in this toxic cycle of feelings that keep churning like the swell of an undertow. A constant push and push, swirling around with no place to dispel.

So I bite one of his fingers hard, but he only laughs, clamping his fingers across my face so tightly that I flinch at the twist of pain. “That’s my girl. Fight me, Carrington Jane,” Sebastian whispers, pressing his forehead against mine and breathing me in, like he can’t get enough of me. I feel him twist a stray piece of my hair between the fingers of his other hand as if he’s memorizing the texture. “You’re so polite and proper with everyone else. I’m the only one who can bring this deranged side of you out. Isn’t that true?” His voice is husky and when he stops speaking, I can hear my own heart racing in my ears. When I don’t answer him, he winds my hair in the

rest of his fingers and slides his thigh between my legs roughly. At the exact same moment, he pulls hard enough on my hair to make me cry out in pain and slides his thigh hard against my clit making my pussy clench in pleasure.

“Shh...your screams are only for me to enjoy,” he whispers and then moves his hand to wrap around my throat. “I feel your heartbeat. Your pulse is racing. Are you ready to take back what you said, stepsister?” he taunts me, practically spitting the title that both of us wish I didn’t have. The name rolls off his tongue like venom, and I have to bite down on my bottom lip not to let out a moan. His thigh is rubbing directly against my clit, and I think I might actually die from the pleasure.

“I’d rather die than give you the satisfaction,” I smile at him swallowing hard, knowing he can feel the movement of my throat against his palm.

“I’m going to destroy your sweet little throat when I shove my cock in it. That’s more than enough satisfaction for me.” His smile is wolfish, and he regards me slowly and then without warning moves his hand to the top button of my blouse. I close my eyes because I know what’s coming. He rips my shirt in one swipe, clear down to the last button. His eyes don’t leave my breasts, now only encased in a red lace unlined bra.

“Blaine’s favorite color was red,” I say with mock sweetness, tilting my head to the side as much as I can with his tight grip. I can’t let him get distracted with what we’re doing, he needs to take his aggression out on me, probably as much as I need him to. My panties are soaked with the anticipation of the pleasure and pain that I know only my stepbrother can give me.

He shoves his hips roughly into me, and I feel how hard he is against my stomach. He keeps his leg between mine, and he forcefully locks one of his hands around both my wrists, securing them above my head against the rough bark of the tree he’s backed me up against. I’m trapped between two

immovable objects, and at this point I'd have better luck fighting off the tree than Sebastian.

"That's expensive, asshole," I snap when he moves the hand that's been locked around my throat down to rip the center of my bra, letting my breasts bounce free. My nipples tighten from the cold, and at the memory of what it feels like when he nips them between his teeth and then sucks them into his mouth to soothe the ache he's just caused.

"You will never wear red again," he says calmly, and that callous smile is pulling at his lips again. "Are we clear?" He slaps one of my breasts roughly and then palms it, pulling the nipple between his thumb and forefinger.

I open my mouth to cry out, and I'm not sure if it's because it hurts or feels good or some sadistic melding of the two, but he presses his lips to mine, shushing me before I can make a sound. When he pulls away, he shakes his head in mock disappointment. "I told you, baby. Your pleasure is only for me to hear, see, and feel," he whispers against my lips, moving his hand to my other breast. "It's like your body was made for mine." He squeezes for emphasis on how perfectly his hand cups my breast before he pulls and tugs on that nipple. He smiles against my mouth, and I can feel that it's genuine when I rock my pussy against his thigh.

I turn my head to the side, squeezing my eyes shut because if he sees how much I'm enjoying this, I know he'll stop just to torment me. "Don't hide from me," he demands, putting more pressure between my legs. He leans in and sucks my bottom lip between his teeth when I whimper.

"I need to come, Sebastian." I hate that I'm begging him and that he's enjoying it this much.

He chuckles darkly, slapping one of my breasts roughly and I watch his eyes light up as he watches it move and bounce back. He leans down and takes the nipple between his lips and says against my flesh, "where would the fun in that be? You will only come with my name on your lips and my fingers around your throat." He scrapes his teeth across the

hardened bud and my hips buck against him chasing the ecstasy that I know only he can provide.

I arch my chest into him when he reaches around and removes my bra. I think he's going to discard it on the forest floor, but instead he forcefully pulls my arms down from above my head and roughly shoves them behind my back. He grins at me like the absolute psycho he is as I struggle when he begins to tie my wrists together. Panic and excitement mingle within me as I try to wrench out of his hold. It's scary to give up complete control to someone as unpredictable as Sebastian, but the way he's about to use me is going to be worth the risk.

When he's satisfied that I can't move my arms, he brings his icy gaze back to meet mine. He's so handsome, so cruel and so ravenous for me.

"Shiiitt." The curse leaves his lips with a long exhale. He tips his head down to get a better view, his eyes glued to my breasts. "You're such a good little slut, with your arms tied behind you." He whispers darkly, and then adds, "*my* little slut."

"I'm not yours. You'll never trust me enough to make me yours," my voice cracks and his eyes flash up to mine. I didn't mean to bring us out of the vicious little game we're playing, but I couldn't help it. Being this close to him fucks with my head, and I know that hate fucking in the woods is the only thing I can ever offer him.

"You're mine if I say you're mine," he growls, rubbing his hard cock against my thigh. I gasp and thrust my chest out further to him. The urge to have him rip my pants down and fuck me hard and fast comes over me as crazy as that sounds. I should want my first time to be in a bed with someone who doesn't hate the air I breathe. But I want Sebastian, and I want this version of him, and I don't think that will ever change.

His hands cup my breasts and I gyrate against his thigh. He hasn't even touched my pussy and I feel like I'm on the brink of falling apart in his arms.

He swipes both of his thumbs over each nipple slowly before pinching them and tugging them away from my breasts.

I jerk in his arms, a zing of pleasure shooting through my body and resonating in my pussy. I can't take much more, and I thrash in his hold and manage to push away from the tree, but his hold on me is too strong. He growls my name, and I can't tell if he means it as a curse or a prayer. He slams me back against the tree and his hand squeezes my neck while he resumes pinching my nipples with his other hand.

"I knew you were a slut, Carrington, but I didn't think you'd give it up this easy." He's saying it to get me worked up again, but I'm just hurt. I want to hate him so much, and I hate myself that I don't. I don't say a word, but I hold completely still. "Look at me," he gasps as he rocks me against him, and I flash my eyes up to his. I know I'm allowing myself to be vulnerable, and that it's a stupid move, but I can't wrench my neck out of his hold. I bite my lip, trying not to show any emotion, but I can see he's searching my eyes even in the dim light of the moon. I expect him to say something mean, something to cut me deeper, but he brushes his lips against mine. "I'm fucked in the head," he whispers. "I like hurting you because I know no one else can. You only let me in here." He lifts his hand that isn't on my throat to tap my temple, and my eyes flutter shut to hide my pain. I try blinking back the tears that are forming, but a few slip out and roll down the apples of my cheeks and quickly fall to my chest that is still arched out toward him.

He cranes his neck and leans down to close his lips around one of my nipples and then to the other, lapping gently and then biting down on the sensitive skin.

"Sebastian," I gasp out his name. "Stop. I want to leave. Let me go." I can't even free my hands to wipe my face, and I'm embarrassed that he got me to cry over something so stupid. I can't let him fuck with my mind. I'll gladly give him my body, but I need to keep my thoughts clear, or I'll drown completely in Sebastian's storm.

He grunts, but otherwise ignores me as his teeth clamp down around my nipple. I moan when his tongue begins lapping at the little bud with rapid movements. I can feel my pussy clenching, and suddenly I'm near the edge of pure bliss

as he moves his mouth back and forth to each nipple. “I’ll never let you go, Carrington. You’re mine in any way I want you to be. Forever,” he says, pulling his mouth away to speak, and I buck my hips at his words. He means to scare me, but the possessive nature of his words consume me.

I feel something shift in Sebastian, suddenly he’s not composed and strategic. His movements are needy and erratic. “I fucking need you,” he grits out as he yanks down my pants so roughly that I’m surprised he doesn’t rip them to shreds too. He sees the red lace panties that matched my bra, and his eyes glare up at mine before he rips them off of me, leaving my pants pooled at my ankles.

I struggle against my bound hands as he moves away from me. If I move the wrong way, I’ll tip over because of the way my pants are holding my ankles and my arms are secured behind my back. He stoops down and sits back on his heels so he’s eye level with my pussy. He licks his lips as one of his hands curl around the back of my thigh, lifting my left leg to remove my pants. He repeats the motion with the other leg and then slaps the inside of both of my thighs hard. “Open your legs for me,” he demands and then rubs his hands over the stinging flesh of my inner thighs.

“Do you still want to leave?” he taunts me as he slides his finger between my pussy lips to find me soaked.

“Make me come or let me go,” I snap, and that makes him genuinely laugh.

He teases me with his thick finger gliding between my folds from clit to entrance and then back to circle slowly around my clit.

My hips buck toward him and he whispers, “That’s my good girl. I’m going to make you come all over my mouth.” He leans in and devours my soaked cunt with his lips and tongue.

“Sebastian,” I cry out, my head falling back against the tree, shoving my body out toward him.

Sebastian licks the length of my pussy over and over again, before finally giving me what I need and sucking my clit into his mouth. I moan his name again and again, which spurs him on. I buck my hips against his face, losing myself in his touch.

“Surrender to me, my sweet Carrington Jane,” Sebastian says between laps of his tongue. “Give in and take the pleasure I’m giving you.” I thrash back and forth, and my hips start bucking more forcefully against his lips. He flattens his tongue as he flicks against my clit, which sends tremors through my entire body. Sebastian stops his movements with his mouth abruptly and moves his fingers to my clit as he warns me, “I own this pussy, baby. You will only fucking crave me and me alone.”

His mouth takes over my pussy again as his hands grip the back of my ass, alternating between squeezing and slapping as he dips his tongue inside me. His nose brushes my clit, and he growls as my whole body begins shaking as I roll over the edge and come harder than I thought possible. My juices coat his tongue, and he keeps lapping at my slit and sucking hard on my clit, making me cry out. “Stop. I can’t. It’s too much,” I beg as another orgasm rips through me.

He straightens to full height, but it’s not lost on me that he keeps his hand on my hip, making sure that I don’t collapse into the boneless mess he’s reduced me to. “No one else could ever do this to you, and you know it.”

Without any further warning, he twists me around and unties my hands and tosses my bra somewhere into the wilderness. I’m still riding the euphoric waves of pleasure and don’t quite realize what’s happening, until he turns me back around and shoves me down to my knees. Rough sticks and leaves scrape at my skin as he shoves his pants down to his ankles. He pumps his long, thick cock roughly in his fist for just a few seconds and he looks down at me with a lustful gaze.

“You’re going to let me fuck your throat and then you’re going to stick out your tongue and beg me to come for you,” he tells me as he grabs a fist full of my hair with his other

hand. I'm still not fully recovered from coming so hard several times in a row, so I try to pull away from him.

He presses the tip of his cock against my lips, and I look up at him with wide eyes. I can talk a good game, but I've never done this before, and I'm starting to come to my senses. He's big, and I don't see how that's going to fit in my mouth, let alone my throat, but I can't articulate what I'm thinking because he warns, "And don't bite me."

"Open," he growls. "I don't want to play anymore."

I glare up at him. "Jesus Christ, Sebastian. I know you're used to fraternity whores but give me a minute. I've never fucking done this before." As soon as it's out of my mouth, I instantly regret it. I didn't want him to know just how inexperienced I am, even though he thinks I lie about everything. I can tell by the look he's giving me that he believes what I've just said and some sadistic part of him is going to enjoy fucking my virgin throat.

I open my mouth to stick out my tongue and lick the head of his cock, but he's not having it. He wraps his hand around my throat and pushes his cock inside my mouth. "Look at me now," he demands just before he pulls his cock all the way out and then shoves it all the way in, hitting the back of my throat with one hard thrust of his hips.

I might not have done this before, but I'm in college and I've got an active imagination and romance novels. I know enough to feel confident that I can make him come. I try my hardest to relax my throat and he groans, bucking his hips as he repeatedly hits the back of my throat. I swallow hard and breathe through my nose, moving my hands up to stroke his cock as it slides out from between my lips.

I moan, and he tightens his grip on my hair, his hips moving faster as my voice vibrates around his dick. I gag, my throat closing as I inadvertently try to push him out of my mouth. Spit drips from my lips and all around his cock as he keeps fucking my mouth. All I can do is keep breathing through my nose and keep as relaxed as possible as he uses me for his own pleasure. The force of his thrusts have me digging

my knees into the hard ground and letting the pain of the sticks keep me semi grounded in reality. I can feel his balls, heavy and full swing and hit my chin and I should be disgusted but I'm just as sick and twisted as he is. The weight of them is almost comforting.

"Fuucccck," he grunts, shoving his full length inside my mouth and then pulling all the way out before he bottoms out in the back of my throat and stills for a moment before resuming. I can feel his cock pulsing and I know he's just about there. "Do. Not. Spit," he warns between thrusts. "Look up at me. Let me see your eyes," he demands on his last thrust and I can feel his cock jerk and spurt and then the warm salty liquid fills my mouth. I gag and subconsciously look down, but he jerks my head up to look at him. "Stick your tongue out, let me see my mark on you," he whispers, breathing heavily. I oblige him, sticking my tongue out knowing his come must be coating it. He takes his still hard cock in his hand and rubs it along my tongue and lips for a moment before he says, "I want to watch you swallow my come, Carrington." I obey, swallowing and then sticking my tongue back out so he can see that the warm liquid is gone.

His breathing has evened out a little and he reaches down to pull up his pants, and then lifts me up from the dirty ground.

"Get dressed, but the panties and the bra stay here. I wasn't joking. I don't want to see you in red again."

"I don't take orders from you." I laugh at the audacity of this man as I sag against the tree and attempt twice to step into my pants, but almost fall down before finally getting them on and pulled up. I wince because my knees are going to be sore from the twigs and dirt scraping them. I look up to see Sebastian glowering at me, I guess because instead of arguing with him, I was supposed to brainlessly agree with his bullshit demands. I decide to add fuel to the already raging inferno that is our relationship. "You're welcome for the best blowjob of your life. I hope you remember it when you go back to the mediocre ones Ella and her friends probably give you." I'm being a bitch, but he was one first, so I'm not going to stop until he does.

That's all it takes and he's in my face, cupping my cheeks much more gently than I would expect him to do after the way he's been with me tonight. He grits out, "You really think that after having a taste of you, knowing what this feels like..." he trails off, moving his hand to caress the front of my throat. I swallow for him because I know he likes that. "I could never settle for anything else," he whispers, squeezing with a gentle firmness that mirrors how I see Sebastian when he isn't angry at me.

I turn my head to look away from him because my emotions are getting out of control, and I can't risk that with him. He's not having it though because he forces me to look up at him. "You will be my fucking shadow until we figure out what's going on," he says roughly, emotion cracking his deep voice.

"Are we calling a truce?" I move my hand up to cover his, tugging it away from my neck as a shiver rips through my body. Finding my coat in the dark is going to be a bitch.

He holds his hand out to me, and before I can talk myself out of it, I put my hand in his palm. We're a few steps into our walk back to campus when he says, "Yea, we're calling a truce. For now."

SEBASTIAN

The restaurant smells like a bag of sweaty dicks and cooking oil, but we need to discuss what's been going on with the threats and we can't do that on campus. How the hell Wilder's cousin Remington found this place, I'll never fucking understand. Not being able to have our vehicles in the middle-of-nowhere setting of Woodsboro, doesn't make it easy to sneak off campus. Remington lives over on Hollow Hill Mountain and often comes to Faircliff to buy shit for those stupid crotch rockets him and his friends fuck around on. He's older, but just like Wilder, a pain in the fucking ass. He dropped us off here and said he'd be back after he went to pick up some parts that I couldn't be bothered to remember the name of.

I thought claiming Carrington the other night, shoving my dick down her throat until she choked would make me feel better, but it didn't. She's still the only thing I think about, and it didn't make me want her any less, it only makes me loathe her even more. It was a mistake, and I can't let that sort of shit happen again, no matter how much my blood races when I look at her. The moment I first laid eyes on her, I knew I would have to have her. I'll ruin her, and the more of her she gives me, the less guilt I feel for taking it.

I already hate the hostess before she starts speaking because she bounces with excitement like she doesn't realize what a greasy hellhole this is. Maybe I've been stuck in the pristine world of Woodsboro for too long because everything in here looks like it was made in the 70's and hasn't been

cleaned once since. The bitch with the menus is playing with her frizzy hair too much and is saying something about extra napkins like that's really going to bring this dining experience up from a negative twenty to a five-star review. I scan the restaurant quickly, and I'm pleased that I don't see anyone I recognize.

"You have the prettiest eyes, and your hair! It's so long and silky," the hostess says to Carrington, and reaches out to touch her hair that is swept over one shoulder, but trips over her own feet as we walk by a few crowded tables. Nathaniel is quick enough to reach out and catch her, which only sends her into a fit of nervous giggles. I'm starting to wonder if smoking crack is required to get a job here. I immediately look down, making eye contact with Carrington, who seems to read my mind. She gives me an accusatory smirk.

"I didn't fucking trip her," I snap, which only makes Carrington laugh sweetly.

"You wanted to," she quips, and she's not wrong.

We're led to the largest half circle booth in the back near the bar that a place like this probably isn't licensed to have. On impulse, I grab Carrington's hand, pushing her in before me. I try to tell myself that I do shit like this to torture her, but having her this close is fucking heaven and hell at the same time. I can't fucking stop myself, my obsession with her only gets stronger whether I'm with her or away from her. It doesn't matter. In my mind, I know what it's like to have a small part of her, and I feel like I'm going to rip the whole world down if I don't get some sort of peace. When everyone's in, I don't let go of her wrist, and I surprise myself because I feel nothing but relief when she doesn't pull away. I can't figure out how to control my feelings, and it makes me want to rage. My thumb finds her pulse point and the gentle beat instantly begins to calm some of my agitation.

I'm not paying attention to anything anyone is saying, but I'm ripped out of my thoughts when a loud grating voice chirps, "Hi, I'm Stacey, and I'll be your server today. What can I get for you?" She's wearing bright red lipstick that is distracting in a way I don't think it's meant to be.

“I would rather stick this fork in my eyeball than eat something from this establishment.” Declan says dryly.

Stacey looks confused like she has no awareness of what this place is really like but doesn't let that stop her from leaning over so her cleavage is practically right in Declan's face. “Are you guys from that fancy college on the cliffs?” She lets her eyes sweep by all of us, and I'm certain Declan and Delaney are the dead giveaway because the rest of us are dressed in casual clothes that we wouldn't get away with wearing on campus. The St. James' have a flair for the extravagant, which explains why he's in a blazer and Delaney's heels could be used as a deadly weapon.

“How about you run and fetch us all some iced tea instead of trying to get my brother to motorboat you,” Delaney chimes in, cocking her head to the side in a condescending way that only a St. James could master. Her fingers fan out in a dismissive wave, and she's not bothered when Stacey stomps away. Delaney's expression of indifference doesn't waver even when the waitress drops her pen and curses when her long fingernails hinder her from scooping it up.

“That's my girl,” Nathaniel beams, which causes a chain reaction around the table.

“No, she's not,” Declan remarks offhandedly, looking at his watch. “Again, I'd rather take a fork to the eyeball than have you as a brother-in-law.”

Delaney shakes her head, and I notice the way Cruz is glaring at her, and I remind myself to ask him about it later. The Wolves don't usually hide shit from each other, but there's definitely something going on between those three. I see the simmering anger in his eyes as he regards her, not unlike the way I am with Carrington.

“You were rude to the whiny bitch with the hooker lipstick so now you've got me,” a short, round woman who sounds like she's been chain smoking since she was still in the womb says as she starts slinging glasses of what I think is supposed to be iced tea in front of all of us. She wears buttons with photos of who I'd assume are her grandchildren on her dirty

smock. She narrows her eyes directly at Delaney and says, “Nothing to say to me, princess?”

Delaney clears her throat before she forces a fake smile. “I’d rather not be added to your display of victims. Unruly customers?” Delaney gestures toward the buttons which makes Wilder and Nathaniel laugh a little too loudly.

“What do you want to eat? Order now or I’ll pick some random shit on the menu and charge you double.”

“We’ll all have burgers,” Carrington says softly, looking wide eyed around the table, trying to convey that fucking with the people handling your food isn’t a good idea when we’re out of Woodsboro.

“Smart girl,” the waitress says and then eyes me up and down before letting her gaze settle on the position of my arm as I rest my hand on Carrington’s upper thigh. My hand feels gigantic as I slide it up her jean covered thigh and I dig my fingers into her. I want to feel her skin, I want my fingers closer to her pussy than I can get with what she’s wearing. She drives me fucking insane, to the point that I know if she had a dress on, I’d already have my fingers coated in her juices. It’s not my fucking fault that she’s pressed up against me. She can’t expect me to be this close to her and keep my hands to myself. “Stay away from that one,” the waitress speaks again, “I know that type, and he’s not going to be anything but heartache for you.”

“That’s her brother,” Wilder says, and he’s trying hard to keep a straight face. It has the desired effect because the waitress looks scandalized. She shakes her head, mumbles something about rich people that I can’t quite hear and heads for the kitchen, probably to spit in our food. “I fucking love doing that,” Wilder laughs and I watch as his hand slides across Declan’s back and then up his neck to the base of his head where his fingers can tangle in the waves of dark hair.

“You’re being awfully quiet,” Delaney says to Cruz who doesn’t respond other than to cross his arms over his chest and lean back against the seat.

Declan ignores the clear tension between everyone at our table and pulls out wrinkled papers that have been used to try to scare us. I've clearly had my mind on other shit because I had no idea it was that many. I feel Carrington freeze up next to me as Declan spreads the stack out on the table. I realize that her eyes are on the holes that clearly came from the knife that was stabbed through them to keep them stuck to the doors.

Delaney takes charge, shushing everyone and organizing the papers in a way that probably she only understands. "I don't see any blatant clues. The only common denominator is Carrington because she's mentioned in every note. Unless other people are getting these on campus and we haven't heard about it, which is highly unlikely, only people close to Sebastian are the targets."

I can feel the nervous energy radiating off of my stepsister, and I use my hand that's on her leg to pull her even closer. She looks up at me with worried eyes, but she tugs on my arm silently indicating that she wants to be closer to me too. I move my hand from her thigh and wrap it around her and pull her close to my ribcage. I'm used to the intense obsession I feel for her, but this need to soothe her is fucking irritating. It goes against everything I want, everything I thought I needed, but I can't control it. She's still shaken up, and I feel my chest tighten. I realize that in my demands to find out what she knows about the night Blaine died and who might have been responsible, I never thought to check if anything else had happened to her. I've always kept a close eye on Carrington, but that was to fuel my own selfish obsession with her. When Blaine was around, I never worried about her safety, because he was fiercely protective of her. He might have been the nicer one out of the two of us, but he'd fuck anyone up who messed with McCoy property.

"Unless it's Carrington trying to make it look like it's someone else." Wilder raises an eyebrow playfully and Carrington laughs, and that makes me want to rip his head off. I don't like her attention on anyone or anything other than me, and that will never fucking change.

“Yeah, in all my free time when you guys aren’t watching my every move, I’ve been leaving love notes for everyone threatening to off myself and five men twice my size,” Carrington says, her voice dripping with sarcasm.

Our food is just about to be delivered when Carrington shifts up, whispering in my ear, “Did Remington give them a lift too?”

When I look up, I see Talon and Ella walking through the door followed by several of our fraternity brothers. They don’t wait to be seated, and wave off the hostess when she tries to hand them menus. Their eyes are focused on our table, and it’s clear they’re not here for the food either. I guess Talon wants his ass beat again, and I’m in just the mood to oblige him.

I feel Carrington tense next to me. The fact that they put even the tiniest ounce of fear into her makes me want to snap their necks. It’s Carrington who has her hand on my thigh now, and I can feel the warmth from her fingertips through my jeans. I rub my hand over my face trying to get the fucking thoughts out of my brain that are torn between beating Talon to death out of sheer frustration and fucking Carrington on top of his dead body. She needs to tell me what she knows, or none of this is going to be resolved. One or all of us are going to end up dead and in the ground next to Blaine, and Woodsboro is going to cover it up to keep their record clean. I gently shift my leg away from her hand. I’m having a hard enough time keeping Carrington at arm’s length, with her hands on me all I want to do is spread her out on this table in front of me and lick that sweet pussy of hers until I feel better.

I look up at Declan to gauge what we should do about the dipshits, because I’m pretty sure he’s going to veto murder and public sex. I realize he hasn’t seen Talon yet because his eyes are trained on Wilder who is animatedly talking to Delaney about the notes. I don’t have time to catch his attention because Remington’s sister, Mia, is walking toward us, presumably to tell us that they’re ready to take us back to campus.

Remington enters just in time to see her walk past Talon’s table and one of our fraternity brothers, Benjamin, reaches out

and slaps her on the ass clearly assuming she's a local girl and not the relative of one of the Ravens of Hollow Hill. The Wolves are pretty ballsy, and we don't back down from much, but even I wouldn't fuck with any of the Ravens. They've killed guys for far less than what Benjamin just did.

Carrington gasps when Mia doesn't miss a beat, turning on her heel and slapping Ben straight across the face. He reaches out, still not realizing Remington is approaching. "Yep, there it is," Remington says, a smile only a psycho would wear stretching across his face. He takes the baseball hat on his head and spins it around to face backwards, and that right there lets me know he's about to fuck everyone at that table up.

I reach into my pocket and grab a wad of cash and throw it on the table. "We've gotta go before our ride gets himself locked up for beating Benjamin to death."

"I mean, he'd be doing us all a favor. That guy is vile," Delaney snips, but follows my direction as we all slide out of the booth and head toward where Remington has just reached the table. He's dressed in work boots, jeans, and a red and black flannel shirt. I eye him up to see if I can spot any obvious weapons, and thankfully I don't see a gun. I don't give a shit if he wants to take Benjamin and their whole table up to the mountains and bounce their heads off a rock, but I don't need to be on the fucking evening news for being an accessory to a public execution.

"She's got a nice ass, doesn't she?" Remington asks, placing his hand on the back of Benjamin's chair, leaning down to crowd both him and Talon. He's a tall fucking dude, and even though he's not bulky, I wouldn't want to fight him, and I'll fight fucking anyone.

"I wouldn't answer that," Declan warns as we walk past Remington and head toward the door. Nathaniel downs the rest of his milkshake. Cruz and I make sure Carrington and Delaney are tucked in the middle of our group as we walk out.

"Get the fuck out of my face. Do you know who we are?" Talon snarls, but Remington elbows him in the face with one

sharp blow.

“You’re a dead motherfucker if you don’t shut your mouth,” Remington snaps and then without warning grabs the back of Benjamin’s head and slams his face down on the table, knocking him out with three consecutive blows. “Don’t fucking touch what isn’t yours,” he says before letting his face drop to the now bloody table.

“Oh my god!” Ella screams, and I glance around behind us to see if anyone is going to challenge him. The Wolves will have his back, because all of us would have done the same thing in this situation.

“That was kind of hot,” Delaney says to Carrington as we usher them out of the restaurant and into the SUV Remington has not only left unlocked, but also left running. He does not give a fuck about anything, and I can respect that.

“I’ll beat the fuck out of Wilder if you wanna see a show,” Nathaniel offers trying to wrap an arm around Delaney, but she’s short enough to duck out of his reach and climb up into the SUV.

“As much as I’d love to see you two tickle each other in this gross parking lot, I’ll have to respectfully decline your offer. Thanks.” Delaney peeks her head back out with her nose turned up in disgust.

Wilder grins, shoving Nathaniel, who only stumbles over a step or two before he puts Wilder in a headlock and rubs his knuckles over the top of his head. I’m too tired and stressed to deal with their shit right now, so I just pretend they’re not with us.

I watch as Carrington climbs up behind Delaney and I can’t help but keep my eyes on her ass. I started out with the upper hand, ready to ruin her, but if I’m not careful she’s going to bring me to my fucking knees.

I wait for Cruz and Declan to get in first, and then I climb in behind them, not even bothering to look behind me when I hear the scuffle of what can only be Wilder and Nathaniel slapping the shit out of each other for no fucking reason.

“Load up, fuckfaces. We gotta get out of here.” Remington snaps as he exits the restaurant with Mia trailing along holding one of his bloody hands.

When we’re out on the main road that will lead us back to Faircliff, Declan finally says, “Is anyone else curious how Talon knew where we’d be?”

“Have you checked the fraternity house for recording devices? It’s the only explanation,” Carrington says, leaning around the seat to look at Declan who is one row in front of us.

“Unless one of us here is feeding him the information,” Cruz says, narrowing his eyes on Carrington. I feel her straighten her back and I place my hand possessively on her thigh. The feelings I have make no sense. He’s well within his right to question her loyalty, especially when I’ve done nothing but accuse her of shit since Blaine died. But I don’t fucking like him speaking to her that way.

“Don’t accuse her of shit like that,” I snap. He glares at me, and I know he can tell I’m slipping up when it comes to her, but I don’t give a fuck. She’s mine to deal with however I want, and I don’t need him getting in the middle of it.

Everyone is silent for a little while until the car begins buzzing with side conversations. I feel Carrington’s eyes on me, and I finally look down at her.

“What?” My tone shows nothing but my annoyance and I see her flinch for only a brief second.

“Why did you stick up for me?” She whispers, but her posture is still guarded, not leaning against me, or melting into my side like I’d really like her to right now.

Because I’m agitated and I want to get a reaction out of her that no one else could, I say, “You’re mine to torment.” I lean down, breathing against her lips, but controlling myself enough not to let mine touch hers and whisper, “I. Don’t. Share.”



“Something’s going on, look at the crowd in the quad,” Carrington says when we get back to campus, pointing at the hoard of students gathered around the fountain. Woodsboro is a very selective school, meaning that the student population is very low. For this many students to be in one spot at the same time, something big must be going on. When Carrington begins walking faster, I reach out and cup my hand around the back of her neck. My grip is not too rough, but firm enough to let her know she’s not leaving my side.

She turns to glare at me, and my dick is instantly hard. I want her to look at me, just like that, like she hates my very soul while I fuck her until she screams. “Let go of me, I’m going to see what’s going on,” she snaps.

“The fuck you are,” I tighten my grip and stop suddenly, whirling her around to face me. She smacks directly into my chest and glares up at me. I ignore the guys and Delaney when they keep walking. I’ll stand here all fucking day until she gives in to me.

I hear Delaney’s heels clicking on the cobblestone before I look up to see the terror on her face as she approaches us. “We need to get you out of here, Carrington. Does anyone have a key to your room?”

“What the fuck kind of question is that? Talk to me, not her,” I snap, pulling Carrington to stand directly in front of me. I don’t care if I’m being irrational, clearly something is going on that involves her safety and that’s my fucking business.

“Oh, swing your big dick energy at someone else, Sebastian, I literally don’t care,” Delaney snaps right back at me, pointing up at me like she might lunge up and try to rip my throat out if I say another word before she looks at Carrington. “Someone’s broken into your room and put some of your things on the statue in the fountain. We need to talk to everyone who lives in your dorm and see if they saw anyone go in there.” I glare at her, but keep my mouth shut, because in this case hearing what she has to say is more important.

“How do you know it’s mine?” Carrington asks, trying to pull away from me, but I hold her firmly. I can feel the tension

in her body, she's ready to bolt and I can't let that happen.

"That red ribbon you always wear and the black lingerie you wore to the frat party," Delaney says, reaching out to place a comforting hand on Carrington's hand.

"How do you fucking know about that?" I eye Delaney suspiciously, and I sound pissed because the thought of everyone seeing Carrington in that barely there lace bra and panties is going to be the reason I snap someone's neck.

"Just because I didn't clear it with you or my brother, doesn't mean I wasn't there," Delaney sneers. "I didn't see what happened, but Cruz told me that night." I get the feeling that she only adds the last part to make Carrington feel better.

Carrington twists in my arms, and I let her, but I don't loosen my hold. The crowd is too large, and I'm not willing to lose sight of her even if it pisses her off. "I want to see. Everyone else has seen it, and it's about *me*. Maybe the letters haven't been about Blaine all along, it could be that someone just hates me. Maybe even more than you do." I look down into her green eyes and the anguish I see there makes my chest constrict in a way that I don't completely understand. I usually love to see her upset, see her pain reflect mine. It's different this time, instead, I want to burn this entire courtyard down with everyone in it to take away what she's feeling.

"Jesse, get down! You're going to fall!" I hear a random girl scream and I move to the side so I can see what's going on, and subconsciously I keep Carrington close to me. Jesse is climbing into the fountain and up to the statute. As I get a better look, I see that whoever did this has put something that looks like blood on the statue. Blood covers the eyes and breasts and duct tape has been placed over the mouth. Carrington's lingerie covers the statue and her red bow is secured to the lifted hand. I feel rage rush through my entire body and I only realize that I'm clenching my fists when Carrington yells.

"Jesus, Sebastian!" She yanks out of my hold, and I let her for a brief moment before I grab her hand and drag her closer to the fountain. Jesse looks hysterical as he climbs up the

marble woman and grabs Carrington's belongings. I watch as he rips the duct tape off before jumping back into the water and parting the crowd as he climbs out. He's heading straight for us, and despite everything he's just gone through to help her, I have the urge to knock him to the ground when I see her panties and bra clutched in his hands. I shouldn't feel that way because this is how he is, always trying to do the right thing just like Blaine. I'm relieved to see the other Wolves forcing the other students to disperse and leave the general area, giving us a little privacy. Declan and Cruz stand silently, hands in the pockets of their coats while they glare at the other students. That would suffice, but Wilder and Nathaniel have decided to climb on the edge of the fountain and wave their arms as if they're trying to direct traffic.

Fucking idiots.

"This has to stop," Jesse says as he walks up to Carrington, his eyes red and watery as if he's trying hard not to cry. I know he's not a hardass, but I've never seen him like this. He's always so even tempered. I reach out and snatch Carrington's things out of his hands and shove them into the pocket of my coat.

"Don't worry about him," Carrington says to Jesse because his jaw is still hanging open in surprise because of how rough my movements were. "He can't decide if he wants to torment me or play guard dog." Her voice is clear, not shaky like I would have expected it to be.

"And that is exactly why you should worry about me," I say calmly, but I see the look of understanding flash across his face.

"Who do you think did all of this?" Carrington waves me off.

Jesse shakes his head in the negative and then motions for Delaney to move in closer to make a circle between the four of us. He looks around before he whispers, "Were you there the night Blaine died?" Carrington stiffens visibly.

"No, I keep telling everyone. I wasn't with him that night," she says without missing a beat.

“Why did he say you were going to be?” Delaney asks, and then continues, “If we can figure out what he was doing down on the cliffs, supposedly by himself, maybe we can figure out who thinks you know something.”

“I don’t know. I didn’t know he told you and Sebastian that. He was my best friend, truly. He probably figured I’d cover for him if anyone asked,” Carrington says and lets out a deep breath. “I would have. If he hadn’t died and needed me to cover for him for whatever reason, I would have. And he knew that. We didn’t have any secrets from one another.” I feel my chest clench at the way she talks about my dead brother. I hate that even in death he owns any part of her, even the parts of her that I don’t want.

Jesse nods sadly, but it’s Delaney who speaks, “You should go back to the fraternity and get some rest. You look exhausted.” She reaches over and puts what is supposed to be a comforting hand on his shoulder, but he visibly flinches away from her touch. He only nods again and pivots and begins slowly walking away.

“You were the closest to Blaine besides me. If you think of anything, please let me know,” Carrington calls out, but he only holds a hand up in acknowledgment.

“He’s really not taking any of this well. I mean, the fact that he jumped up on the fountain and...” Delaney starts, but shuts her mouth and moves to stand in front of us. “Look who’s back on campus.”

I look across the courtyard and my eyes instantly lock with Talon. The glare that appears on his face lets me know he’s still salty from the ass kicking I gave him. I feel my whole body go cold when he grins, blowing a kiss to Carrington.

It crosses my mind to walk over and beat him to death right here in the center of campus for everyone to see. Carrington must know what’s flashing through my mind because she puts a hand on my shoulder, and then on my chest, pressing her palm against me softly to let me know she’s there.

“Don’t do anything stupid, he’s just trying to antagonize you,” she says, and I realize that this is one of the reasons I

need her, and that scares the fuck out of me. I loathe that it's becoming hard to hate her. I thought touching her, kissing her, almost fucking her would be a way to control her, a way to torment her, but in the end it's only made me more frustrated and angry. I need a breather to cool off, to figure out how to get the upper hand and make her tell me what she knows about Blaine. She might not have been with him the night he died, but she said it herself, other than Jesse she was the closest person to him. I'd argue that my sweet little stepsister was closer to Blaine than Jesse, because she was fucking him.

I must be scowling, deep in thought, because Delaney snaps her fingers in front of my face and says, "Wipe the fucking attitude off your mug and walk us to the library like a good little Wolf. Carrington can hang out with me while you and the guys go sniff around her dorm and make sure it's safe for her to go back there."

My gut instinct is to tell her that the only place that's safe for Carrington is with me, but I push the thought away and begin walking toward the library. I purposely walk fast because it amuses me to watch Delaney wobble on those ridiculous heels she insists on wearing.

"So who are you fucking? Cruz or Nathaniel?" I grin when Carrington gasps and swats my arm.

Delaney isn't rattled though because she doesn't miss a beat before she replies, "Not my fiancé, and I think that's the important part of the story." We meet up with the other Wolves halfway across the courtyard and head toward the library together and everyone is silent, even Wilder and Nathaniel. What happened with the fountain might not have been a physical attack, but the way things are going, I wouldn't be surprised if that was next.

When we make it to the library, I walk around and check the place over before I'm satisfied that they'll be safe. As I'm walking past Carrington toward the door, she stops me by putting a hand on my forearm.

"I want my stuff back," she says, pointing to my pocket. I slip my hand inside and my dick instantly hardens when I feel

the lace under my rough fingers. I'm instantly reminded of her wet pussy coming all over my mouth. Staying away from her is going to be absolutely vile, but it's what I need to do.

“I guess we're even, Carrington Jane. We both want things we can't have.” I grin at her and leave her there to watch me walk away from her again. Declan, Cruz and I head across campus together to check out her dorm, while Nathaniel and Wilder hang around to make sure no one tries to get into the library.

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CARRINGTON

“So, which one of you is babysitting me tonight?” I ask Wilder as we walk across campus toward my next class which he happens to be in too. People make an effort to move out of his way, and I realize that he’s so used to that special treatment that he probably doesn’t notice it anymore. I hold my hand out palm up, trying to feel if it’s started drizzling yet, but so far the ominous gray clouds are only threatening to soak the campus. Thankfully no other threats have come my way, that I know of anyway. I wouldn’t be shocked if the Wolves were hiding things from me, but I’ve decided not to focus on things that are out of my control.

I don’t bring up the fact that I haven’t seen or heard from Sebastian since we got back from our little off campus adventure or that I’ve stayed up thinking about him more nights than I want to admit. I’m just a toy for him, something to play with when he’s bored or feeling particularly cruel, but my feelings for him are sincere. I’ve always been drawn to him, since the first day I met him, and nothing he does changes that.

“Not me. I haven’t had a drink or any ass all week because Sebastian has me patrolling the campus like I’m a fucking Navy Seal.” He rolls his eyes, and waves his hand out in exasperation. I find it funny that he thinks this situation is all about him, like Blaine’s death and whoever is harassing me is only doing it to give him blue balls.

“Did you do the homework for this class?” I ask as Wilder opens the door and I duck under his arm and begin looking for

an empty seat.

“Nah, I paid some nerdy kid to do it. I can’t have old man Whitlock on my ass for failing anymore classes. This whole place is such a fucking time suck.” He huffs like paying someone to do his work is so much effort, and I can’t help but smile at him. He’s so spoiled, it’s almost endearing. Following me into the classroom, he hands me my backpack that he was carrying and then he scans the room. His eyes linger suspiciously on Ella, long enough to make me uncomfortable. I don’t need him causing a scene in front of everyone, it’s already awkward enough that I have four different guys escorting me around campus, and everyone already thinks I’ve fucked both of my stepbrothers. I can only imagine the rumors that are flying around about me.

“Declan’s picking you up,” Wilder finally says, rubbing a hand through his dark hair as he stoops down so we’re eye to eye. He glances over at Ella again, and my stomach sinks. I can sense what’s coming, so I look away as she laughs huskily at me like she knows something I don’t. “Do you have a fucking problem?” Wilder glares at her and that makes her instantly shut her mouth and face forward.

“Okay, you made your point. Now will you please sit down?” I barely move my lips and keep my voice low. “People are staring.”

His sour expression fades into a sincere smile when he stands up, patting me on the head in a big brotherly way. “I’m not staying. I’ll end up getting us both kicked out. I’ll be around though if you need anything.” He huffs as he stands up, flips his middle finger up at Ella and heads toward the door.

“Don’t forget to turn in our homework. I shoved mine in your bag earlier,” Wilder says cheekily and closes the door behind him. I sink down in my chair and pull out my notebook. I don’t want to acknowledge the people that I know are staring at me.

I think about asking Delaney to come over tonight. She’s fun and would probably keep my mind off of everything. But I’m sure she probably doesn’t want to deal with college

bullshit on a Friday night. She's got a whole forced arranged marriage to deal with, so what's happening to me probably seems like nothing to her. The notes are annoying, my underwear being displayed in public was embarrassing, but that's really it. No one has tried to physically hurt me, and I suspect Jesse is right in the sense that whoever it is probably thinks I know something that they did and they're trying to shut me up. I have a sinking feeling that Blaine died because he knew something he shouldn't. Woodsboro is filled with secrets; it could be anyone.

I feel someone staring at me and when I look over, it's Ella. I can't read her expression, but dread rushes through my body. I quickly look away and pull out my notebook and flip through the notes from last class.

"Are you fucking all of Sebastian's friends too? Very ambitious of you." Ella's laugh can only be described as a cackle, but I ignore her. Trying to defend myself is only going to make her want to keep coming at me. "Did you fuck Blaine to death?" Her smile falls when she looks around and no one else is laughing.

"Will you quit bitching? Oh my god, every fucking time I see you, your mouth is moving," I hear Jesse bite out in a low tone.

Ella doesn't respond, instead she glares daggers at me before turning to face the front of the classroom just like she did when Wilder yelled at her. I take a chance and look over at Jesse, but he's shaking his head and sorting through his notebook. He must feel me staring at him because he finally lifts his eyes to meet mine. I let out a soft and simple, "Thanks."

He smiles and nods, but the dreadful feeling swirling in my chest and stomach doesn't dissipate. Something bad is going to happen.



I'm not sure how Delaney convinced Nathaniel to bring us to the graveyard, but I don't doubt there's anything she can't do. Declan gave him strict orders that he was to watch over us at Delaney's on-campus apartment, while the other Wolves attended a party in the graveyard. The other Wolves haven't noticed that we're here yet, but Nathaniel is already buzzed and trying to tell me a story about Declan. He's laughing so hard that he's wheezing between breaths and it's hard to understand what he's even saying, which makes me laugh harder.

"Sebastian is going to kill you. I'd run if I were you. He just got finished with a fight and he's ready to fucking rip everyone apart." Wilder nudges Nathaniel and gestures toward Sebastian who is staring at us like he's seen a ghost. I knew I'd see him tonight, but I wasn't aware that seeing him would twist my stomach up so bad. I shouldn't have come here; I can't emotionally handle dealing with him tonight.

I look around for Delaney because at least if I'm with her, I won't be tempted to go off alone with Sebastian. There's too many people milling around the graveyard to find her right away, but then I see her over by the tree line. She's waving her arms wildly at Cruz, and he's looming over her in the same way Sebastian does with me. I don't feel like he'd hurt her, and it's really none of my business what's going on between them. It feels like I'm watching a colossal train wreck happening feet away.

Out of my peripheral I see Sebastian walking toward me and instinctively, I take off trying to squeeze through the crowd of students. I merge into the middle of the crowd and try to decide what my game plan is. I'm not sure it's safe enough to try to make it back to my dorm without one of the Wolves, and I'm pretty sure if I tell any of them what's going on, they'll only take me back to Sebastian. My thoughts are interrupted when a cold hand grips me by the arm, yanking me forward. I run into Talon, hitting him square in the chest, and he grabs me by the shoulders to steady me. His hold isn't particularly tight or menacing, but the look on his face is pure hate.

“Looking for your *brother*?” I snort out a laugh, because he’s really trying to push this whole incest storyline he has going on in his head. I’m not afraid of him, I’m just fucking tired. I want things to go back to normal, and while I know that’s not possible, I can at least hope. “Will your panties be on display tonight too? Or is that strictly for the middle of campus where everyone can see?”

I jerk out of Talon’s grasp. “Keep touching me, and I’ll let the Wolves rip you apart. Is that what you want?”

Talon narrows his eyes, and they somehow seem darker than their usual hue. I consider standing here and arguing with him, but I remember that I need to get out of here because he’s the least of my worries. Sebastian looked like he was ready to burn the whole campus to the ground, and I’m not about to hand him the matches. I jut out my chin and give my best cold stare before I turn and push my way through the crowd in the direction of the gate that will lead me out of the cemetery.

I make it just about to the set of trees right before the wrought iron gate when I hear heavy footsteps. I look toward the sound and immediately have to shield my eyes. Whoever it is has a high-powered flashlight shining directly into my eyes. I stumble back, and I realize that turning around and running inside the graveyard is my only option. I don’t get the chance to run though because as I take another step back, I collide with a hard chest. I’m sure it’s either Talon or one of his fraternity brothers. Panic rises in my chest, and I can’t even scream. I want to scream for Sebastian. It’s my first instinct to cry out for him, but I can’t get any sound to come out.

“Turn that fucking light off, motherfuck!” It’s Sebastian, and I’ve never been so thankful in my life. He’s angry, and I welcome the rough way he’s holding me to his chest. I should have never run out here alone. His arm wraps around me, and he shoves me to stand behind him because whoever it is doesn’t obey Sebastian’s command and is still shining the light at us. “Don’t move,” Sebastian partially barks the words at me, and I’m not even irritated with his tone. I wrap my arms around his sides, holding on and I notice that in one hand he has his half empty beer bottle. “It’s gotta be Sanderson,”

Sebastian says more to himself than to me. I shake my head against his back, and I feel him still at my rough movements. “Did you see who it is?”

“No, but Talon grabbed me inside the cemetery. He wouldn’t have had time to make it out here before me.” I suck in a sharp breath. I’m exhausted, and I feel like I might just fall to the floor if I didn’t have Sebastian to lean on.

“Talon is inside the graveyard,” Declan says, and I realize he must have followed Sebastian.

“Why are you out here?” Sebastian demands, and I squeeze myself closer to his muscular back.

“I saw how angry you were looking at me, and I panicked,” I manage to speak. “It was stupid, and I realized it right away, but I just wanted to go back to my room and sleep. I don’t have the energy to fight with you tonight.” I break off, huffing in a sharp breath against his back.

The person appears to take a few steps backward and they press something on the flashlight to make the light flash in a strobe-like fashion. It hurts my eyes and I dip my head to press against Sebastian’s back, shielding me from the light. I feel Sebastian react, using his empty hand to cover his face. I feel his body move as he cocks his arm back and hurls the glass bottle toward the light, hitting his target and shattering the glass all over the blacktop.

I half expect someone to race toward us, but instead they retreat, turning the light completely off and fleeing into the tree line. Sebastian turns, pulling me into his chest and cupping the back of my head with his palm.

“Did they do anything to you?” His voice is still hard, but all I can hear is concern.

“No.” I shake my head, wrapping my arms around him, clutching the back of his shirt in my hands. “We need to find Delaney. What if they go after her next?”

He doesn’t answer me, but pulls my cheek to his chest, his fingers stroking through my hair absently as he speaks to

Declan. “Find Delaney and whatever Wolves you can find and meet me at Blaine’s grave.”

“Don’t let her run off again. Whoever that was is ready to amp things up,” Declan says, and his voice is fading, so I know he’s walking back into the graveyard. I turn my head to look up from under Sebastian’s arm.

“That won’t be fucking happening again.” Sebastian squeezes me tighter, and I realize that as much as he says he hates me, as much as he shows me that he hates me, he’s worried about me.

As we walk, Sebastian surprises me by lacing his hand with mine, shoving me behind him as he navigates through the crowd.

“Fuck off,” Sebastian snaps at the blonde sitting on Cruz’s lap as he sits on the tombstone next to Blaine’s. She’s kissing his neck, and his hand is down her unzipped top.

“Are you going to let him speak to me that way?” She jerks upright in his lap.

“He can say whatever the fuck he wants to you,” Cruz says with a little chuckle, but he doesn’t look at her, instead his eyes bounce back and forth between me and Sebastian. “Where’s Delaney?” I can see the alarm in his eyes, even though most people wouldn’t recognize it.

“Not sure. Last I saw her, she was fighting with you,” I snark, but Sebastian shushes me with a hand curling around my waist. “I tried to leave and someone blocked me from leaving. If Sebastian hadn’t shown up, I’m not sure what would have happened.”

Cruz is up, nearly causing his lady friend to fall on the floor, but she steadies herself by grabbing his shirt. When she begins to protest, Cruz holds his hand up to her but Sebastian is the one who speaks. “Shut the fuck up and leave.”

“Did you get a look at who it was?” Cruz doesn’t seem to notice that the girl that had his attention just moments before is storming off.

“No, the flashlight was so bright and they had on all black clothing. It was hard to tell how tall the person is or their body type,” I say quietly.

“We need to find Delaney,” Cruz starts, but Sebastian cuts him off.

“She’s clearly run off, just like Carrington did and none of you noticed.” I hear the outrage in Sebastian’s voice, and I wrap my hand around his wrist, rubbing my thumb along his pulse point to soothe him. I feel the tension in his arm ease. It’s not their job to babysit me and I made the choice to leave on my own. “We can’t let them out of our sight until we figure out who this motherfucker is,” Sebastian’s tone is final, and Cruz only nods in agreement.

As we’re turning to leave, I see Delaney, sitting on a tombstone two rows over. I break away from Sebastian and rush over to her, surprising her with a giant hug.

“Oh my God. I thought they had you.” She jerks back at first and then relaxes when she realizes I’m the one tackling her. “Where did you go?”

She looks up because Nathaniel and Cruz are now standing on either side of the headstone, arms crossed and their gazes focused on us like we committed some sort of crime against them.

“The ground is soft and my heels were sinking in the mud so I came over here to wipe them off. Why is everyone freaking out?” She grabs my face so that I look at her. “What happened to you?”

“I was trying to avoid Sebastian, and Talon started harassing me, so I tried to leave on my own which was stupid, I know. And someone with a flashlight came after me,” I say, chewing my lip. “Whoever it was didn’t back down even when Sebastian and Declan came out to find me.” I hug her again, and she squeezes me tight in silent thanks before we separate.

Declan appears with Wilder, giving us a dirty look before he rubs a hand over his face, a practiced twitch he has even

when there are no glasses tonight to shove up the bridge of his nose.

“Neither of you have a reason to be wandering off by yourselves,” Sebastian grits his teeth, and I can sense the anger he had before is coming back now that I’m not next to him, touching him, trying to soothe him.

“If you hadn’t looked like you were going to pummel me, maybe I wouldn’t have run off in the first place,” I say, standing up, but Delaney stays seated. I notice she and Cruz are having a silent and obviously very private conversation with their eyes, so I look at Sebastian. “I can’t take much more of the back and forth with you.”

His jaw clenches, not with anger, but probably because he’s swallowing the fact that I’m right.

He looks at Cruz, shoulders still bunched up with tension. “One of you keep an eye on Delaney, we’ll meet up tomorrow and try to figure this shit out.” He steps around Delaney and his hand closes around my arm, pulling me to walk in front of him up to his room. “You’re staying with me, and we’re not fighting about it.” He levels me with a dark stare, and I don’t have the energy to argue with him. I don’t want to admit it to him or myself that I feel much safer sleeping in his room than in mine even if one of the Wolves is guarding my door.

“She can stay with me,” Cruz says, and I look back to see him reach out a hand to help Delaney up off the stairs and Declan pinch the bridge of his nose again.

Sebastian holds my hand as we walk in silence. I expect him to be rough, dragging me behind him like the toy I am, but he doesn’t. He walks slowly, his thumb rubbing absently over the top of my hand. My stomach dips at the gesture because I hadn’t realized that something so small could warm my whole body. When we reach the fraternity house, I spin around to face him before he can open the heavy wooden door. “Are you going to flip as soon as we’re in your room alone?” I’m hoping my playful tone is enough to soften him. I know he’s mad at me for putting myself in danger, but I don’t think I can handle a knock down drag out fight with him tonight.

He pulls me to him and slips me between himself and the door. He dips his head to press his forehead against mine and says softly, “I’m tired of fighting with you, Carrington. So fucking tired. Let’s just call a truce for tonight.”

“Done,” I say softly,

He doesn’t say anything else, but instead opens the door with one hand and cups my side with his other, backing me into the room and shutting the door behind him. He doesn’t turn the light on, but I hear the lock click. The house feels empty, but I’m sure there are some people already in their rooms sleeping. I let Sebastian guide me up the marble staircase and to his room. He fumbles a little getting his door unlocked and he doesn’t say a word to me as he opens the door and flicks the light on.

“What the fuck, Sebastian?” I exclaim when I see that it appears that all of my stuff except for my furniture has been moved from my room and is neatly stacked in front of his large closet.

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SEBASTIAN

I wake up to Carrington touching my face, and when I crack open an eye to look down at her, she smiles and cuddles closer in her sleep. She was irate when she realized that I had twenty freshman Kappa Alphas move her stuff over to my room after she left. I think she knew it was a lost cause to argue with me, and eventually climbed on her side of the bed and passed out. I lasted probably a half hour of listening to her breathe, until I finally gave in and pulled her over to my side of the bed. It's amazing to me how well I sleep when she's next to me, but I'll never admit that to her. I reach up to rub my fingers through her dark hair and then gently tug her up for a kiss. She moans against my lips in her sleep, and I have to fight the urge to roll her on her back and climb on top of her. I told myself I was going to stay away from her, and here I am acting like a lovesick puppy.

She settles back against me with her head on my chest, and I lie there holding her trying to think if there has ever been a moment in time when I felt this calm, or this satisfied. I was attracted to Carrington the moment I saw her, after all, she's fucking gorgeous. But that wasn't what made me crave her. She's strong enough to call me on my bullshit, but soft enough to calm me down when I'm close to snapping. She's smart, too smart to put up with me. I'd heard that from Blaine too many times to count. My lip twitches at the thought, he really hated the fact that she wanted me as much as she did, but I don't smile. Instead, I press a kiss into Carrington's hair and she sighs against my skin. Her hand slides down my chest to my stomach then back up to rest over my heart.

I hear my phone go off, but I don't have any inclination to reach over to the night table and answer it. I'd like to stay wrapped with her like this all day, but after the third phone call she wakes up and pushes herself into a sitting position, looking around sleepily to see where the noise is coming from. As she moves over me to retrieve the phone, I grab her hips, allowing her to snatch the phone but keeping her in place, sitting right on top of my dick.

"Might be trouble or something," she says, her voice sexy as fuck from sleep. She is trying to hand me the still ringing phone, but I'm more interested in the view in front of me. She rocks her hips over my dick as my hands slide up her stomach and over her breasts. She's only in panties and one of my t-shirts, and that's two articles of clothing too much.

"I don't give a shit. Check it if you want." I rock her against me, and the phone stops ringing, but I hear the alert from a text message.

"Declan," she says, and I can hear the concern in her voice.

"What does it say?" I squeeze her breasts and pinch her nipples through the thin fabric of the shirt, but sit up, because I've already discerned that this morning isn't going to turn out the way I want it to.

She flips the phone around and I begrudgingly read it.

**Open your door and let me in, but don't say anything.
Now.**

Declan isn't one to exaggerate, so I already know I'm not going to like whatever bullshit has gone down since last night. I instantly bristle at the thought.

"Does he ever sleep? He's up all hours of the night and still awake before anyone else." Carrington sighs, knowing whatever we're about to be hit with isn't going to be good.

I swat her on the ass hard enough to leave a red handprint on her ass cheek as we get out of bed. "Get some clothes on. I don't want him seeing you like that," I tell her as I grab a pair

of sweatpants, pulling them on as I head to the door. I double check to make sure she has pants on before I let Declan in.

He holds a finger up, reminding me to be quiet and walks over to my nightstand and flips on my radio, filling the room with some awful pop music.

“What are you doing?”

He walks back over to me, holding up a small, black device in his hand. “I found this in my room this morning. They’re all over the house. You’ve gotta have some in here too,” he whispers, putting the device in my hand.

“What the fuck is this?” I barely breathe out the words, looking around my room to see if anything sticks out. If someone has my room bugged, then they heard the night Carrington and I almost had sex. My blood boils at the thought of anyone listening to the intimate moments between us. The sounds she makes are for me, and no one else.

“I’m telling you, this is bigger than Talon. Where the fuck would they get all of these?” He keeps his tone hushed as he points to the wooden frame encasing my mattress and box spring. I bend down and hidden in the frame is the exact replica of what Declan is holding. I rip the device off and toss it to Declan.

“This could be how Talon knew we were off campus the other day,” Carrington says as Declan and I flip my mattress off the box spring looking for more. Declan and I both signal for her to be quiet. Even with the music on, I’m not sure what one of those mics can pick up. I nudge her into the hallway, and I don’t need to look behind me to know Declan is following.

He takes the initiative to check up and down the hall, and I pull her in, tucking her under against my side.

“Who do you think is helping Talon, and why? None of it is adding up to me. He and Sebastian don’t like each other, but would he really go through all this trouble?” she asks, but she doesn’t seem panicked. I admire that about her.

“If I were to bet,” Declan says, nodding and then looking at me. “We need to meet somewhere we can talk openly.”

“Carrington’s dorm is out of the question because clearly someone has free access to that.” I let my fingers play with the ends of her hair that dust the small of her back as she moves her neck.

“The graveyard,” Carrington decides for us, and I look down at her and give her a nod, letting her know I agree.



Despite standing in the middle of the graveyard for several hours and talking about the few details until things made even less sense, we’re no further than we were when we first suspected there was foul play regarding Blaine’s death. Carrington didn’t fight me about staying in my room, but really there isn’t much she could do since I raided her entire dorm room. I also think that she’s scared and staying with me, no matter how much she thinks I hate her, is a better alternative than being alone.

The next morning, I wake up, expecting to feel the weight of Carrington curled against me, but the curve of her ass isn’t against my dick like it has been the past few mornings. I reach my arm out and feel nothing but the cold silk of my sheets. Immediately, I’m up and already pulling on a pair of sweats as I scan the room. Panic grips me when I realize she’s not anywhere around, and her shoes are still by the foot of the bed where she kicked them off.

Blaine’s birthday is today, so I’m already in a fucking fantastic mood. Whoever is tormenting Carrington has to know what today is, and it’s too much of a coincidence that she’s missing from my bed. I groan as I lock the door behind me because this is all my own fault. I let my guard down, I allowed myself to sleep, knowing all this shit was going on. I let the fact that having her with me eases my pain just a little. Every time I let her in, something bad happens. Carrington wouldn’t wander off on her own, especially after what

happened in the graveyard the other night. So I'm certain something's happened to her. She's hiding something to protect Blaine and she'd rather die than let him down. The fact that he's still her priority even in death, twists in my gut. She wouldn't wander around the fraternity house knowing that Talon is just down the hall. She didn't want me to confront him at the fountain, and despite the rage running through me at someone trying to intimidate her, I know she's right.

At some point things will get bad enough that someone else is going to get hurt or die, and I know that Woodsboro will cover it up, especially with Talon being so involved. We've set something in motion when we started digging around in Blaine's death and I'd be willing to bet my entire fucking life that they'll hurt Carrington as retribution if any of us gets in their way. I was so devastated by Blaine's death and too obsessed with Carrington, to question why Talon is so mixed up with all of this. He was never close to my brother, and he certainly didn't hate him. Talon and I have always butted heads because I'm the fucking villain everyone wants me to be, and he's the pussy who wants to be the villain, but doesn't have enough balls to do anything but run his fucking mouth and kiss ass.

I bound down the stairs barefoot and shirtless, and with the mindset that I'm going to kill whoever has her. I don't care if they've hurt her physically. When I find who has touched what is mine, it's over. The Wolves are going to spend Blaine's birthday digging a six-foot hole in the cemetery, because the motherfucker is already as good as dead. It's fucking cold, and my stomach twists with every step. Something's about to happen, it's like I can feel her anxiety in my bones. I check out the front door of the fraternity house, but I already know she's not out there with no shoes or coat. *Fuck*. Livingroom, dining room, hallway, no sign of anyone, which isn't abnormal this early in the morning. Until I reach the kitchen and I see the asshole I'm going to take outside and stomp his skull in and watch as his blood drains from his body.

Declan and Carrington are huddled together at the counter, she's looking up at him with worried eyes and his fucking hand is on her shoulder. He's touching her, and all I see is red.

Mine. She's MINE. I'm going to break every finger that has touched her and I'm going to make her watch while he screams and begs for a moment of mercy. Their conspiratorial whispers ring in my ears and a new wave of rage rips through me. I've been demanding answers from her since the day Blaine died and she's freely speaking to him, clearly telling him things she wants no one else to hear. Her whispers, her screams, her every thought is meant to be for me and me only.

I've been so focused on keeping other men away from Carrington, too obsessed with her relationship with my brother, raging over the thought of her with anyone other than me, that I never considered it would be someone in my inner circle who would betray me. I should expect that from her. I know it's my own fucked up mind that lets me fall into the fantasy that she's sincere when she touches me, the way she looks at me when she says she wants me as much as I want her. I know she's nothing but a dirty little liar that had my brother under the same spell. Hate fills my veins and I realize that the only thing I'm going to enjoy more than making her cry with my words is going to be making her cry when I shove my cock deep inside her. I need to fuck her out of my system, and finally burst the little fantasy that she's been telling the truth about Blaine and the other guys I've questioned her about, that she's denied fucking. I study her profile for a moment, the gentle slope of her small nose, her long dark lashes and the freckles on her cheeks. Such a pretty fucking liar.

“Were you sucking his dick the night Blaine died? Is that why my brother was alone down at the cliffs? Did you ditch him for this piece of shit?” I snap, and they jump apart like fucking teenagers who just got caught fucking in their parents' car. “Don't be shy. Touch him. Show me what kind of slut you really are. When are you going to just give up the act and embrace what everyone says about you? Are you fucking my other friends too? Wilder? Nathaniel? Cruz? Do you suck one of their dicks while the other two fill your holes with come?” The visual I'm creating in my mind is enough to snap the last strand of control I've been trying to hang onto for the longest time. I advance on them and I'm not sure what I expect them

to do, but Carrington just stares at me with hurt swirling in her green eyes. She doesn't deny anything I've said, she doesn't cry, or get angry. It's like I can see her crawling inside of herself and putting up walls to try and block out the things I'm saying to her.

Declan doesn't respond but I don't expect him to, the bastard likes to pretend he's better than everyone, but here he is, just like the rest of us, obsessed with Carrington Jane. He's straightened to full height and is casually rolling the sleeves of his white button down like he's unbothered. He clearly thinks I won't beat the shit out of him because we're supposed to be close, trust each other with everything, but he's about to be fucking surprised.

Carrington's eyebrows knit together, and the look of absolute pain is etched in her features. "Sebastian, someone left a..."

"What is it you're telling him that you can't tell me?" I demand, grabbing a bottle of wine that someone has sitting on the center island countertop. I smash it and glass flies all around us and I only feel minimal satisfaction when I see the red liquid splatter everywhere. "Why the fuck would you wander off without waking me up? Do you know what I thought? I thought someone got you! I thought I was going to find you dead. I thought I was going to have to bury you just like Blaine," I'm screaming now, and I can feel the tension in my neck. I'm so fucking angry and also relieved she's okay that I can't handle the emotions exploding out of me. I step toward her and Declan steps in between us, shielding her from my line of vision. I could snap him in half with my bare hands for thinking he has the right to protect her from me.

"I'm going to give you a pass because of what today is, and the fact that she makes you psychotic by just breathing." He sounds like he's in a debate, instead of a fist fight. I absolutely lose my shit. She's mine to protect, not his. "Go calm down and we'll explain everything, it's not what you think, Sebastian."

I drop the jagged bottle to the floor and grab him by the collar of his shirt and throw him into the counter, barely

missing Carrington. She steps back, holding her hands over her face and cries out my name. She calls *my name, not his. MINE.*

“Did you fuck her?” I grit the words out as he gets to his feet. I advance on him again, not waiting for an answer before I punch him in the jaw. I bust his lip, but he doesn’t fall like I think he will. I’m not being accurate with my strikes because I’m too angry to focus. “Answer me!”

“When she finally decides she’s had enough of your shit, you’re going to have no one to blame but yourself,” Declan says, and his tone is aloof and calm, and he doesn’t bother to stop the blood dripping from his lip. But I know him better than anyone, I thought we were closer than I was to my own brother, and he’s absolutely seething on the inside. Just like he knows using that snotty tone with me will only make me rage harder. I’m jealous when it comes to Carrington, even if it’s just someone looking at her with an appreciative glance, but seeing her confide in someone else? That shit ripped my heart out of my chest while it was still beating and chopped it up into tiny pieces.

“Sebastian, stop it! I told Declan not to wake you because it’s Blaine’s birthday and you were sleeping soundly.” She advances on me, seemingly unafraid of my temper or my size. She pushes me back, and I let her. I let her guide me backward until my back is against a wall. My eyes are locked on her and I’ve never experienced something like this with another person. She has me fucking mesmerized, and I hate that she has this much control over me. “Someone left pictures of Blaine on the cliffs stabbed to the door and a cake that said happy birthday.” She chokes on her words, and I realize that the tears pooling in her eyes are over the loss of Blaine. Even when she’s wrecked, sad beyond repair, she’s fucking gorgeous.

“Why did you come down here with him?” I glare down at her, and then look over at Declan when he speaks for her.

“CJ and I figured out Blaine’s secret and why Talon has such a fucking hard-on for ruining our lives.” My eyes snap to his when he says her name, and she must feel me tense up

because she presses me back, probably afraid I'm going to pick up what's left of that bottle and slit his throat. He's got a cloth up to his lip catching the blood, and the sight is satisfying. "All I'm going to say is, you better learn very quickly how to grovel, because you're going to be on your knees for a long time. The shit you've done and said to her is ridiculous, and we've just stood by blindly letting you do it because it was easier to believe everything we heard about her than that she was trying to protect you. Not Blaine, not herself, but you."

I grip Carrington by the face and my hands are shaking as I tilt her head up to look at me. "Tell me."

"Blaine didn't want you to know. And you'll only get yourself into more trouble if you do find out." She blinks through tears, and doesn't show any fear, but I know she has to be afraid. I'm irate and I have her by the jaw, immobilizing her, but I've got enough sense to be careful not to put too much pressure. "And I'm just the whore that your friends take turns using as a fuck toy, right? That's all I'll ever be in your mind, so maybe that's what I need to become." She reaches up and slaps me hard across the face, and I don't react. The sting of her palm against my cheek feels good in a fucked-up way. I want her to do it again. I want her to fight me. I want to get her out of my fucking head.

"CJ, you should go get some of your things and I'll take you over to Delaney's and see if you can hang out with her for the day until we get some of this shit figured out," Declan says, rubbing an agitated hand through his messy, curly hair. I let go of her face but wrap my fingers around her wrist gently to keep her in place against me.

"Say her name again and I'll fucking kill you right here," I snap at him, and he doesn't respond, but he doesn't leave either. Carrington yanks away from me and I see my anger and rage mirrored in her eyes. We match. We're hurt. We're broken. And we belong together even if we both hate the idea.

"Jesus, it's four in the fucking morning. Why are you yelling?" Delaney asks as she follows Cruz into the room. She's wearing one of his shirts and her long blonde hair is

piled haphazardly on top of her head in a messy bun. I've never seen her without all the makeup and fancy clothes, it's almost shocking how much younger she looks this way.

"Sebastian thinks I'm sleeping with all of the Wolves and probably the rest of the fraternity," Carrington scoffs through her tears.

"You're joking." Nathaniel laughs, clearly hearing what she said as he shuffles into the kitchen. I eye him suspiciously as he sidles up to Delaney like she didn't just show up a minute ago with sex hair with a shirtless Cruz. He sobers when both Declan and I pin him with a look. "I know. I know. Not my monkeys or my circus, but that's the dumbest shit I've ever heard."

"Sebastian is good at leaping to conclusions," Delaney rolls her eyes and then gives Carrington a sympathetic smile.

"Would you walk me back to my dorm?" Carrington asks Cruz, but I reach out, pulling her over to me. "Don't fucking touch me again, Sebastian." She doesn't raise her voice, but her tone is final.

For once, I comply, letting her out of my grasp even though this isn't over between us.

"Of course, we can do that." Delaney answers for Cruz and then looks at Nathaniel expectantly. "You too, come on, let's go."

"We need to talk," I say to Carrington, but she shakes her head.

"I think you've said enough, Sebastian." She sounds broken, and I know I've finally done it. I jinxed myself last night thinking that there was nothing I could do or say to push her away. All I can do is watch as Delaney guides her out of the kitchen and into the hall.

Cruz gives me a confused shrug before following them, and when I hear the front door close, I start pacing. I've got enough rage inside me right now to burn Woodsboro to the ground.

“You don’t deserve her,” Declan says as he walks by me, pausing to hear my response before heading down the hall and up to his room.

“I know, that’s been the fucking problem since the day I met her.”



“What did you do? Why are they after your *sweet girl*?” The name he had for her feels heavy on my tongue. I hated when he called her that. She’s not some naive little girl who needed him to take her under his wing. She’s strong, capable, and that’s why arguing with her is addictive, she gives just as good as she gets. I pace back and forth a few times, my thoughts racing with all the things I wish I could say to my brother. “You know I used to look up to you. You were perfect, the perfect son our father could be proud of no matter what. You could control your temper, always had the right thing to say in any situation, and you treated Carrington like she was some porcelain doll that you were afraid my dirty hands would ruin.” I laugh humorlessly, flicking the ash from the cigarette I swiped from Cruz on my way out to the graveyard.

“But I don’t want to be anything like you anymore. You’re the one who put a target on her back to protect yourself, God damn it!” I scream the words he’ll never hear and slam my fist down on Blaine’s gravestone. “You didn’t know her like I do. You don’t know what she needs. You wanted her to be perfect like you, but she’s not. She’s broken just like me,” I whisper, tears filling my eyes as I run my fingers along the cold stone. It’s extravagant, says some bullshit about him being a loving son and brother and our last name is fucking huge and embossed with gold flakes so it shimmers in the moonlight. I take a drag of the cigarette I don’t even want, but hope will ease the panic attack I’m trying to come down from.

I haven’t seen Carrington for an entire week, and I haven’t slept more than an hour at a time since the day she stormed out of the fraternity house. She’s as stubborn as I am, which means she’s not going to tell me what she knows. She’ll let me break

her down into nothing, humiliate her, treat her like garbage before she betrays Blaine. Declan seems to think she's trying to protect me somehow, which makes no sense. I didn't have anything to do with whatever she's hiding, and why would she protect me? She wants me because I'm the only one who can make her feel good. I'm the only one who knows how she likes to be touched. I'm the only one she craves. But she hates who I am and how I am. We were never supposed to be endgame because she'll end up with someone like Blaine or Jesse or Declan. As soon as the thought rolls through my mind, I have a physical reaction. It feels like someone has stabbed a dagger through the center of my chest and it burns as if it's being slowly turned. She will spend the rest of her life with a good man who treats her well in public and bores her to tears in bed. That will be her own private hell. My eternal damnation will be the same. I'll always imagine her in some extravagant house with her rich husband lying on top of her, gently making love to her while she closes her eyes wishing it was me. She will know no pleasure, and I will know no peace. I let out a frustrated yell, wishing I could rip this whole cemetery apart as I picture her smiling at the faceless man I've invented. I'm insane. My obsession with Carrington has driven me to pure, unequivocal insanity.

“Bash, you're gonna be really pissed off, and I'm really not in the mood to get punched in the head or buried alive or whatever else you think about doing to people who touch Carrington.” I jerk my head up when I see Wilder. He's a few rows over with Carrington at his side. He's touching her, but he's only holding her by her upper arm, so I decide to let him live and finish whatever bullshit he's about to tell me. “I have to hold onto her cause she'll run away if I don't.”

Carrington snorts in disbelief before snapping, “You're all psychotic. Every single one of you.” Wilder gives her a smile because he's too dense to realize she's not teasing him.

“Cruz and Nathaniel think you're gonna implode if you don't fuck her or apologize so she'll fall in love with you. Because even guys like you want to be loved, right? I don't know, they're drunk and I think they were just repeating stuff Delaney told them.” He shakes his head before a confused

expression washes over his face and I realize he's lost the plot of why he's even here when he asks, "Are they both fucking her? Because it seems that way...but then she's always annoyed and mean to them so I don't really--"

"Go home," I cut him off because if I had a shovel right now, I'd make him dig his own grave for giving me a fucking headache.

"Gladly. Tell your guard dog to let me go," Carrington jerks her arm, but Wilder just uses it as an opportunity to spin her in a circle and right back next to him.

"You've gotta stay. You're the chosen one. With a magical pussy, if you will." He shrugs innocently when Carrington cuts her eyes up at him, but doesn't say another word. She's seething with anger, and I'm guessing that's more directed at me than the overgrown golden retriever who's holding her captive. He looks over at me, and I must look murderous because he lets go of her arm and gently shoves her toward me like he's tossing raw meat inside the lion's den. He turns to walk away, but calls up to the sky, "Come on out, ghosties. Y'all are about to get a show."

"He's ridiculous and I hope he falls in a ditch on his way home," Carrington mutters more to herself than to me. I don't move toward her because I'm still shaking from the panic attack. I still have the innate urge to control and dominate her in every way, and because she won't meet my gaze, that feeling amplifies tenfold.

I place my hands on Blaine's headstone and let out a tortured groan. I grip and pull back, rock forward and then back again as hard as I can, fully prepared to rip it right out of the ground in sheer frustration. Carrington calls my name, but I don't stop. I have so much anger and hate swirling around inside me like my own personal inferno ready to eat me alive. Nothing helps. Nothing makes it better except for her, and even then, I can't have her the way I want her. I need to break her completely. Make her hate me so much that she'll never give me another chance. The game will be over. It will finally be done.

I only stop when I feel Carrington's hands on my back. I pause, leaning on the headstone with my full weight braced on my extended arms. "Sebastian, please stop." The concern in her voice makes my chest burn and the feel of her hand sliding up the tense muscles of my back makes my dick rock hard.

"Why did you come here?" I grit out the words but continue before she can answer me. "We both know you wouldn't be here unless you wanted to be. Wilder is easily distracted."

Carrington is quiet for an agonizing moment and then she says in a strong voice, "Because you needed me to."

"Shit," I push away from the gravestone and pull her to me so tightly that I think I might break her in half. I groan against her neck, planting kisses there as I roughly fumble to get her coat off. "I'm going to fuck you so hard, so deep, and so well that you will never find pleasure with anyone else," I promise her darkly. When her coat is gone, I realize that she's wearing a black long-sleeved dress with a white collar. One of her good girl dresses that Woodsboro would approve of, but I know what kind of lingerie she wears beneath this facade. I cup her face gently and lean down to kiss her, but she puts her hands on my chest, trying to stop me.

"Don't be gentle with me, Sebastian. I need you to be yourself. You don't want sweet kisses and soft touches. You want to punish me, and that's what I came here for." Her words are like a bucket of ice being poured over my head. She doesn't want me to be gentle with her because she can get that from good men, the men that deserve more than just her body. The men she's been fucking while she lies to me. She backs away from me but grabs my hand trying to lead me toward one of the large mausoleums that hold the bodies of important Woodsboro's figures. I grab her by the arm so hard she yelps out in pain as I yank her toward me.

"Not so fast, *sweet girl*," I growl into her ear. "I'm in charge here." I shove her back over toward Blaine's headstone and push her up so the upper half of her body is lying across the top of it.

“Don’t call me that! Let me go.” She struggles, but I keep my palm on her back, holding her in place. I lift her dress and the sight of her ass encased in white lace panties is enough to make my dick jerk against the front of my jeans. I feel her tense up more than she already was, and I know realization has hit her of what she’s arched over. “Sebastian, this isn’t funny. Even you aren’t this cruel.” I can hear the tears threatening by the way she chokes on her words and that brings me a little satisfaction. Clearly she’s underestimated just how unhinged I really am.

I slap her ass cheek hard and then the other side before I rub my fingers over her pussy. I can feel how wet she is even through the soft fabric of these little panties she’s clearly worn for my benefit. “I thought you came here to fuck a monster, baby? Isn’t that what you’re looking for? A way to punish yourself for all the fucked-up shit you feel guilty for. Does being my whore make you feel better, Carrington?” I slap her ass again and then the backs of her thighs before I wedge my leg between them. She’s at the perfect height for me to ram my cock inside her so deep the devil himself will hear her screams.

She tries to push herself up, wiggle her hips to gain some traction, but I’m relentless. I hold her down as I unbutton my jeans and tug my boxers down enough to let my dick spring free. I’m so hard that it’s painful. I don’t want foreplay, I don’t want enough time to second guess what I’m doing. I just want the sheer ecstasy of being balls deep inside my stepsister as I hate-fuck her. “Sebastian, I’ll do anything you want, just please not here.” She sounds broken, not sad or angry like before. She sounds devastated and I wish my chest didn’t constrict at the sound of her voice. I shake away the thought.

“We need this, both of us. You need me to ruin you, break down every wall until there’s nothing but the truth,” I tell her, ripping her panties down her legs in one swift pull. She cries out, and I don’t know if I’ve hurt her or if she’s anticipating what’s to come. “And I need to make you hate me so much that you’ll never let me near you again.”

She reaches back, trying to push my hips away as I rub my cock along her slit. She's so wet, and I know that must be humiliating her because she wants so badly to pretend that she doesn't want this right now. I groan when the head of my cock breaches her opening. I grab her wrists in one of my hands and secure them on her lower back as I push my cock inside her. I knew she would be tight, but I thought for sure with how wet she is I'd be able to slide right in. I've never felt resistance like this, and I've fucked enough girls trying to get Carrington out of my mind, that I'd know that this isn't normal.

"My God, you're tight," I gasp out the words as she struggles in my hold. I push a little further inside her and I feel her flinch like she's in pain. Her pussy contracts around the tip of my cock and pleasure shoots through my whole body. I let go of her wrists and let my fingers bite into the globes of her ass. I spread her apart so I can look at her sweet cunt gripping my dick.

"Fuck you," she bites out. "You've never fucked a virgin before and it shows," she snaps. That's my girl. There's that attitude I love so much. And still a filthy little liar. Virgins don't fuck their stepbrothers under the moonlight in a graveyard. I burn the image in front of me in my mind and then I lose the tiny bit of control I'd be harnessing. She lets out a gut-wrenching cry when I slam all the way inside her in one swift stroke. I feel something inside her stretch and tear as I break through, bottoming out inside her.

She's so fucking tight, and the urge to pull all the way out and then slam back inside her is almost unbearable. I still my whole body when I feel what's just happened. I'm all the way inside her, and I can't help pressing my hips forward. It's not even possible to go any deeper, but feeling her clench around me, makes me want to try. I lean over her, brushing her hair to the side to uncover her face. Her cheek is tear stained and her bottom lip is bloody from where she sank her teeth into it.

"Go ahead, Sebastian. Pull your dick out and look at my blood all over it. Isn't that what you wanted to see? Proof that I'm not the liar you like to pretend I am." She's livid, she finally hates me the way I need her to, but her words only

make my cock jerk with excitement inside of her. I do what she suggested and slowly slide out of her, my eyes rolling back at the pleasure of sliding through her slick folds.

“My God,” my words are practically a growl when I see the blood mixed with the wetness from her pussy coating my entire length. I press my cock back at her tight hole and this time when I feel her tense up, I lean my upper body over hers, speaking directly in her ear. “You’re mine now. No matter who has you after this, my dick is the only one you’ll ever feel.” I reach under the front of her thighs and move my fingers to her clit, rubbing circles as I ease my cock inside her more gently this time. I need to make her come with my fingers because nothing I do inside of her is going to ease the pain of how I ripped her apart. I’m not going to last long, and I want to make sure she remembers some sort of pleasure when she thinks back on this night and how much she hates her cruel unlovable stepbrother.

Her legs shake under my ministrations and I know that despite her anger, she’s close to coming for me. “Has anyone else ever made you come?” I demand.

“You’ll just call me a liar, so why should I –oh!” She cries out when I change the direction of my fingertips, rubbing directly on her clit as I slide my length all the way inside her, filling her, stretching her, leaving my mark on her.

“Tell me.” I want to rip her dress off, flip her over on her back and cover her body with mine so that I can feel her naked beneath me as I pound into her, our skin slapping together as she comes all over my cock. There isn’t time for that, and this isn’t the place, the urge to fill her with come and watch it drip down her silky thighs is overwhelming me.

“No one has ever touched me except for you, Sebastian. I won’t say it again.” She cries out when I grip her hair and start thrusting into her. My other hand works on her clit and it’s only moments before she’s falling apart and I feel her coming all around my cock.

“You will say it whenever I want you to,” I grit out the words.

“You will never touch me again.” Her words are broken, shaky from the orgasm that just wrecked her, and they’re final. They spur me on, urging me to make this time everything I need it to be, because there will be no more chances with Carrington Jane. A familiar burning rises in my stomach and I feel my cock start to pulse inside her.

“Are you on birth control?” I whisper against her ear, and the sound of my hips slapping against her ass is the most erotic sound I’ve ever heard. She stiffens, trying to push up, but I shove the weight of my chest on her, pressing her against the stone. I love this feeling, trapping her, keeping her as my most prized toy that no one else will ever play with.

“You have to pull out, Sebastian.” Her voice is nothing but panic, and I thrive off of it, slamming inside her harder.

“I will fill you with my come, and you will take it,” I growl, thrusting inside her two more times. “Tell me, Carrington. Tell me to come inside your sweet little cunt.” I rub her clit again, bottoming out three more times and groaning as I feel her walls grip me like a vice as she comes again, and I can’t hold on any longer.

“Come. Come inside me,” she pants out the words, surprising me. That’s all it takes. I bury my face in the nape of her neck as my cock jerks harder than I think it ever has and I feel the streams of my come jetting inside her until she’s full. I pull all the way out and then thrust back inside two more times, not ready for it to be over. The urge to push my come deeper inside her is so intense that I push back in before I collapse on top of her.

I press my lips to the exposed skin of her neck, even though I know I shouldn’t allow myself that pleasure. It’s only minutes before she goes from boneless and sated to rigid under my body. I’m still inside her and her pussy is still pulsing from the orgasms, milking my dick. I’ve never stayed inside someone after I’ve finished before, but I can’t bring myself to pull out of her. She feels too good, and I’m not ready for what comes next.

But Carrington Jane is always ready for a fight with me.

I expect her usual sarcastic comments meant to hide her feelings and get me riled up, but they don't come. She whispers softly, but not meekly, "I'd like to leave now."

This is what was meant to happen. I was going to break her until she had no fight left in her, until she just disappeared from my mind. But anger courses through my entire body and it's only directed at myself this time. I don't want her to go. I don't want to stop touching her. She's been waiting for me all this time and no matter how many times I called her a liar, a slut, and accused her of unthinkable shit. She still wanted me.

Only me.

"Why didn't you want me to kiss you?" I know the answer, but I need to hear her say it. I need her to jerk the proverbial knife in my chest and twist it a little harder.

She breathes in deeply and I can feel her heartbeat, even through our clothes thrumming against my chest. "Because I don't want to fall in love with you, Sebastian. And it's hard not to when you look at me like I'm the only valuable thing you've ever had." She pushes up, and I let her this time because I'm stunned by her words. I curse under my breath when I slide out of her, and she rights herself. "I know it's fake, just a game you play with me. Sometimes I play back, saying things I know you need to hear to get your anger out. But sometimes it feels real." She pauses to pull her panties up before she adds, "You're a good actor too. Because when you kiss me and look at me the way you're looking at me right now, it feels real."

I tuck myself back inside my pants and fasten them and I move toward her, but she holds her hand up to stop me. "We called a truce before. But I don't want to play anymore. You need to find a new toy because it's not me."

I advance on her anyway because I feel like I'm drowning, but she screams, "Sebastian, stop it! I can't take anymore. You got what you wanted, I'm tapping out. You broke me. You all by yourself. Not Blaine's death, not whoever is threatening to kill me over a secret that isn't even mine to keep. You single handedly did it on your own all because you're the only person

I truly give a fuck about now.” She breathes in roughly several times, and I’ve come to realize that’s what she does to keep herself from crying. A sad smile, not one meant to antagonize me spreads across her blood smeared lips. I want to lick the wound she inflicted when she bit her lip as I was fucking her. I want to spend hours kissing and touching her body until I can work her up enough to take my cock again. I’m not finished with her, but she’s finished with me. “I guess you could say I’m the one who ruined myself.” She turns on her heel and when she hears my boots thud on the ground behind her she turns and looks over her shoulder. “Don’t chase me this time,” she says before she takes off running.

I watch her as she disappears behind the tall monuments and mausoleums speckled around the graveyard. Rage envelopes my whole body as I stalk over to Blaine’s grave. I grab onto it and fall to my knees, screaming in agony at the loss of something I didn’t even know I had. Minutes pass and I pull myself to my feet, ready to go after her. I don’t give a fuck if I have to tie her to my bed until she accepts my apology. I don’t care if she never tells me any of the secrets she vowed to keep for my brother. All I care about is that Carrington Jane is mine, and I will do whatever I have to do to make her realize that. She all but admitted she was falling in love with me, and I hadn’t expected that or realized how much I wanted to hear her say those words until tonight.

“Sebastian!” I hear her scream my name. “Help! Oh my-” her words are cut off and all I can discern is her muffled scream. I take off running toward the sound, but it’s an archaic cemetery and everything echoes.

“Carrington!” I scream her name, my voice cracking from the sheer violence in my tone. I keep running until I see smoke coming from the most extravagant mausoleum right next to the entrance of the graveyard that holds the body of Talon’s great-great grandfather.

I hear her screaming from inside and look around for something to break the door down with. I hear a rustling noise and see a hooded figure running across the cemetery holding a flashlight in one of their hands just like the night they

approached Carrington after my fight. I don't know how they got the crypt open to trap her inside, but it's jammed so tightly together that not even kicking or ramming into it with my shoulder will make it budge.

"Sebastian, run! Please. He's out there," she screams through a sputtering cough. "He has a knife. He'll kill you!"

"I don't give a fuck. Get away from the door, baby. I'm going to break the lock." I run over to a heavy cross grave marker that I know will be easy to rip out of the ground with the adrenaline that is coursing through my body right now. "Did you hear me?" I call when I get back up to the door. I know that when I break the lock off, the door will swing back and if she's behind it, the sheer force could kill her.

There's no answer and my gut twists. "Stay with me, Carrington Jane," I plead and all I can do is lift the cross over my head and bang it down on the lock repeatedly. Flames lick at my feet as they spread from under the door and I realize that the floor is covered in gasoline. I don't waver, instead, I bring my foot up to kick the lock as hard as I can. Because I won't leave her.

If we burn, we burn together.

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I kind of believe in fate. It just works in really fucked up ways sometimes.

— DENISE FLEMING, CAN'T HARDLY WAIT

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CARRINGTON

My vision is blurring, and I've stopped panicking. Smoke fills the mausoleum I'm locked inside and even though I've backed all the way in the corner, the flames are licking at me. My breathing is shallow, and my eyelids feel so heavy. I hear Sebastian screaming for me to just hold on. To hold on for him. The sound of my stepbrother beating on the door isn't enough to keep my eyes from fluttering shut. I hear muffled voices, and despite the fact that I can't seem to open my eyes, panic fills my chest once again. I don't know who grabbed me and threw me in here, and I'm so afraid that they've come back for Sebastian.

"Get out of my fucking way!" Sebastian bellows.

"Jesus, Bash! We're trying to help," I hear Wilder yell as the door flies open and slams against the wall. I cough, gasping for breath and I'm suddenly so tired and sag against the stone wall. I don't know why Wilder came back, but I'm grateful he did.

"Shit, shit, shit," Sebastian hisses as he scoops me up. He cradles the back of my head and holds my face against his chest. His swift movements are jarring, but it's still not enough to help me snap out of this haze. I can hear and feel everything going on, but I can't speak or manage to get my eyes to open.

"Your leg!" Nathaniel exclaims and I hear a scuffle. "Shit, it burned through your pants. Do you even fucking feel that?"

"Get the fuck off of me," Sebastian snaps ignoring his question and keeps walking. "It's shallow, but she's still

breathing,” he says roughly, and I can hear the unabashed panic that he’s feeling. Sebastian doesn’t panic. He rages, and that tells me all I need to know right there. I’m in big trouble, and he knows it.

“I’ve got you. If you just hang on for me, I’ll make up for every fucking thing I’ve ever done to you. I’ll grovel just like Declan said I would. I don’t even know what that means, but I’ll do it for you.” Sebastian’s breathing is so labored that his whispers are barely audible as he presses his mouth against the side of my head. “Stay with me, baby. I’ve got a lot of shit to say to you.” He squeezes me to his chest when his voice strains and cracks on the words, “Please don’t leave me, Carrington Jane.”

I’m fighting to open my eyes. I want to tell him that it’s okay, that it’ll all be okay, but nothing happens. His voice sounds far away for a moment, and then all I hear is the thumping of his heart before I slip into unconsciousness.



Memories of the last few days flash in my mind, and I’m not sure what was real and what was a dream. I remember Sebastian whispering, telling me he was sorry for everything he’s done to hurt me. That definitely has to be a dream because I think he’d rather die than utter those words to me unless it’s part of one of his games. It feels like it’s been a decade since I’ve been able to open my eyes, and when I’m finally able to, the bright light of the room nearly blinds me. I look around the room and I realize that the light is coming in through the windows. No one is around, and I look down at my arms that are covered in cotton bandages. I try to lift my arms, but they feel so heavy, and my entire body hurts like I’ve been dragged by a truck. I look around again and try to discern where I am. The stone walls are undisputable; I’m still at Woodsboro. I hear the faint noise of what sounds like a woman yelling, presumably down the corridor. I don’t know how much time has passed, and the last thing I remember before blacking out is smoke burning my eyes and filling my lungs. A chill runs

through my body when the memory of someone grabbing me pops into my head. Someone familiar. I know the person who threw me in the gasoline covered crypt and flicked a lit match at me before pulling the heavy door shut. It's like the person's identity is right on the tip of my tongue, like I want to say their name, but the words won't come. I try to think back further and my stomach twists when I remember Sebastian fucking me on Blaine's tombstone. That explains the ache between my thighs. My memory is scrambled, but I remember running away from him and finally feeling like I could stop silently pining after him.

My eyes flash to the open door when the sound of two women arguing is clearer. I try to sit up in the bed, but everything hurts so I end up flopping back against the elevated pillows.

"I've told you that she is not in any position to be entertaining visitors," a woman I assume is a nurse scolds Delaney as she appears in the doorway. Her long blonde hair is curled, framing her face in a way that looks like it took hours to perfect. Her eyes are lined in black winged liner and her lips are painted red. She's more coordinated in her stilettos than I am in bare feet.

Delaney swings around to face the nurse, her coat flaring out with the movement to reveal the pencil skirt she wears underneath. She tilts her head to the side, appraising the nurse slowly, her eyes sweeping from her shoes, all the way up until she meets her eyes. "You and your poorly applied lipstick are in no position to be telling me what I can or can't do." Her bright smile is a clear contradiction to her condescending tone.

The nurse scowls and Delaney walks toward her, the clicking of her heels is the only sound in the room. The nurse backs up in the doorway, which is funny to me because Delaney is still shorter than her even with the height her shoes give her. "That's it, Nurse Ratched. Run along and bother someone else." She slams the door in the nurse's face and then spins around dramatically to give me a sympathetic smile.

I open my mouth to speak, but only hoarse squeaks come out. Delaney waves her hand dismissively, pulling a glass

bottle of water out of her purse. She unscrews the cap and then pulls a straw out and drops it into the bottle. She's always prepared, and I find it hard to believe that she's ever been wrong about anything in her life. She scoots a chair up next to my bed, but before she takes a seat, she puts the straw up to my lips. I suck down the cool liquid, and it soothes my sore throat, but I have to stop when a cough rattles in my chest.

"You inhaled a lot of smoke, so take it easy," she says, pulling the straw away and sitting back in the chair with the posture of a queen.

"Sebastian," I say, forcing my voice, but it comes out as more of a ragged whisper. "Is he okay? He was there."

"Physically he's fine aside from some minor burns on his legs that he won't let anyone check out." Delaney flares her nostrils in distaste. "Mentally he's still a psychotic toddler," she chirps and if I weren't so worn out, I'd laugh at the fact that she's still giving Sebastian shit, even in this situation.

"Where are we?" I manage to push myself up into a sitting position. Delaney winces with me. I don't want to know what I look like right now if it's even only half as rough as I feel.

"The infirmary on campus. They're trying to sweep all of this away like you accidentally wandered into the mausoleum, and it spontaneously caught on fire." She shrugs and her long nails click as she digs around in her purse. She pulls out gum, offering me a piece. When I shake my head in the negative, she pops a piece in her mouth before she continues. "How that crypt was opened to put you inside it, is a mystery. The only reason they got you out in time is because it had been unsealed to put you in there in the first place. Hawthorne went to check it out yesterday." She pulls her lips into a tight line when she realizes her slip up. "Cruz, I mean. He said they've cleaned it and locked it up like nothing happened. Declan thinks the school will have it resealed soon."

"What did they say? Are they even looking for who did it?" I breathe in deep, and I'm thankful that my voice is starting to come back.

“No. They were more interested in why you were in the cemetery in the first place.” She quirks a knowing eyebrow at me. “Don’t worry, I didn’t tell anyone you were getting railed by your stepbrother surrounded by dead people.”

“Delaney St. James!” I can feel my face heating against my will. “Did Sebastian tell you that we...?” Sebastian acts like his tongue is going to fall out if he has to speak to Delaney, let alone tell her the intimate details of his sex life.

“No. Wilder told me. And everyone who will listen. Including the nurses.” She shrugs and I can’t help but smile. “Don’t be embarrassed, we’ve all been there.”

“You don’t have a stepbrother,” I remind her, and I start to crack a smile, but even the muscles in my face are sore. Delaney shows no hint of amusement. Declan possesses the same ability to appear unaffected in every situation, and it makes me wonder what they’ve been through to have learned that coping mechanism.

“*Yet.* You never know what the future brings,” she teases, and then switches her tone to tell me, “Today was the first day Sebastian left your side since you’ve been in here. He was starting to stink, so I made him go home to shower. I sent the others to make sure he doesn’t do anything stupid while he’s out there. Like set Talon or Mr. Sanderson on fire in broad daylight.” She shakes her head. “It figures you’d wake up in the ten minutes I left to go pee and reapply my lipstick.” She rolls her big eyes and reaches her hand out to touch the top of mine. “We’ve been so worried about you.”

“How long have I been here?” I raise my other hand to cover my mouth just before I let out a hacking cough.

“Four days. And that bitch has told us for *four days* we can’t be in here,” she says and lets out an elegant laugh as she scoots back in her chair. “So I’m guessing you and Sebastian made up?”

I contort my face in confusion, because we’re definitely not made up in any way, shape or form. I know how Sebastian’s mind works. If he loses me, he loses his little toy to break whenever he needs a distraction. When he chose to

bend me over Blaine's headstone, knowing how much that would hurt me, he showed me that no matter what, I'll always just be a pawn for him. Something he can say he took from his brother. I realized then, and admitted to myself, that I love Sebastian. Despite that revelation, I can't trust him, or continue to let him keep hurting me. "Why would you think that? Just because we had sex—"

She shakes her head, and I stop talking because I learned a long time ago that the less you say, the better off you are in any situation.

"He's been so gentle with you." She smiles and then continues, "He's been wretched to everyone else, of course. Hovering over the nurses every time they changed your gauze, and he made a male nurse quit six minutes into his shift." She rolls her eyes as if to say she's not surprised. "You're not burned badly, by the way. It was your lungs we were worried about. You weren't breathing for a little while there. But you've been in and out of consciousness for the last couple days. And you've been able to walk to the bathroom with help, but it didn't really seem like you knew what was going on." She frowns for only a second because the door swings open. The same nurse who backed down from Delaney just a little bit ago shuffles in the room with Wilder leading the pack.

"Oh, fuck. Bash is gonna be pissed. I knew you'd wake up while we were gone just to make him angry," Wilder says giddily when he sees that I'm awake. It's like he's excited to see Sebastian rage that I woke up while they were gone taking their group shower or whatever they've been doing for the last hour. Cruz files in next behind Wilder and whacks him on the back of the head with an open palm which shuts him up but does nothing to wipe the grin off his face. I muster the strength to flick my middle finger up at Wilder for telling everyone that I lost my virginity to my stepbrother in the cemetery. He rubs his messy hair out of his eyes and widens his smile even more, bouncing his eyebrows suggestively which tells me he knows exactly why I'm mad at him.

"How much did you see?" I harshly whisper, pushing to lean against the brass railing on the side of the bed. "No, don't

tell me. I don't want to know why you were lurking around in the cemetery.”

He's fumbling with the buttons of his coat but pauses to look me in the eye. “You can't be mad that I hung around. He couldn't be a lookout while he was hate fucking you.” He winks when I glare at him.

“Payback's a bitch, remember that.” I tell him.

“I'll fuck someone in front of you if that's what you're into,” Wilder says, and he can't contain his laughter when my scowl deepens.

“Looking good, CJ,” Nathaniel says, pushing past Wilder to stand next to Delaney's chair like the loyal lovesick puppy that he is. I can't wrap my mind around the fact that she's tamed one of the Wolves. Delaney shifts in her seat as Cruz moves to stand on the other side of her chair and lets out a huff of annoyance before standing up, straightening her skirt. She makes her way around the foot of my bed to stand on the other side just as Declan strolls into the room as if he's the most unbothered motherfucker on this planet. He gives me a small tight smile before looking over his shoulder.

My body instantly stiffens in anticipation when I meet Sebastian's stare, and the dark shadows under his eyes are prominent. It feels like my heart does a somersault inside my chest when he pushes the nurse out of his way and nearly knocks Delaney over as he stomps over to stand by my bed. He's limping ever so slightly, but his face shows no indication of being in pain.

“You cannot just—” The nurse starts, but Sebastian snaps his head in her direction and levels her with a dark glare.

“We can do whatever the fuck we want,” Wilder says, and his goofy tone doesn't match that slick smile that is usually intended to melt the panties off of sorority girls. I suppose he also uses it to mock the Woodsboro staff.

“You all have ten minutes, and then I want you out of here,” the nurse says, her voice higher and shriller than before.

“Fuck off, lady. You’ve been bitching for a fucking week and I’m up to here with hearing your voice,” Cruz snaps, holding his hand up to the top of his head without even looking at her. He’s pacing back and forth, taking only a few steps each way, and rolling a cigarette between his fingertips. He either needs nicotine or Delaney refusing to make eye contact with him has his panties in a twist.

The nurse gasps, clutching her hand to her chest as if he’s physically punched her and storms out of the room, making a point to leave the door wide open.

“She acts like we’re going to have an orgy while we build a shrine to Satan,” Delaney quips, her heels clacking as she walks over to shut the door so we can have some privacy.

Sebastian reaches down and grabs my hand in his and links our fingers. I know I must look shocked, but he doesn’t seem fazed as his eyes appraise me. It’s as if he’s trying to make sure I’m really awake. I see in him what Delaney was talking about earlier, there’s a softness in his eyes that I’ve never seen before, and it scares the fuck out of me. I try to pull my hand away from him, but that only makes him tighten his grip. He lifts his other hand to my hair, letting a lock slide between his fingers. His voice is low and raspier than usual when he says, “I thought I lost you.”

Anger ignites in me because this is what Sebastian does. He pulls me in just to hurt me and shove me away. “You can’t lose something that was never yours in the first place,” I bite out the words, not even trying to keep our conversation private. I try to pull my hand away from him again, but he squeezes harder to the point it becomes painful and I stop struggling. He lets the strands of hair slide out of his hold and his eyes darken as they meet mine.

“I’ve *had* you, Carrington Jane.” The connotation in his words is clear, but he adds, “You’re mine. You can take as long as you want to come to terms with that. But I won’t let you go.” His empty hand moves to cup my jaw, but it’s not like how he used to grab me before. His fingers are firm, but gentle, almost reverent as his thumb rubs gently over my skin. “You understand that, right? It’s not an option.”

“Jesus Christ, Bash. I was joking about her having a magical pussy, but holy fuck.” Wilder cackles and Sebastian’s jaw tics with anger, but not enough to let me unlink our fingers. Declan does not seem amused, giving Wilder a stern look. “What? I’ve never fucked a girl and then lost my mind. Carrington is cool and all, I always thought that even when you guys were being dicks to her. But come on, the man is one syllable away from dropping the L bomb and letting her castrate him. That’s not the Bash we know and love. Come on Carrington, let him keep his balls.”

“How do you know what castrate means?” Delaney pipes up, wrinkling her nose in distaste which only earns her a shrug from Wilder.

“Everyone get the fuck out,” Sebastian snaps, apparently having enough of Wilder’s antics.

“No. You don’t have to leave,” I say quickly, not ready to be alone with him.

“I think the two of you do need to talk.” Declan purses his lips in disapproval, and I’m not sure if it’s because Sebastian and I are messy, toxic, and too complicated to function or if it’s because he doesn’t think fucking on dead relatives’ graves is a good way to settle our differences. He sighs, crossing his arms over his chest when he says, “But it’s important that you tell Bash what you know, CJ. You almost died, and Sebastian would have burned up right along with you if Wilder hadn’t seen the smoke and called us before he ran back to help,” Declan says, sweeping his arm out to the other guys, indicating that they all helped save my life. He calmly approaches the foot of my bed. “This isn’t going to stop here. We’ve watched you round the clock, making sure no one can get to you. Whoever is doing this isn’t going to stop until you’re unable to tell their secrets.”

I open my mouth to speak, but the words don’t come. I let out another chest rattling cough and it’s only then that Sebastian lets go of my hand. He grasps the back of my neck and places his other palm on my chest, bracing me as I suck in a wheezing breath.

“I’ve got you,” Sebastian’s raspy voice is comforting and familiar almost like I’ve heard him say those words to me before.

“Who are you protecting? Blaine is six feet deep. You can’t help him anymore. You need to be worried about yourself,” Cruz blurts out when I stop coughing. I try to suck in a sharp breath, but it feels like I have cotton shoved down my throat and into my lungs. I decide at that moment that I need to come clean with everything I know. He’s right. Keeping secrets is only putting everyone in danger.

“Sebastian. I’m protecting Sebastian.” I push myself to sit up all the way. “Maybe you guys should leave so we can talk.” I look at Declan because if anyone can get the group to go along with something, it’s him.

“Whatever you have to say, you can say in front of them,” Sebastian says, leaning down to be eye level with me. “I know you hate me right now, and that’s fine. I don’t give a fuck. My only priority is making sure you’re safe. Tell us what you know, baby.” I hate the way my body responds to his voice, the way he’s looking at me. Even though I know this is another one of his mind games, I want nothing more than to pull him to me and kiss him until I can’t move my lips.

“They’re gonna kiss,” Nathaniel whispers loudly enough to incite Sebastian to pull back from me just enough to glare at him.

“I’ll do whatever the fuck I want to her, wherever I want. Shut the fuck up so she can tell us what she knows,” Sebastian demands, but Nathaniel only grins at him. Sebastian’s eyes are back on mine and it’s hard to focus when one of his hands grips my thigh. Even through the blanket, I feel the heat of him, the need he has for me.

I bite my lip and then decide to just rip the band aid off. “When you slept with Talon’s sister and wouldn’t acknowledge her after that, she couldn’t cope and started acting out in a lot of ways,” I say the words slowly because I see the confused look on Sebastian’s face. “Blaine was trying to help her. He would meet up with her once a week, and

they'd go down to the cliffs just to talk. He asked me if he could say he was with me so that Talon wouldn't get in the middle of it."

"When was this?" Declan asks.

"Before she was sent away—" I start, but Sebastian's hand grips my leg harder, clearly wanting my attention back on him.

"I didn't fuck Talon's sister," Sebastian snaps. "Not before. Not after. Not ever."

"Maybe you were drunk," Wilder offers, but quickly shuts up when Sebastian, Cruz, and Declan all level him with a glare.

Nathaniel clearly can't read the room because his eyes close as he's smiling up at the ceiling, trying to process whatever is going through his head. He snorts out a laugh, clearly thinking he's way funnier than any of us do when he adds, "I've never been *that* drunk." Wilder snorts, trying to hold in his laugh, but that only eggs Nathaniel on more. "She looks like someone slapped a wig and a pair of tits on Talon." He gags, pretending he's going to throw up and the room quickly buzzes with the noise of him and Nathaniel cracking jokes at Talon's expense and Delaney and Declan trying to make them be quiet.

"Hey!" I snap, ripping my hand away from Sebastian and clapping, trying to get everyone's attention. "You've been harassing me since Blaine died to tell you what I know. The least you can do is listen to what I'm saying."

"He said she was freaking out because she thought you cared about her. Which, in hindsight, I should have questioned why any girl would think you genuinely cared about them." I cut my eyes at Sebastian and his stare hardens. He takes a quick, short breath. Despite his games and the fact that he claims he wants me to submit to his demands, bend at his every will, Sebastian McCoy *likes* when I fight with him. "Blaine said she became suicidal and was self-medicating. He never said what she was using or what she was thinking of doing. It must've been bad if he was sneaking around, meeting her, and trying to help her, you know? And then she was sent

to the psychiatric ward on campus, so I don't know why he needed to use me as a cover the night he died. She wouldn't have been able to leave, right?"

"Is that where she is?" I clearly piqued Delaney's interest because she pulls her attention away from trying to smooth the wrinkles out of Nathaniel's shirt. He's watching her with the softest eyes, and she doesn't seem to notice. My eyes bounce to Cruz because even with the state of disorder around me, I really want to know what's going on between the three of them. His eyes are trained on Nathaniel's profile, and he looks angry. He looks away when Delaney looks around the room to gauge everyone's reactions and adds, "I mean do we have proof that she's actually been admitted? You know how Woodsboro likes to cover things up."

"So it has to be Talon, right? He's pissed that his sister ended up in a psych ward and blames your family. And technically, CJ is a McCoy," Cruz suggests, moving over to the window. He cranks it open and lights up his cigarette. I watch as he takes a deep drag and his eyes flutter shut like it's the most precious thing he's ever tasted.

"Why would Talon want to keep it a secret? Whoever it is wants CJ to keep her mouth shut," Wilder shrugs and when everyone has surprised expressions on their faces, he laughs. "I'm not as dumb as I pretend to be."

"Everyone shut the fuck up," Declan snaps, pacing a few steps back and forth at the foot of my bed before he grabs the footboard. The veins in his hands are prominent under his death grip on the brass. It's clear to me that Declan has just as much rage living inside him as the other Wolves. He just harnesses it, feeds off of it, keeps it inside of him instead of lashing out. "I'm not clear on any of this, CJ. You need to tell us everything. What does Sebastian fucking Talon's sister have anything to do with the night Blaine died?"

I clear my throat and I'm grateful when Delaney hands me the bottle of water from earlier. "I honestly don't know. That's the only secret I was keeping. Originally, I thought that Blaine was with Elizabeth Sanderson that night, but then I found out that she'd been admitted to the psychiatric ward, so she

wouldn't have been able to meet him. He made me promise not to tell anyone about the meetings with Elizabeth because he said Sebastian would be blamed for the way she was spiraling and that it would make the tension between Sebastian and Talon worse."

"I never touched her," Sebastian says more quietly this time, his hand coming up to cup my jaw and tipping my face up to look at him. His expression is hard, but his eyes are searching my face. "That's what you were hiding? You let me torment you because you thought I was going to be blamed?"

"I'm all for you groveling, but now isn't the time," Declan interrupts before I can answer Sebastian. "Are you certain Blaine didn't tell you anything that could get anyone else in trouble?"

"What if it's his sister?" Nathaniel suggests. "Maybe the whole trying to keep CJ quiet tactic is only to scare her. It could be a game, and maybe she's mostly targeting CJ because everyone knows she's the only thing Sebastian gives a fuck about."

"Yeah, I mean if she's that obsessed with Sebastian, it would make sense that CJ would be the target," Delaney agrees, which makes Nathaniel practically beam.

I shake my head. "I couldn't see who threw me into the crypt, but she's about my size. Whoever it was, they were bigger than me. I thought it was one of you guys at first because I was running away from Sebastian, and you like to stop me from doing that." I glare at none of them in particular. "But once I realized what was happening, it was too late."

"Can you get access to the psychiatric building?" Sebastian asks Delaney who doesn't miss a beat.

"I can get access to anywhere we need to go on this campus." She straightens her posture and looks to Declan, as if to see if he approves of sneaking into the psych ward. He's looking at Sebastian, though, and I can't quite read what the two of them are thinking.

"We'll check it out tomorrow," Declan finally says.

“Why not tonight?” I ask. “I’ll be fine here for a few hours.”

“Because we can’t just waltz in there like we own the place, despite what my sister might think.” Declan tips his head toward Delaney who only smiles brightly, unashamed that she absolutely thinks she can walk in there in broad daylight and toss her last name at anyone who questions it. “The Kappa Alpha formal is tomorrow night. All of the staff on duty that night will be at the formal. We can make an appearance and then some of us sneak out to see what we can uncover...” he trails off and his eyes bounce from Nathaniel to Wilder. “Some of us can stay to create a distraction.”

“That’s all you think we’re good for, huh? A distraction?” Wilder grins, but there’s a glimmer of hurt mixed with anger in his eyes that I don’t recall seeing before.

Sebastian must sense something is happening because he says to no one in particular, “Great. We have a plan.” He dips his head to speak just to me. “You’re coming home tonight,” Sebastian says, pulling the covers back, and I’m thankful in that moment that someone has dressed me in one of Sebastian’s t-shirts.

“Do you feel well enough to leave?” Delaney asks me, and I know right then that she’ll fight Sebastian on this if I say no. I feel weak, and I’m still coughing here and there, but I’d much rather be in my own room than this cold, drab one. My room. I can’t go back to my room, not after what happened. I can’t go with Sebastian. I don’t trust him with my heart, and I’m not in any state to pretend I’m not in love with him.

“Yes,” I swing my legs over the bed and silently pray that they’ll hold my weight when Sebastian helps me hop down. I tilt my head over to Delaney and ask, “Can I stay with you until we get this figured out? I’m not sure being alone in my room is safe.”

She opens her mouth to respond, but she stops short when Sebastian tilts my head up to look at him. “You’re staying with me, and I won’t argue about that. You belong with me. You’ve never belonged anywhere else.”

“Sebastian-” I start, but he cuts me off by cupping my face in both of his hands and lowering his mouth to mine for a brief, but passionately rough kiss.

“You’re coming home with me. We’re going to fight about whatever you want to fight about today, and then I’m going to fuck you and fill you with my come until you forget why you’re mad at me.” He practically growls the words right in front of everyone. What’s even more fucked up, is that his tone turns my insides to molten lava.

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SEBASTIAN

I need to fucking fight, but Declan made the executive decision that all further fights are canceled until we find out who tried to kill Carrington. The fire in the graveyard drew too much attention to the woods where we hold the fights. I know he's right, but I'm so wound up that if I don't beat someone until I crack their skull, or bury myself inside my stepsister, I'm going to snap. I fully intended on getting on my knees, apologizing for everything I've ever said or done to her—except for fucking her, because I'll never be sorry for that shit. I didn't get the chance, because as soon as I got her back to my dorm, she crawled into my bed and fell asleep. I'm a heartless, selfish bastard, but even I knew that she needed to rest and not to put up with anymore of my bullshit. I fell into a deep sleep with her curled up against my chest, and because she was sleeping, she didn't put any walls between us. I woke up to Nathaniel practically ripping my door off the hinges to appease Delaney. While I was dealing with him and the goddamn door, Delaney whisked Carrington out of my room and down the hall. I was halfway down the stairs of the fraternity house when Declan stopped me. Apparently, Delaney had appointed Wilder their bodyguard so they could get ready for the ceremony tonight. All fucking day, that's apparently how long it takes girls to brush their hair and pick out a dress.

And now I'm at this fucking living hell.

I glance around the intricate staircases leading to the amphitheater from all sides of the building. It's the hub of the

campus, and Kappa Alpha has pulled out all the bells and whistles for this stupid formal. Even out here, there are fancy light fixtures, floral arrangements, and drink carts. I can only imagine what fuckery I'm in for once I get inside. I hate these fucking things, but Declan is probably right. If we're going to figure out what's going on, we need to blend in.

"You look like you're going to rip this place apart with your bare hands," Cruz says, clapping me on the shoulder with a low chuckle. He hates everyone and everything too, so he's probably the only one who understands how I feel right now. He already has his tie undone and we haven't been here twenty minutes. "Wilder's straight up having a bad life right now. Delaney made him get a pedicure and plucked his eyebrows." I don't smile, but my top lip twitches at the image. Good. That's what that motherfucker deserves for not telling me where they were when I asked him to.

Cruz elbows me as he clears his throat, and two things happen when I look up and see Carrington Jane ascending the staircase. My chest constricts and my dick instantly hardens. She's always fucking gorgeous, but tonight, my god she's breathtaking. I'm finding it nearly painful to keep my hands off of her as I watch her hold onto Delaney's arm to steady herself as she makes her way toward us. She's wearing a dark green gown with thin straps hugging her slight shoulders. I've already decided that when I get her alone, those straps are the first thing I'm ripping on that dress. Wilder trails behind the two of them decked out in a tux, instead of the suits the rest of us opted for. My eyes rove over her face and I realize that she's doing everything she can not to meet my eyes. She's definitely seen me because I'm the only fucking person that can make her blush just by looking at her. I take a step forward, fully prepared to say fuck it and drag her back down the stairs and fuck her until she forgives me, but Cruz blocks me with his arm.

"Give her time. She's been through a lot," Cruz says, lifting a beer to his lips and handing me an unopened one. "You're going to fuck things up even worse if you bend her over the railing right now." He knows me too well.

I watch as Delaney motions for Carrington to turn around while she adjusts the zipper for her. Carrington's long black hair is curled and hanging down, dusting her lower back every time she moves. And that dress. Fuck. Her back is bare, and the silk is hugging her ass like it was made just for her. I don't know whether I want to rip it off her first or if I want to gouge out every set of male eyeballs that glance her way. Nathaniel interrupts my thoughts when I see him bouncing up the stairs, his eyes are completely lit up and he's grinning as he takes in the extravagant silver gown Delaney is wearing. Declan is behind him, his eyes scanning every point of entry, his entire demeanor aloof as he unbuttons his blazer with one hand. Everything happens too quickly for me to intercede, but I glare at Delaney as she nudges Wilder and Nathaniel to escort Carrington into the amphitheater.

"Broody much?" Delaney smirks as she walks up to Cruz and me, and I glower at her, he takes a sip of his beer.

"God, you're so fucking transparent." She points a finger up at me that looks like the nail has been bedazzled and now I realize why it took them all fucking day to get ready.

"Are you going to be a meddling bitch the entire night, or will you be getting off my dick anytime soon?" I ask archly.

"*Disrespectfully*, there is no scenario where I would be anywhere near your dick." Delaney shrugs before elegantly taking the beer out of Cruz's hand. Her silver bracelet with a million fucking trinkets dangling from it slides down her slim forearm with the motion. Her nearly white hair is piled up into some kind of hair clip and loose pieces hang down framing her face. She downs the entire beer he's been nursing and keeps her eyes on his as she swallows, breathing in through her nose. She hands him the empty bottle with a bright smile before turning to me. "You'll thank me later for meddling. She's on high alert right now, guarding her heart because you've been a barbaric asshole for, oh I don't know, the entire time you've known her. You need to get yourself together, check your fucking attitude and apologize for..." she trails off, crinkling her pert nose up in disgust as she lets her eyes appraise me.

“Just everything. Apologize for everything and hope for the best.”

“If he’s so fucking bad, why are you trying to help them work shit out?” Cruz interjects, tugging at the top button of his white shirt. I give him fifteen more minutes before he dips out of this pointless ceremony. I know we need to be focused on being seen here, and then trying to find out where Talon’s sister is and finding who attacked Carrington, but all I can think about is getting her alone.

Delaney sighs before she moves in close to Cruz. I see his whole body go rigid when she reaches out and unbuttons the top two buttons of his shirt before smoothing her hands down the wrinkles in the front of his shirt. She finally answers his question when she blurts out, “Because sometimes people just belong together. They just fit. They’d never work with anyone else, even if they put each other through hell.”

“Did she say anything about me?” I blurt it out, and instantly regret it when I see the smirk on her face.

“You’re asking me for dating advice?” She beams, her dimples show, and she practically bubbles wicked joy at my expense. “Do you want to know what I think?” She’s too fucking giddy for someone standing on heels taller than she is.

I clear my throat and hand Cruz my unopened beer. “No.” Her face falls, and I rub my hand over my forehead, because what the hell am I even doing? There’s no possible way I can change the intense way I react to Carrington. We could be together for fifty years and I’ll still want to murder anyone who touches her. “I’m done dealing with you,” I say, waving my hand. “Stay out of my fucking business. I’ll just...”

“You’ll just what? Keep dazzling her with your sparkling personality?”

I look to Cruz who is trying hard not to laugh and then I level Delaney with a glare. I’m fully aware that I’m only angry at her because she’s always right. Her and Declan are irritating in that way, so I decide to hurt her feelings anyway. “Shouldn’t you be deciding which one of the Wolves’ cocks you’re going to gag on tonight instead of getting on my fucking last nerve?”

“The night is young, Sebastian. The dick sucking possibilities are endless,” she says with a bright smile as she shrugs her shoulders like she’s unaffected by my cutting words. “As long as it’s not yours, I’ll be absolutely thrilled.” She winks, grabbing Cruz by the arm and leading him into the archway of the amphitheater where people are still filing into the main room.

I close my eyes and imagine Delaney cartwheeling down the stairs and landing on her head as I take a deep breath. I shake out my shoulders and head toward the entrance. Carrington Jane better be ready.



“You look lovely, CJ. Would you like to dance?” I hear some dipshit ask as I approach. Carrington is sitting at a round, silk covered table with Wilder and Nathaniel. Declan’s disappeared again, and I know I should probably go look for him. His only flaw is that he thinks he’s better doing everything himself, which normally wouldn’t be a problem, but we’re dealing with next level shit right now. We don’t know who the next target is, and it could be any of us. I won’t leave Carrington though. Never again. Not for anyone.

“I’m actually kinda tired.” I hear Carrington say as I hover behind her, listening intently and trying my hardest to control my temper. With everything else going on, we probably don’t need me causing a scene by choking this douchebag in front of the entire fraternity and their dates. I don’t know who this fucker is, but he’s dumb enough to lean in, his elbow is resting on the table, and his upper body is invading her personal space. He’s trying to intimidate her into doing what he wants, and that’s not going to fucking happen.

“Aw come on, a girl as pretty as you shouldn’t be sitting around all night.” He reaches out to touch one of the tendrils of hair that hangs down over her shoulder. There it is, the fucking reason I’m going to get a lecture from Declan for bashing this guy’s face in without saying a word.

I walk around Carrington's chair, letting my hand slide beneath her hair and cup the back of her neck possessively. Fuck giving her space and all that corny shit Delaney told me to do. She's mine, and this motherfucker needs to know it. Instead of stiffening under my touch, I feel her relax into it, and that's when I realize that she likes this side of me. Carrington Jane would be lying if she said she isn't attracted to the possessive rage I hold inside of me. She likes the way I would destroy anything for her, even when I wanted to ruin her myself.

"Do you still want to dance, asshole?" I mimic his body language by leaning over and glaring at him, hooding my eyes with a knitted brow. He instantly rights his posture and backs up a step and I can discern the nervous energy lacing his forced laugh even over the music that's playing. I realize that he's a Kappa when I see the fraternity pin attached to his tie, but I can't place where I've seen him before.

"Sorry, Bash. I don't mean any harm," he says smoothly, quickly recovering from his initial shock. He uses my nickname like we're best friends, but I wouldn't know him if I fucking fell over him. I slowly straighten up and move to stand behind Carrington, letting my hands rest on her bare shoulders. I move her hair to the side and brush the knuckles of one of my hands against her neck as I stare him down. I want him to see what I can do. I want him to see what she'll never let him do. I wrap my fingers around her throat and squeeze lightly, and my dick is instantly hard when she tilts her head into my hold and swallows forcefully. The dipshit smirks at me when he says, "I see you've taken over for Blaine." I feel Carrington stiffen at Blaine's name, and while I know she never had anything romantic with my brother, the insinuation is enough to make me irrationally agitated.

"Don't speak to her again." I grit my teeth, but my hands remain gentle and one of her hands comes to rest over my hand that is still cupping her shoulder.

He doesn't respond but does his best to scurry away looking like the coward he is. Wilder begins slow clapping, standing, and making a spectacle of himself and our whole

table. A few people join in, but the majority of people who have noticed look confused. Even over the mindless chatter and music, more people notice and turn and stare at us, which makes Carrington try to hide her face in her hands. I fist my hand in her hair and pull hard enough to make her look up at me. I can see the desire she has for me there. She bites her bottom lip and I groan, curling my fingers tighter in her hair. If she keeps looking at me that way, I'm not going to be able to control myself. I'm going to bend her over this table and bury my cock so deep in her pussy that no other idiots will dare try to approach her.

"Do you even listen?" Delaney scolds as she glides up to the table, and this time Nathaniel is trailing behind her. "I said be a gentleman, not a neanderthal."

"Yeah, fuck that shit," I say stooping down between her chair and Carrington's. "I need to talk to you. *Privately.*" My voice is so raspy with desire that even *I* can hear the need I have for the girl in front of me. I'm looking up at Carrington, searching her eyes for any indication of her feelings for me, but her walls are back up. She's afraid I'm going to use her to make myself feel better and then turn on her like I have in the past.

"He means he wants to fuck," Wilder announces to Carrington, but is loud enough for everyone buried in the fucking graveyard to hear him. Which inspires Nathaniel to snort because he's trying so hard not to laugh. I don't have the energy to deal with him, but I glance over when I see erratic movements out of my peripherals. I'm happy to see Nathaniel holding Wilder while Delaney tries to wrestle his flask out of his hands.

I place my hand on Carrington's thigh that is exposed by the slit in her dress. I groan, sliding my palm clear up her silky skin and only stopping when she squeezes her legs closed. She knows me too well. I have no compunction about pushing her panties to the side and finger fucking her until she comes hard. "You should take me up on my offer to leave, we both know your legs will spread for me even if you don't want them to," I whisper, but my tone is so definitive that I see her eyes widen.

I need to feel her, hold her. I need her to say that she's mine, even if she's not sure she wants to be. I need to know that she feels this magnetic pull between us.

"You chased away that other guy, so I think you owe me a dance," she finally says, and just hearing her mention him triggers me to dig my fingers into the supple skin of her thigh. She smells so fucking good, and I just want to bury my face in her sweet cunt and lick her until she can't walk. She feels phenomenal in my hands. Her skin is soft and smooth, and I want to taste her. I've been deprived of her for too long. Fuck, I need her to be able to breathe, and she knows it. She has all the power, but I'm torn between wanting to wear her down, get her to leave with me like I've demanded and giving in and giving her what she's asking for.

"I'm going to end up killing every man in Faircliff if you keep wearing dresses like this," I say against her ear as I stand up and hold my hand out to her indicating that I'll give her the dance she wants. I don't bother telling her that as soon as the song ends, she's going to have a couple choices and all of them revolve around me filling one or all of her holes with come.

"I was thinking of wearing this to my classes on Monday," she says flippantly, shrugging in my arms. I jerk her close to me and tip her head back to look up into my eyes. Her firm tits press against my chest, and I lift the hand that isn't fixed on the bare skin of her lower back and brush the side of her breast. She's not wearing a bra and I can feel the heat of her skin through the silky material of the dress. I pull my chest back, just enough to get my hand between us. She gasps when I cup her entire breast. I squeeze my fingers and dip my head to groan against her ear. I feel her shiver and her nipple harden against the center of my palm.

I kiss her neck less than gently and then smile against her sweet skin. "The only place that dress needs to be seen is in our bedroom." I use the word *our* even though she probably wouldn't agree willingly. I know that'll change soon. It has to, or I'll fucking lose my mind.

She doesn't smile, but I don't expect her to. I'm challenging her to spar with me. Just when I think she's about to, I see her look to the left and freeze in my arms. I slip my hand from between us and wrap my arm protectively around her, pulling her up against me. I know she has to feel how fucking hard I am for her, but I don't give a shit.

I see what's caught her attention, and I have to be careful not to let my anger overtake me. She's delicate, probably still feeling sore and tired from everything she's been through, and I need to compensate for that. I settle for glaring at Talon from across the room. He's decked out in his tux, and he's staring right at her. It's like he's looking past me, and all he cares about is eye fucking what's mine. He's lucky I haven't pounded him into the fucking pavement by now. No matter what he thinks I did or didn't do with his sister, he needs to get it through his thick skull that Carrington is off limits for everyone. He might not be the one who tried to kill her, but I don't give a fuck. I'll fuck him up just for the way he's looking at her.

I pull Carrington close to my chest, and she burrows her face against my white shirt. She clings to me, letting her walls down, and it feels as though she's trying to melt into me. I realize then just how afraid she is, despite the brave front she puts on when she talks about the situation we're in. "He won't get near you. No one will. It's just me and you, Carrington Jane," I say, trying to soothe her. I stroke my hand down her back and Talon grins at me, and that's all it fucking takes.

I'm done playing this wait and see game. I get why Declan and Delaney don't think it's Talon, but the truth is, none of us really know what the fuck is going on. He could just be fucking dumb enough to be doing all this shit and taunting us openly. I see Cruz is a few feet away trying to drag Wilder away from Ella who is curling her finger at him, trying to entice him to come over to where she's standing. I hear him asking offhandedly where Declan is, and I realize that I can take care of Talon without the repercussions of Declan intervening.

I move quickly, shifting Carrington into Cruz's arms. "Don't fucking leave her for one second," I demand, and he looks confused at first, but ultimately he nods. I don't wait for any protests from Carrington, because this needs to be done and over with. I'm already stalking toward Talon, and I'm pleased that everyone in the middle of the dance floor parts for me, moving out of my way. They seem to stand still, watching my every move in anticipation of the fight they know is about to happen. It won't be a fight, he stands no chance, and we all fucking know it. He sets his drink down, and I've gotta give it to him, he's either stupid or not afraid to die, because he stiffens his posture and squares his shoulders in what I assume is supposed to be an intimidating stance.

"Bash, you don't want to do this," Jesse stands up from the table next to Talon's. He's just like my brother, always sticking his nose in where it doesn't belong in the name of being the voice of reason.

"That nice guy act got my brother killed," I say, stopping only for a brief second to cut Jesse down with a cold stare. "Stop while you're ahead." I'm surprised when I see anger flash across his face and his jaw tic with anger, but as quickly as it appeared, it's gone. In its place is his usual soft expression, his eyes pleading with me not to do this here in front of innocent people.

It's too late. All of Woodsboro's secrets are going to be revealed. "Scare her again and I'll fucking kill you." I crack him right in the jaw with a clenched fist so hard that he topples over, falling on some girl who screams, causing everyone who wasn't already watching the show to stop what they're doing and stare.

"Mister McCoy, a word please." I know it's Talon's father before I even look in his direction. Mr. Sanderson is trying his hardest to look unaffected, but he's struggling and that's enough satisfaction for me.

I turn around to look at Carrington. She looks worried, but she's safe, still standing with Cruz. I'm happy that the music has stopped because now that I have everyone's attention, I'm going to use that to my advantage. I extend my arm pointing at

Talon's father and his wife, who I have on good authority has fucked half of our fraternity, and they're both scowling at me. "Write me up, I don't give a shit. Call my father and tell him what a fuck up I am. He expects it. You can't bring me down any further than being related to the fucking golden boy of Woodsboro. And while you have him on the phone, tell him that your son is a coward who picks on Carrington because he's too afraid to fight me." I grin because I'm feeling more psychotic than usual.

"Well, I never! Honey, do something. He's out of control," Mrs. Sanderson screeches, clutching her hand to the gaudy necklace hanging around her neck as I turn to leave. Her voice is just grating enough on my ears to cause me to shift and turn back toward her, but I address her husband instead.

"Do you know your wife is a whore? Or is that another Woodsboro secret that's been swept away like my brother's death and the attempt to kill Carrington?" I'm pleased when the room audibly gasps, and Talon's father's face pales as if he's seen a ghost.

"You think you're invincible, Mister McCoy, but you're sorely overestimating your family's contributions to this college," he says when he's regained his composure.

I walk over to stand directly in front of him. "I don't give a shit about this school. Your son is going to stay away from my girl, or I'm going to bury him next to my brother. No questions asked, isn't that the unspoken rule of Woodsboro? No bad publicity, right?" My voice is low and serious. "So if I were you, I'd tell him to leave her the fuck alone." He grits his teeth, looking up at me with so much anger that it makes me laugh. "It's been a pleasure speaking with you, *Mister Sanderson*." I take a page out of Declan's book, clapping Coach on the shoulder as I move to walk back over to Carrington.

Everyone is still quiet, and I use that to my benefit to get something off my chest. "If anyone else wants to be stupid enough to so much as make her slightly uncomfortable, you'll deal with me." I bark the words out, and this time it's calculated. I want them to understand just how serious I am.

“If any of you have a problem with that, tell me now, and leave her the fuck alone.” I glare at Talon who’s staring right back.

“Anyone have an issue with that?” I glare from Talon to Ella because I know she’s in on whatever shit he’s doing. I don’t know what her alliance is with him other than the fact that Delaney discovered that she was roommates with his sister before she was put away in the psych ward. I can’t really discern the look she’s giving me. She seems sad, defeated, and tired. The way she jerks her chin up, and flashes a wide-eyed look at Carrington, I’m not sure that she’s not being coerced.

“Sebastian,” Carrington says to get my attention, and when I look down at her, her eyes hold so many emotions, it’s hard to pinpoint just one.

“I know you haven’t forgiven me for everything I’ve put you through,” I say quietly so only she can hear me, my mouth nearly touching hers. “And Blaine would tell me that I need to give you time and a choice to decide if you want to put everything behind us. But that’s not me. You’re mine, and I honestly don’t give a fuck if you like it or not.”

She lets out a ragged breath that’s something between a gasp and chuckle at the absurdity of my words against my lips. I deepen the kiss, claiming her in front of nearly everyone who attends Woodsboro. I let one of my hands slide down her back and over her ass, squeezing the firm flesh once and then one more time for good measure.

“You just put a target on your back,” she says when I finally break the kiss. It’s not an accusation or a reprimand. I can see she’s worried, and it makes my chest squeeze with emotion.

As my hand moves to her shoulder, I let my thumb brush against the bruises that I assume Delaney tried to cover up with makeup. It infuriates me that someone else left marks on her skin, both because they hurt her and also because I’m the only one who can claim her in that way. “It was already there, I’m just escalating whatever’s gonna happen,” I say truthfully.

She looks up at me with lust in her eyes, and huskily asks, “Can we get out of here, Sebastian?”



She doesn't have to ask me twice. Before she can say goodbye to anyone, I usher her out of the amphitheater, and take off my blazer to drape over her shoulders once we're out on the grand staircase. I physically can't wait to be inside her, to feel her in my hands, and to fuck the apprehension out of her. I hold my hand out to her as we're about to descend the intricately adorned staircase, and a nervous skittering feeling grips my entire torso as I wait for her to accept it. “I'm about to fuck you until my come is dripping down the inside of your thighs, I don't think holding my hand is that big of a risk, Carrington Jane.”

She looks up at me but shows no reaction to the vulgar words that roll off of my tongue far too easily for someone who is meant to be groveling and begging her to forgive me. That's the thing about my stepsister that I'm only realizing now. She's never wanted me to change or be more like my brother. She wants me, and I suppose always has, just the way I am. Fucked in the head, and desperately obsessed with her. She matches me, her stubbornness rivaling mine when she doesn't give in and hold my hand. Instead, she curls her fingers around my bicep, and I can feel the heat from her skin through the thin material of the dress shirt. I grin at her as we make our way down, the lights cast shadows on her already flawless skin, and I've never seen anything so fucking beautiful in my entire life.

When we exit into the cobblestone street, she starts to veer to the left, but I pull her to the right, heading away from the direction of my dorm. She does a few quick steps in the heels she's not accustomed to walking in to keep up with my quick pace. “Are we going to look for Elizabeth first?” The beast inside me rages in triumph at the tinge of disappointment that I hear in her tone. She wants me. She may not trust me or even

like me right now, but she wants me. And that's a good fucking start.

I stop mid step and yank her to stand flush against me. Her eyes widen when she feels how hard I am for her. I grip her ass hard enough that I'm hoping my fingerprints are visible on the delicate skin of her cheeks tomorrow. My mouth waters thinking about kissing and licking the marks I'm leaving on her. "I want to hear you scream tonight. I want you to tell me how good, how perfect I feel inside of your pussy. I want you to tell me how wet you are for me." I lean down to let my lips brush against hers so gently that I have to do it again for good measure, sucking her bottom lip between my teeth. I bite down hard and slap her ass at the same time. She moans, pressing closer to me, and if she's not careful, I'm going to fuck her here right in the middle of campus. "They bugged the fraternity house once, and they've probably done it again trying to see if we've figured anything out," I say after I pull away from her with a heady groan.

She's breathless and I love her this way. "Where then?"

I tip my head toward the cathedral poised regally just a short walk from the amphitheater and I relish in the look of unabashed horror that crosses her face at my suggestion.

"Sebastian, we can't." She shakes her head. "Church?" she whispers, and I shoot her an evil grin, scooping her up in my arms, bunching her dress up with the movement. I force her to wrap her legs around my hips as I take ground-eating strides toward my destination.

"We can. And we will," I growl against her ear when she slips her arms around my neck. I only let her slide down my body when I reach the front door of the church that is left open twenty-four-seven in case anyone wants to confess sins that Woodsboro will inevitably cover up if they're found out anyway.

She's in front of me, and I watch as she starts to lift the brass latch on the handle of the door. I reach up and pull it shut with one of my hands, effectively blocking her from moving away from me. I press into her, grinding against her ass and

cupping her breast with my free hand. I lean in, kissing the side of her neck and squeezing her soft flesh, letting her know how desperately I need this, how desperately I need her. That's one thing about Carrington that can never be denied—when I need her, no matter what, no matter the situation, she's there, living in my darkness with me and thriving in it.

“How do you want me to fuck you, baby?” I pinch her nipple roughly and the strap that's barely holding her dress up slides off her shoulder. I growl, replacing it with my lips and then scraping my teeth all the way up to the curve of her neck. She shivers, and that just makes me want to push her further. “Does my stepsister want me to be gentle?” I kiss her neck so softly, I'm not even sure my lips grazed her skin until she moans my name, pressing her ass back against me, silently pleading for more of what I have in store for her. I move my hand up from her chest and rub her neck gently at first before I press my fingertips against her throat in just the right spots to take her breath away. “Or do you want me to fuck you like I still hate you?” She gasps, her hand reaching back to push against my abdomen just enough to feel the hardness of my body, but not enough to indicate she really wants me to stop. I brush my lips against her ear as I let my fingers ease on her throat, listening for that sexy little gasp she'll let out as soon as I allow her to. “I don't hate you, but you're not ready to hear that yet. You like when I fuck you like my own personal fuck toy, don't you? You like that no one else will ever satisfy my dick the way you do. No one is as perfect as you are for me.”

She doesn't answer, instead, she presses back against me, and her hand moves from my stomach to the front of my slacks. She fumbles for a moment, her fingers brushing over the buckle of my belt. The mental image of bending her over the altar and spanking her tight little ass with my belt makes my dick pulse with excitement. But then I feel her swallow against my loose hold around her neck, and I know exactly where my belt is going.

“Sebastian.” She practically moans my name, and I don't give a shit about giving her choices anymore, asking what she wants. She needs me, and I know just how to take care of her. She's mine, and I'm not going to let her forget that ever again.

If I'm honest, I need her just as much as I want her, but that's a conversation for another day. Another time when I'm not two seconds away from fucking her on the front steps of the only sacred place on campus. I move my hand down her back, over her ass and under her dress. She arches back against me and opens her legs enough to grant me access. I swipe my fingers over her panties, teasing her and giving her enough time to decide if she wants to stop me and finish this inside, or if she likes the thrill of getting caught just as much as I do. The thin lace material that barely covers her pussy is soaked, and I know that it's because of me and the things I've said to her. Before she can adjust, I'm rubbing two fingers along her slit, purposefully avoiding her clit. She whines, shifting in my hold, trying to get my fingers to brush the bundle of nerves that so desperately crave my attention. Without warning, I sink both fingers all the way inside her. My intention is to torture her with pleasure, but it's my eyes that roll back at the sensation of her sweet little cunt gripping my fingers.

"You're so fucking tight for me." My voice doesn't sound like my own, and I'm having a hard time concentrating on anything other than how wet I've made her. "You're so wet. Such a good little slut for me, aren't you, baby?"

"Always," she whispers and then breaks off. "Sometimes you don't even have to touch me. You look at me and I just—" Her words are cut off by a moan when I pull my fingers all the way out and sink them back inside her tight hole. One time. Then again. And one more time until I feel her pussy begin to pulse, clenching around me, trying to keep my digits deep inside of her.

"Fuck," I curse. "Tell me what makes my little fuck toy wet," I demand, pushing my hardness into the soft curve of her ass as my fingers quicken their pace.

"You." She gasps, and I know she's close. "All you have to do is look at me, Sebastian. No one else can do that to me, only you." Her words send electricity through my entire body. Her head lolls back against my chest and she gasps, my fingers deep inside her. I'm not gentle, or slow, I want her to come undone in my hands before I take her.

“You better come for me now, Carrington Jane,” I say, moving her long hair back with my hand that was around her throat exposing her lean neck to my mouth. My tongue flicks out and I gently kiss her skin. I just want to take away her pain and every bad memory she has, especially if that means replacing it with the pain and pleasure she desires from me. She tilts her head, her breathing increasing. I move my hand around to the front of her dress, ripping her panties in my haste. I find the little bundle of nerves that I know will send her over the edge.

“God,” she cries, and I smile against her hair, pressing my hips into her ass and grinding into her. It’s been literal days since I destroyed her pussy with my cock, claiming it and the rest of her for my own. I don’t have the self-control to hold out any longer. I need to feel her wet heat around me, her soft skin sliding against me while I unleash every bit of pent-up stress I’ve been holding onto.

She starts shaking, and I slam my fingers back inside her, wanting to feel the pulse of her contracting sex as I tug on her hair, her head tipped back against me so I’m looking down at her open mouth and heaving chest.

When she stops shaking, I don’t give her any time to recuperate. She sags against the heavy door while I expertly unfasten and slip my belt out of the loops of my pants. She musters enough strength to look at me over her shoulder. Her eyes widen when she sees me looping my belt back together.

“What are you doing?” she tries to right her posture, but I push her up against the door hard enough that I hear the air expel from her chest. I wrap her hair around my fist and use the fingers of my other hand to place the fine leather around her neck and slowly tighten. She brings her fingers up to her throat and she’s got enough slack to fit her finger beneath the belt snugly. I don’t miss the needy little whimper she lets out when she feels the slight pressure of my leather pressing upon her throat.

“Open the door. You’re going to ride my cock like a good little slut,” I say, and I’m surprised when she immediately obeys, lifting the latch and pushing it open. I give her just

enough slack to walk in front of me. I plan on waltzing right in and sitting down in one of the pews and letting her gag on my dick while I watch her, but as soon as we enter, we hear voices coming from inside the main sanctuary. I pull the belt tighter, causing Carrington to jerk back against my chest with a soft thud. I cup my hand over her mouth to prevent her from outing us to whoever beat us to desecrating the church tonight. I pause to listen and recognize the person talking to be Declan, and Carrington must as well because she tips her head up to look up at me with wide, knowing eyes.

“Are you going to be quiet if I take my hand away?” I growl into her ear in a low tone. She nods which prompts, “Good girl,” to roll off my tongue. As soon as I take my hand away, she’s trying to move away from me to see what Declan is doing. I tighten the leather again around her neck to get her attention and pull her back to me as I tower over her. We hear someone groan and I push her through the corridor to stand in the shadows where we can hear what’s going on better. As we walk by, I glance through the stained-glass panes that allow me to see the illuminated silhouettes of Declan and Wilder. The door is propped open, letting us hear everything they’re saying clearly. Wilder must have left shortly after we did and found his way through one of the side entrances in search of Declan. They’re standing close together, staring each other down and while I don’t get the vibe that they’re angry with each other, they’re definitely fighting for dominance.

When I’ve successfully moved Carrington into the darkness, she tries to pull the belt from around her neck. “Not so fast, baby,” I say, feeling around for one of the long tables that I know is around here somewhere that holds pamphlets of information on how not to get damned to hell or whatever the fuck they push at this school.

“We need to leave, Sebastian,” she whispers so only I can hear. “Whatever is going on between them seems private.” I grin at her, brushing my thumb across her bottom lip as she looks up at me.

“As much as I wanted to hear your screams, the idea of dragging orgasm after orgasm out of you when you can’t make

a sound makes my dick throb.” I breathe the words against her lips, but we both still when we hear Declan begin speaking.

“Why don’t you get on your knees and pray to your actual god, Wilder,” Declan growls into the quiet air of the church. My eyes widen and meet Carrington’s in the darkness, and I see her tongue dart out over her bottom lip. I always felt like there was more between Declan and Wilder than any of us knew and judging by what we just walked in on, it explains the intense relationship they have within the Wolves. They aren’t brothers but lovers. Two sides of the same coin.

“Does that turn on my little slut? Do you like listening to them?” I’m equal parts turned on that she’s so into this and jealous that she’s hearing other men in a sexual scenario. The only thing that keeps me calm is that I know no one will touch her, and that I’m about to fuck her until she forgets what they sound like.

I keep my grip on the belt as I reach out and rip the straps on both of her shoulders, making the silky fabric of her dress fall and expose her exquisite tits to me. I reach out and cup one of her breasts and watch it move under the ministrations of my fingers. I lean in and take her nipple between my lips and begin sucking a little too roughly and loudly for someone who’s trying to stay hidden.

Carrington moans and I immediately pull my mouth away and cover her mouth, backing her up against the stone wall. A shiver runs through her, and I think it has little to do with the cold stone chilling her skin. “If you don’t play by my rules, I’ll stop.” She tips her chin up at me defiantly as if to call my bluff. We both know that God himself couldn’t keep me from fucking her tonight. She likes this little game I’m playing though because despite the fact that I’m telling her what she will and won’t do and I have the ability to cut off her air supply with one flick of my wrist, she reaches over and begins slowly unbuttoning my shirt.

We hear Declan moan before the words, “You’re such a good little slut,” leave his mouth. Carrington stills, looking up at me with lust before undoing my last button and then running her hands up and down the hard panes of my chest and

stomach. I flex which makes her top lip twitch in amusement as she lets her fingertips memorize the contours of my abdomen.

Even in the dark shadows of the corridor, I can see that her cheeks are flushed, and her pupils dilated. “Come here,” I groan, pulling her to me and kissing her roughly as we listen to the sounds of Wilder gagging on Declan’s cock.

Carrington quickly undoes my pants with shaking hands. When she has her small hands around me, I let my head roll back and loosen the firm hold I have around her neck so she can sink to her knees. I have to restrain every muscle in my body to keep from grunting out how good her soft hands feel wrapped around my cock. The first time I fucked my stepsister was rough, angry, full of pent-up emotion. I’m taking my time with her this time, enjoying every fucking second, every blink of those lashes over her pretty green eyes. I reach down to stroke her face with my thumb, but all coordination leaves my body when her wet mouth surrounds the tip of my dick, and then takes me in further. She breathes through her nose just before she flattens her tongue and takes me all the way to the back of her throat. It’s only now that I’m pissed that we have to be quiet, because she’s being careful not to be too loud as she widens her mouth to allow me to move my hips, sliding in and out.

“Swallow my dick, Carrington,” I demand. “I don’t give a fuck who hears. I’m going to fuck your throat.” I groan and shove my dick all the way down her throat, yanking on the belt to keep her in place so that I can fuck her roughly. When I see her eyes widen in fear that we’re going to get caught, I lose the last strain of composure I have, thrusting harder and watching her drool drip down her chin and pool on the top of her breasts. The sound of me fucking her pretty mouth and throat echo, mingling with the sloppy sounds of her needy moans and I know that Declan and Wilder have to know that we’re here. “Do you feel like a whore? Letting my friends hear you gag on my cock?” I tighten the belt briefly as possessiveness rages through me. “They can listen to you, baby, but they’ll never touch you. No one will ever touch you.” She swallows hard around my length, and in combination with her hands holding

onto my thighs like a lifeline, it makes me realize just how close I am to coming in her mouth. While the thought of watching my come drip off her lips and down her chin while she tries to swallow my load always drives me closer to the edge, that's not what I'm interested in tonight. The urge to come inside her pussy again is so intense. I want to know that I'm a part of her now, intertwined in a way she'll never know another man. In a way I'll never know another woman. If I could bathe her in me I would, to let everyone smell me coating her. Mine.

I pull her up, and she looks at me confused for only a short moment. I grab her roughly by the hair, my hand cupping the back of her head and pulling her in so close that her cheek mashes against mine. "You're going to bounce on my dick and beg me to let you come," I warn her.

"Maybe you'll be begging me." Her voice is husky as she pulls her dress up around her hips and I instantly reach out and let my fingers brush against the wet fabric of her panties. Her smooth skin peeking out from the rips I tore into the lace feels divine against the rough pads of my fingertips. I can't retort because she's too fucking distracting when she presses her hand flat against my chest and pushes me back to sit on the sturdy wooden table behind me. My mouth waters as she steps out of her panties and takes care to shove them inside the pocket of my pants and then trails her hands down my thighs. I hoist her up, letting her straddle my lap so quickly that I barely have time to adjust. She hovers over me, letting her wetness coat the tip of my dick and I can feel the apprehension in her body. I hurt her the last time I shoved myself inside her without warning and as much as the fucked-up part of my brain wants to do that again, I stop myself. I slide my hand down her calf and I'm surprised to feel that she's left her heels on. I pull her face close to mine using the belt and even though I'm impatient, I brush my lips along her shoulder and use my free hand to cup her hip and guide myself to her opening, pulling her down on me slowly. To my surprise, she leans in and kisses me hard and lowers herself all the way, fast, and without reservation.

She cries out at the feel of me fully inside her, and I grip her hips too hard, but I want her to feel the bite of my fingers. I want her to remember this tomorrow. I lift my hips up, wrapping her in my arms as tightly as I can. I gasp when she rocks her hips, gripping me so tightly that I know I'm not going to last long.

"Sebastian, please." I groan when she says my name, and I'm aware that she does that just for me. She knows how much I love the sound of my name on her lips, and that thought alone urges me on, faster, harder. I pull her down on top of me in a frantic, raw rhythm. There's barely any light in this corridor, but I can see the silhouette of her body moving as her pussy clenches around me and she rocks her hips, trying to take me deeper than I even was in the graveyard that night. I tighten the belt around her neck and listen to the sound of her gasping as she grinds on me, her nails digging into my shoulders and her screams are muffled by the hold I have on her. She doesn't know that despite the things I say and do, I'm so fucking scared that this will be the last time I feel her this way, that tomorrow she'll wake up and realize that I'm not what she deserves. In a fair world, she deserved to end up with Blaine. She should have loved Blaine the way she loves me, and I take solace in the fact that no matter what happens between us, I'm burned in her memory as the only one she ever really loved.

She leans into me when I loosen the belt, finally taking it off of her and tossing it on the floor. Her mouth finds mine and her pussy milks my dick as her hard nipples rub against my chest. "Fuck, Carrington." My voice is guttural as I pull away only to claim her lips again. I can feel her getting close, her walls contracting, pulling me in deeper and begging me to finish with her.

"I'm almost there," she says breathlessly. And my hands find her ass, pulling her down, grinding her into me as she rolls through her second orgasm. She's clutching onto me, her arms around my neck and her pretty mouth gasping against the side of my throat and that's enough to send me over the edge.

I buck my hips up, hard, fast, and deeper than I think I've ever been. I cry out her name, wordlessly begging her to love me the way she used to as I spill myself inside her. I'm shaking, and I don't want to lose this closeness even now that I'm fully sated. I move my hands up and down her back and groan against her lips when I feel her tight sex clench around me in the wake of her orgasm.

She leans back, covering her face with her hands shyly, and I know it's because of what we've just done in such a public place. But I don't give a shit if the entire campus of Woodsboro knows I've just claimed her. When she moves to get off my lap, I hold her still, pulling her down to allow me to stay inside her, even if only for a few seconds more. I lean in and take one of her nipples between my lips and let my tongue lap at the hardened bud while my hand massages the other one before traveling up to her neck where I'm sure there will be marks tomorrow. I fucking hope there will be remnants on her body of what we shared tonight. I feel my dick start to harden again at the thought.

"Say it. Tell me what you almost said in the graveyard that night," I whisper, and I feel her body still, but she knows what I'm talking about. It's not fair that I'm asking her to say this because I haven't apologized for anything. I haven't told her how I feel about her, what she means to me. But I'm not a fair motherfucker. I'm selfish, jealous, and I want to consume every aspect of her life. I don't feel guilty when I demand, "Fucking say it." I need to hear the words that I already know she means. She wouldn't be here right now sitting on my cock if she didn't mean the words.

"I love you? Is that what you want to hear me say, Sebastian?" she asks, her lips hovering against mine, our breath mingling. "Now what would be the fun in that? If I just did everything you told me to do all the time."

"I'm going to get you to say it first. Trust me," My voice is low and husky, and I feel her moving off my lap, and I let her, because I hear voices coming from outside the building.

She's trying to fix her dress from where it was bunched around her waist but gives up when she remembers I ripped

the straps, rendering them useless. She smooths her hair around her shoulders to cover the marks my mouth and teeth have left behind. She's quiet for a long moment before she looks over at me. I study her features and let out a sigh of relief when I don't find any regret. She picks my blazer up off the floor and slips it on, and I make a face at her, showing my disappointment that I can no longer see her bare skin.

“I think you'll say it to me, Sebastian McCoy. And you'll be on your knees and groveling,” she finally says, winking at me and begins walking down the corridor toward the front entrance to the church, not bothering to wait for me to get my clothes back in place or wipe off the shocked expression I know I'm wearing.

Carrington Jane might be McCoy property, but she's going to be the fucking death of me.

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CARRINGTON

It turns out that Declan slipped out of the ceremony shortly after he arrived and went to check out the psychological ward by himself. I suppose he went to the cathedral afterward where he met up with Wilder. Neither of them has said anything to me, and I doubt they have to Sebastian because he's been in a bad mood all morning. I got freaked out after we had sex last night. Despite the rough, demanding way he handled me, there was a gentleness in him that made me feel like I just wanted to melt into his arms and wash away everything that's happened between us. I can't risk that. I can't let him in again just to tear me down. I've survived Sebastian McCoy once, and I'm not sure my heart can do that again. I spent the night at Delaney's swanky apartment so I could clear my head. It was only this morning that I realized Sebastian slept outside her door, waiting for me. We still haven't talked because shortly after that, the other Wolves arrived, and we decided to head down to the cliffs to talk privately about what Declan found out.

I feel nervous, a weird buzzing feeling that spreads all over my body. I'm not sure if it's because we're only feet away from where Blaine took his last breaths or if it's because Sebastian has been staring a hole into my skull since I first saw him this morning. I want to believe that he's had some change of heart where I'm concerned, that me almost dying in the cemetery that night made him realize that he wants to do more than torment me. It's going to take more than orgasms to convince me that he cares about me. "It's fucked up that you went without us," Cruz says, scuffing his boot in the dirt covering the flat of the cliff we're standing on. I'm not sure

what I was expecting in regard to Talon's sister or her whereabouts. What I didn't see coming was that Declan would be able to single handedly finesse his way past the staff, find her room, and still be in the church before Sebastian and I arrived there.

"A lot of things are fucked up." Declan's tone is bored and flat as he pops the collar of his peacoat up to cover the bottom half of his face. The wind is strong today and if the ominous clouds hovering are any indication, rain is not too far off. "I found what we needed to know and that's all that matters. If we all went together, we would have gotten caught, and that's the last thing we need."

"You're not the boss of the rest of us," Nathaniel says and his naturally deep, husky voice is the only thing that keeps him from sounding like a petulant child.

"Spare me the dramatics," Declan huffs and I realize then how agitated he is, and I wonder if it has anything to do with last night in the cathedral. I've definitely noticed that Wilder isn't being his normal goofy self and there's been no interaction between him and Declan this morning. It's none of my business, but I'm dying to know what's going on between them. They're such an odd matchup. Wilder is goofy, always looking to crack a joke at someone else's expense and Declan makes it a point to let him know that those jokes weren't amusing. "She wasn't there, but she has a room. I couldn't stay long, but I glanced around and it doesn't appear that anyone is actually living there. None of the drawers have anything in them and the closet is empty. There are a few things on the top of the dresser, but the room just doesn't look lived in."

"Do you think the Sanderson's know?" Delaney pipes up, and I can see that her brain is already working overtime trying to fit the pieces together. "How could they not know that she isn't there? And where is she? Clearly Woodsboro is trying to make it look like she's there. Which means they know where she is or what happened to her."

"I suspect her father does, but I'd be willing to bet that her mother hasn't tried to visit her. She's an embarrassment to their name. They've made that clear by only acknowledging

Talon and totally eclipsing her out of the family as soon as she started having trouble,” Declan suggests.

I go stiff when I feel Sebastian move up beside me and my body visibly shivers. Since the fire, it hasn’t felt like I’m running on a hundred percent and it’s freezing out here today. He lifts his hand to gently brush my hair away from my back before he takes off his coat and wordlessly places it around my shoulders. I drown out the back and forth I hear going on between Delaney and the other Wolves, minus Wilder who seems to be in his own little world, staring out over the edge of the cliff.

I glance up at Sebastian when his hand strokes down my back and eventually settles on the back of my neck in a comforting, yet possessive gesture. It’s so unlike what I’ve known of my stepbrother up until recently, yet the firm, gentle way he holds me feels natural, like he was meant to touch me this way all along. His eyes are trained on Declan and Cruz as they argue about what our next move should be. He’s so fucking handsome it hurts to look at him. I watch as he flexes his defined jaw in annoyance and before I can stop myself, I’m reaching up to trace my fingers along the sharp angle. He instantly leans into my touch before looking down at me with those intense blue eyes that normally hold malice just for me.

I pull my fingers away when I hear Delaney clap her hands loudly, several times in a row before snapping, “We need to go check the mausoleum again. It still doesn’t sit right with me that it was so easy to unseal it to trap Carrington inside.”

“We need to stay the fuck away from the cemetery. We’ve already checked it out,” Cruz argues, glaring at Delaney as he towers over her.

“*You* checked the mausoleum. I haven’t seen anything. You could have missed something.” Delaney moves to walk around him, but he picks her up by her forearms and moves to stand further away from the cliff’s edge.

“You’re going to fall. And *we* didn’t miss anything. What the fuck is there to miss. It’s a fucking tomb,” Cruz snaps. “There’s nothing in it except a fucking stone coffin.”

Delaney waves her arms in frustration and opens her mouth to speak, but she ultimately closes her mouth and pulls herself close to Cruz by grabbing onto the front of his coat and nudging him to look up at the path we walked down to reach this section of the cliff. “Is that Ella?”

I snap my head up, trying to see what she’s looking at. There’s a figure barely visible through the incoming fog, hunched over, bundled up in a heavy winter coat. Her hair is unruly, but from here I see the resemblance to Ella.

“I think so,” I whisper, and I feel Sebastian tense next to me.

“You and Delaney need to stay here while we check it out,” he says, leaning forward to grab Delaney by the arm and pull her to stand next to me roughly.

She straightens her coat as if she thinks Sebastian’s hands are dirty before glaring up at him. “Don’t ever do that again,” she warns, pointing a finger up at him and her long ponytail swings with the erratic movement of her head. “She’s by herself and known to hang out with Talon, who is by far the only suspect we have right now. I don’t think five men approaching her is really the look you all want to be going for,” she snipes, and I watch as Declan strolls off by himself, headed straight for her not bothering to wait for us to decide what the best move is. Sebastian slowly rotates his neck, and then turns his body so that he can get a full view of all the possible entrances to where we’re standing.

“I don’t see anyone,” he mumbles mostly to himself, but continues to survey the cliffs as we all begin walking, following Declan’s lead.

“Never a dull moment, huh?” Delaney says, and I nod, a shuddering breath leaving my chest.

“I’m ready to be bored,” I say, and it makes her snort.

I watch as Ella lifts her head up when Declan and Nathaniel approach her slowly. I can’t hear what they’re saying, but I can see that she has a busted lip and is crying. Delaney walks quickly, trying to catch up with Cruz, who

despite his angry, disheveled disposition, offers her his forearm to hold onto in case she loses her footing.

“It’s going to be fine,” Sebastian says roughly, low enough for only me to hear. He links his fingers with mine and I hate that I’m blushing at the gesture. I try to hide my face from him, but he squeezes my fingers to get my attention. “Look at me,” he says, and I do because in this moment I need the comfort of his unabashed confidence in every situation. “We don’t know what happened, but I promise you Carrington, I’ll die before I let anything else happen to you. I’ll *kill* before I let anyone near you,” he amends, but I have a sinking feeling things are much worse than we initially thought. If Ella, who up until now, I thought was in on whoever is targeting us, is getting knocked around, it’s not looking so good for us.

When we finally make it close enough to stand near where Nathaniel is kneeling in front of her, I can see how badly she’s been beaten.

“Oh my God, Ella, what happened to you?” Delaney breathes the words, holding onto Cruz’s arm so tightly like it might somehow make Ella’s pain lessen.

“I uh...” Ella shudders, and Declan shrugs off his peacoat in an elegant movement before offering it to her. Wilder appraises her carefully, scowling at the gesture before quickly wiping the look off his face. He then moves for the first time since I’ve seen him today to stand next to Declan. I wonder what the two of them think. I mean, I’m aware that they probably have no feelings for her even though they had sex with her, but it has to be a bizarre situation seeing someone you’ve touched intimately so brutalized.

“Put this on, it will fit over your coat,” Declan says, unwilling to touch her in any way as she sits down on a boulder that lines the designated walking path.

She takes it but doesn’t move to put it on.

“You’re freezing, how long have you been out here?” Delaney asks, the concern in her voice is clear.

“I don’t buy it,” Sebastian says. “Don’t get close to her,” he utters to Delaney and then looks down at me as if to reiterate his statement.

“Sebastian, you don’t have to be a rude asshole twenty-four-seven,” Delaney snaps and then looks toward Ella again. Her expression softens, clearly taken aback by the damage done to Ella’s face.

“No. I get it. I get why Sebastian thinks I’m faking. I’ve lied a lot to get what I want. I’ve helped people do bad things in order to stay in their good graces because I thought they had all the power.” She pulls her hair away from her neck, showing nasty bruises like she’d been choked. “It hurts to move.” She slumps forward, clutching the coat to her chest.

I hear Cruz speak lowly, his lips pressed into a hard line and the anger in his tone palpable. “Who did this to you? Who did you help?”

Ella doesn’t answer. I see the way she’s leaning into Delaney and I’m equal parts worried that she might be hurt worse internally than we even realize and that she might flip a switch like she has before and attack Delaney.

“Do you listen to a fucking thing I say?” Sebastian snaps at Delaney as she wraps a maternal arm around Ella’s shoulders. Because she’s so fun, and bickers with the guys so much, I often forget that she’s older than us.

“No,” Delaney says honestly, and for a second, I think Sebastian will blow up at her, but instead, he pulls me close to his side, his arm wrapping around me and resting on my stomach.

“If you want our help, you need to tell us what’s going on,” Declan says, crossing his arms casually across his chest, as if he doesn’t have a battered woman sitting in front of him. Wilder must think that Declan’s stance is because he’s cold after having given his coat to Ella, because he takes his own off less elegantly than Declan had and drapes it over his shoulders in much the way Sebastian did for me a little while ago.

“I-I,” Ella stutters, but Delaney tries to soothe her before she lifts her chin, and I see his eyes roving over her face. Both of her eyes are blackened, and her mouth is red and swollen. “I don’t think you guys can help me,” she says sadly before adding, “you can barely help yourselves.” Those last few words, she falls back into her mean girl voice, and I wonder right there if she’ll ever be able to shake that attitude.

“He didn’t say we were going to help you. He asked you who did this to your face.” Sebastian waves his hand, indicating the sad state of her face and I move to stand in front of him, letting him wrap both arms around me. I don’t trust her, and I don’t want his temper to give her any reason to exacerbate her interaction with him.

I look back up at him, pressing the back of my head against his chest. We stare each other down for a moment, and I realize that this is just how we work. I’m here to soften him, and he’s here to keep me safe. We’ll just need to learn to compromise when we don’t agree. Which is all the fucking time.

“Who did this to you?” Declan asks again, not raising his voice, but I can see the agitation in his demeanor. He rubs a hand over his face in frustration.

“Mr. Sanderson.”

CARRINGTON

I see the horror in her eyes when she says his name, and that makes her very believable. “He uh, he was, he was forcing my friend to do things she didn’t want to, and I tried to stop him, and...” she breaks off. “I thought he was going to kill me.”

Delaney and I cover our mouths in horror at the same time, and I feel tears pricking my eyes.

“Does he know you’re here?” Cruz asks, but I’m watching Declan as he walks toward her, his eyes scanning her body, her demeanor. His eyes flash up to Sebastian, but only for a fleeting second before he straightens his back and walks calmly back over to stand next to Wilder.

“I’m sure if he knew she was here, he would have sent Talon and his friends to start shit with us,” Nathaniel says, and his eyes never leave Delaney.

“Unless this is a set up,” Sebastian says darkly, pulling me back against his chest. In this moment I know it isn’t a protective maneuver. He’s feeling me out, trying to decide if he wants to let me calm him down. I lean into him, trying to give him what he needs from me. “Is he the one who tried to kill Carrington? Was it Talon? Did he set it up because he thinks she knows what the fuck happened to his daughter?”

Ella lets out a choked sob. She’s looking at me when she answers, and I don’t know if it’s because she wants me to know she had nothing to do with it, or if it’s because Sebastian is too intimidating to look in the eye.

“I don’t know which one attacked you, but I know it was one of the Sandersons. And Carrington, I’m so sorry for that.” A few tears fall on her cheeks, and I nod because I’m so conflicted. She’s believable. Her whole body is shaking, and her tears are real. The Sandersons are a powerful family and if they think that Sebastian or Blaine had something to do with her issues, they might take things this far.

“She’s a liability for us even if she is telling the truth,” Wilder says, and he is looking at Declan to see if he agrees. The rest of us look at him bewildered that he knows what a liability is and also used it correctly in this situation. Declan is the only one who doesn’t seem surprised, and I suspect that’s because he knows Wilder’s mind and all the intricate facets to his personality that he’ll never show us.

“What do we do with her?” Sebastian blurts out, nodding his head toward Declan.

“I’d like to point out that for as much as you all bitch and complain about me making decisions, you’re always asking me what the fuck we should do.” Declan huffs, clearly riled up, and I can’t put my finger on why. He’s stayed cool and collected through all of this, so something specific must have irritated him. I don’t miss the fact that Wilder slips his hand behind Declan, presumably putting it on his back.

“Wilder and I will walk Ella back far enough that she can get to her room or to the infirmary.” Declan looks over at Ella and adds, “whichever you choose.” It’s then that I see her jaw set in defiant anger.

“Are you mad at him because he still doesn’t want you? Or because he’s ruining whatever plan this is?” I ask, gesturing toward the bruises on her face. She cuts her eyes at me, and it’s hard to believe that tears were just flowing from them only moments ago. I think back to the day she approached me in the dining hall, crying about Declan. She was believable then too. However, after she lured me right into Talon’s pathway, she seemed fine. No tears, and no more questions about him. But she seems extremely fixated on Declan and his lack of care for her for someone who’s been attacked so brutally. “Why would

Talon and his father beat you up when you've been their little cheerleader?"

"You stupid bitch! You have no idea what's going on, and it's way bigger than your friend who got in way over his head." Ella lashes out, standing up, practically spitting as she screams. Sebastian takes a step back from her, pulling me with him and I see Cruz and Nathaniel both reach for Delaney, getting her away from Ella in the most uncoordinated manner, both fighting for dominance over her safety. I give Ella an easy smile then because that's exactly what I wanted to happen. I wanted the real Ella to show herself. At least now we know what we're dealing with. "You think you're so fucking smart. Talon and his father are nothing but pawns. Just like you and your little *Wolfpack*." She cackles, and still looks foolish because she got the name wrong.

Wilder is the one who grabs Ella, yanking Declan's coat off her first and tossing it on the rock before grabbing her arms and roughly holding them behind her back. "Someone get me something to restrain her," he grits out when she growls, trying to rip out of his hold.

"Sorry, I left my fucking whips and chains at home, Wilder," Cruz snaps and I twist my head up to look at Sebastian when I feel the rumble of a suppressed laugh emanating from his chest. He's different. Still broody, still wants to choke me with various parts of his body on a regular basis, but I've never seen him this easygoing. He's bossy, demanding, but I don't see the hate in him anymore.

"Jesus Fucking Christ, I've got the fucking Scooby Doo gang for friends," Declan snaps, unbuckling his belt and ripping it out of his beltloops in one slick motion before walking over to Wilder and fastening Ella's hands behind her back.

It's Wilder who grabs her by the face, leaning in and pressing the side of his temple to hers so roughly I hear their skulls meet. "You're going to tell us everything you know. And if I find out you had anything to do with Carrington being thrown in that crypt, I'll let Bash torture you before I kill you myself. She's like our sister, you don't fuck with our family."

His voice is a snarl, and I don't think I've ever heard Wilder sound so serious in all the time I've known him.

“Yeah, if she *were* your sister, you'd be fucking her too. You're all into that incestuous weird shit, aren't you? Isn't your cousin, Remington fucking his sister?” She laughs, and I feel Sebastian tense up. “Blaine was obsessed with her too. But he knew he never had a chance with tall, dark, and brutal over there yanking her around every chance he got.” I feel Sebastian start to move, but I reach up and squeeze my hand over his where it rests on my midsection. She's no good to us if she's dead. Maybe she'll slip up in her tirade.

“That's right, you were at the diner that day with Talon and those other dipshits,” Wilder growls the words.

“We need to go back to Delaney's and regroup,” Declan says, pinching the bridge of his nose.

“Great, just what I wanted in my apartment. Five frat boys and a hostage.”

“We'll catch up with you,” Sebastian says, his hand sliding up my stomach, over my chest before he tucks it inside my collar. His fingers brush against my throat, a silent command for me to be quiet and not to argue with what he's just suggested.

“Are you sure that's a good idea?” Delaney stares him down for a moment before looking at me for assurance that I trust what he's asking of me.

“We won't be far behind you,” Sebastian says matter-of-factly. I watch as Wilder positions his own coat around Ella's shoulders to hide the way her arms are tied. The other Wolves and Delaney begin walking further up the pathway that will lead them back to campus. When Sebastian loosens his hold on my neck, I turn around and look up at him expectantly.

“We need to talk,” he whispers, sticking his hands in his pockets, and he's looking at the unadorned spot where his brother died, instead of at me. His eyes are trained on everything and nothing all at the same time.

“I’m sorry I didn’t tell you about Blaine and Elizabeth sooner,” I tell him, and I mean it. I wish I would have told him what Blaine thought before things got this out of control. “But I can’t fight with you about it anymore. I know that’s our thing. We fight, we fuck, throw a couple mind games in, and then we fight some more. I’m exhausted.” I turn my back to him because opening up to Sebastian emotionally feels like I’m ripping open a gaping wound.

He scoffs, but I realize he’s confirming what I’ve said, and acknowledging how exhausting our relationship has been. His voice is hoarse when he says, “Do you have any idea what it was like for me growing up with him? Constantly being compared to him, and never measuring up.” I look at him because the sadness in his voice is gut wrenching. “I don’t want to break you down anymore, Carrington. You were the one thing I wanted more than anything that Blaine had, even more than our parents’ love. But now. God, now you’re the only thing I have that I can’t live without.” He looks over at me with emotions in his eyes I’ve never seen before, hate and lust are all I’ve ever known from him.

He moves to stand next to me, but I don’t move to touch him, and I don’t speak. I feel like I’m holding my breath waiting to hear what else he has to say. For the first time since I’ve met Sebastian, I don’t question his motive. “I don’t think I ever really knew what loving someone was until I met you.” He shakes his head, laughing without any humor. “Our parents don’t love each other. They love the lives they merged to create, a legacy they think everyone will be jealous of. They certainly never loved us. I used to think my father loved Blaine, but after he died, and he couldn’t be bothered to look into his death I realized he only liked the way Blaine made him look. He was perfect, and that was a reflection on my father.”

I look up at him, and he’s so close his chest is almost touching me. “Blaine wasn’t perfect,” I finally say. “He was just good at hiding his demons, you were always hell-bent on making sure everyone knew yours.” I reach out because I need to touch him, sliding my palms up his chest and over his

shoulders, linking my fingers behind his neck. His hands instantly snake around my waist, and rest on my lower back.

“I’ve done a lot of bad shit and I own all of it. Every single bit. No regrets. Except the way I treated you,” he says, pulling me into him. “I love you, Carrington Jane.” His hands slip down to grip my ass and pull me into him so close that it’s hard to tell where he ends, and I begin. “I’m a jealous sonofabitch when another man even looks at you. I want to be the only thing you think about. I want to be the only one inside your mind just like I’m the only one who will know your body.” He lowers his mouth to brush along my lips in what is only a whisper of a kiss. “I’m going to kill whoever put you in that crypt and lit the match.” I suck in a sharp breath because I don’t doubt him in the slightest. He’s not just talking big, trying to sound like a badass. He means every word, and he intends on following through with it. “I don’t care who the fuck it was, they’re already dead as far as I’m concerned.”

“Sebastian,” I whisper, unlinking my fingers and cupping his face in both of my palms. I start to say something, but choke on the emotion welling in my chest.

His voice ripples with some kind of emotion that he’s trying his best to hold back. “I know you loved me. You’d never let anyone else get away with the shit I’ve put you through. But do you still love me? Was Declan right? Did I fuck up bad enough that you’ll never be able to trust me?” He brings one of his hands up to cup mine, leaning his cheek into my touch.

“Yes,” I whisper.

“Say it.” His tone is demanding, pure Sebastian style. He’s not angry at me anymore, but it’s clear he’s not in the negotiating mood.

“Sebastian, I do love you. More than anything. I always have, you know that.”

He pulls me to him and his lips brush against mine so softly it seems unlike the Sebastian that I know. He’s not tense, he’s not forcing himself to react this way, and I can feel him relax under my touch.

When we pull away, he brushes his lips against my forehead. “I would have died in that fire with you if I couldn’t have saved you. No one will ever take you from me.” He pulls me closer, his mouth dropping to whisper in my ear. “I’m not the knight in shining armor that you deserve. And I’m not noble enough to let you go.”

I wrap my arms around his middle, burying my face against his chest. “I wouldn’t go even if you were.”

I suck in a trembling breath, but for the first time in what seems like forever, I’m smiling. I’m confused when he starts messing with his peacoat that I’m wearing. He digs around inside the front lapel pocket and pulls out a necklace I’ve seen before. His Grandmother’s gold locket. I remember her wearing it nearly every time I saw her. I never knew she’d left it to Sebastian when she passed away.

“My father was surprised too. That she left it to me.” He holds up the dainty necklace that has been in the McCoy family for many generations and puts it around my neck gently. “She left it to me because she wanted you to have it. My father checked the paperwork from her estate over and over, and even went as far to say he thought she’d made an error in her old age and meant to leave it to Blaine to give to you. But she was as sharp as a tack. She never missed an opportunity to give me a hard time about you.”

“She told me to never settle for anything I didn’t have to fight for,” I say, my teary eyes trained on the trinket as he unclasps it. “She knew how drawn I was to you.” He fastens it around my neck and then leans back for a moment to look at his handiwork. “She’s probably somewhere cursing you for where we had sex the first time though.” I grin up at him, letting him know I don’t harbor any bad feelings for him.

His mouth covers mine and we kiss so hard and fast that I think I might lose myself in him. I also think that it might be the case that all I’ll ever need is to be lost in Sebastian McCoy.

SEBASTIAN

I turn the stove off and dart out of Delaney's kitchen when I hear her scream. I'm not the only one, because I nearly trip over Cruz and Nathaniel when we reach the living room. I freeze when I see what has her scared. Two guys I've never seen before have let themselves in her front door. And judging by the lock in one of their hands and the crowbar the other one is holding; I'd say she didn't let them in.

Carrington comes running down the stairs from where she was helping Declan get Ella situated until we can figure out what to do with her.

"Shit," Wilder spits out, shoving himself up off the couch and crosses the room to stand in front of the two guys who appear to be in their early twenties.

"Remington couldn't make it," the one in the blue and black flannel shirt says with a grin, placing the lock he must have ripped off of Delaney's door into Wilder's hand. I relax when I realize he knows them, but my agitation over the intrusion doesn't lessen.

"What the fuck, Mason," Wilder complains. "I said bring me guns, not rip Delaney's door off the hinges." He cranes his neck to survey the damage to the door.

"If we can get in here with this, whoever tried to kill your friend can get in if they want to," the other guy says, brushing a hand through his shaggy black hair.

"Do you think we'll need guns? Do you guys even know how to use them?" Carrington asks, moving to stand next to

me. I don't answer her because anything I say is going to make me sound like an asshole or scare her worse than she already is.

"Because I don't think whoever tried to kill you is going to go away just because Sebastian bitch slapped Talon," Cruz retorts and moves over to stand next to Delaney. He doesn't reach out to comfort her, but she seems to stop shaking just by his close proximity.

"Mason," Wilder says, pointing to the one wearing the baseball hat. "Bennett." He points to the other one as he takes out one of the guns they've brought and inspects it. The way he handles it, expertly opening the chamber, it's clear this isn't his first time.

"Since when do you know how to shoot a gun?" Declan regards Wilder, and there's an emotion in his eyes I can't quite place. He makes his way down the stairs with Ella in tow, her hands now secured in front of her.

"I guess Whitlock didn't tell you guys about his summers with the Ravens in Hollow Hill?" Bennett snickers like there's some sort of inside joke that none of us are privy to. Declan's mouth presses into a hard line and I think I know what he's feeling right now. If it were someone telling me that I didn't know every single detail about Carrington, that someone knew her in a way that I don't, I'd be pissed too. In fact, I'd handle it a lot worse than he is right now.

"Do you guys...like...kill people?" Nathaniel asks like a fucking idiot when they both take off the backpacks they wore and start unloading weapons. From guns to knives and even a wicked looking set of brass knuckles.

"Don't answer that," Declan snaps, grabbing Ella roughly by the shoulder and shoving her to sit on the couch where she's out of the way. She's stopped bitching, threatening us and the fake tears are long gone.

"Honestly? Sometimes?" Mason says with a chuckle. I've decided that I don't ever want to go to Hollow Hill or have anything to do with the Ravens. For as friendly as they and Wilder's cousin, Remington, have been to us, they're clearly

unhinged. Wilder loads the gun and places it on the mantle above the fireplace and begins looking through the other weapons his friends have brought. He holds up what looks like a hatchet and Bennet only smirks.

“Sometimes knives are boring,” he shrugs.

“Yeah, that’s just what we need. To spice things up around here,” Delaney rolls her eyes and walks toward the stairs. “I’m going to take a bubble bath. If anyone bugs me for anything, they’re getting that hatchet to their eyeballs.”

When she’s disappeared from view Mason says sarcastically, “She seems fun.”

“Aren’t you even going to ask why they have me tied up?” Ella snaps, trying to wiggle to the edge of the couch. She leans forward, trying to stand up, but Cruz reaches over and shoves her back.

“That sounds like something that’s none of our fucking business,” Bennett says laughing before he and Mason leave without a word, only their empty backpacks and crowbar in hand.



I look around and everyone is sound asleep in the living room of Delaney’s apartment. Even Declan, who I’m convinced doesn’t sleep, fell asleep in the recliner. I glare at Wilder because he’s snoring so loudly that I’m surprised anyone else is still able to rest. I look over at Ella, whose legs are tied now too, and she’s staring at the wall blankly, but not saying anything or trying to free herself. I sit up and push myself to lean on my elbow so that I can appraise Carrington’s resting form. She’s bundled up under a blanket, her brow furrowed as if she’s having an unpleasant dream.

I recline on my side, and I can’t take my eyes off of her. Her long hair is hanging down around her shoulders and she has one of my hoodies on with my last name printed across the back in gold. That alone does things to me I never thought I could feel. This is it right here, she’s my future and I’m going

to do whatever it takes to make her see that. We're going to be just like this in fifty years, and I'll still be looking at her because she's the most beautiful thing I'll ever see.

"Wake up, baby," I whisper against her ear, tucking my hand under the hoodie and sliding it up to cover the lacy material of her bra. I pinch her nipple between my fingers roughly. As much as I'd love to explore her sleeping body, licking, and kissing every inch of her before I sink my cock all the way inside her tight pussy, all before her eyelids flutter open, I don't feel like having this big of an audience. I need to get her somewhere alone, somewhere where we can be as loud as we want.

Carrington's eyes slowly open and her lips part on what would be a moan of pleasure if I didn't think quickly and cover her mouth with my hand. I can't help myself; I need to taste her right this second and the panicked look on her face makes it all the more exciting. I use my hand under her shirt to lift it up over her breasts. The room is dark enough, and I'm leaning over her, so I'm not concerned about any of the guys seeing her. I don't want to take my hand away from her mouth because she looks so pretty with my fingers clamped over her, forcing her to keep our little secret. I lean down, lapping at her hardened nipple through the soft fabric of her bra before pulling it into my mouth and sucking hard. The anticipation of removing the material and feeling the hardened peak inside my mouth and rubbing against my tongue is almost too much.

I move up on my knees, taking my hand away from her mouth and pulling her into a sitting position. She doesn't protest, but instead, she wraps her arms loosely around my neck, clasping her hands where my hair ends, and the sensitive skin of my neck begins.

"I love when you wake me up like that," she whispers so softly against my ear, and I can feel the small smile that graces her lips.

"I'm going to wake you up one morning with my cock already inside you," I promise her, and I feel and hear that short little intake of breath she does, the same one she makes when my fingers first enter her or my tongue first touches her

clit, pressing a kiss to her forehead. "I'll never get over this, the way you feel, and the way you make me feel." Laying her back down, I nudge her legs apart and let my weight fall on her. The way she sighs, I know she loves the feeling of our bodies melding together. I keep my upper body propped up on my elbows and just look at her. Her gorgeous eyes, her soft lips, and flushed cheeks. I don't deserve this moment, and I'll never deserve her.

"I wanna take you somewhere," I say and it's barely a whisper, taking her lips, and kissing her deeply until I feel her hips roll up against mine. "Do you trust me?" I need to know if she trusts me with her life.

She doesn't hesitate, "That's never been a question." And that's all I need from her. I know things aren't going to calm down around here anytime soon, especially not now with Ella showing up. I still think she's a liability, but I trust what the other guys want to do even though I would have tossed her off that cliff no questions asked. I have no answers to anything that's been going on lately, and the one thing I do know is that I want to spend the rest of the night showing Carrington how much she means to me.

"I want to be alone, just us," I say, rolling off of her, and pulling her to lay on my chest. "Will you come somewhere with me?"

"Where?" She rubs her hand under my t-shirt, and I'm just about to say fuck it, and roll her back underneath me when she says, "I'd go anywhere with you Sebastian."

Fuck.

I stand up first and then lift her in my arms. As I flip her over my shoulder, I feel her grab onto the back of my shirt.

"I won't let you fall," I say in a hushed tone. My hand grips the back of her thigh, and I squeeze before sliding my hand up, letting my fingers slide along the leggings she's wearing and then land on her ass. I dig my fingers in, kneading the muscle and squeezing, knowing she can't make a sound.

I make my way through the kitchen and out on the small back deck that is attached. I let her slide down the front of me slowly, and my eyes roll back when her body rubs against the hardness straining against my pants. She rests her hands on my chest, wobbling slightly from the rush of being turned back upright.

“Delaney will kill us if we fuck in her hot tub,” Carrington says with a little laugh as she looks around, immediately knowing my intentions. I reach up, tugging her face to look up at me. I don’t tell her the irritation and jealousy that courses through my entire body when her attention isn’t on me. This utter fascination that I have for her, it’s in my blood and I know it’ll never lessen, and it certainly will never go away completely.

“No matter what the hell is going on around this fucking school, no matter what happened to my brother, or who wants to silence you, I am going to enjoy you. Every fucking part of you. None of that other shit fucking matters right now except you and me,” I growl the words, and my hold on her doesn’t soften until she leans into me and I kiss her gently, the way she deserves to be kissed. I kiss her the way I’ve wanted to kiss her from the beginning.

I feel her start to tremble in my arms and she smiles against my mouth. “I’m cold, so you better get me out of these clothes and in the water so you can fuck me.”

CARRINGTON

I watch as Sebastian's naked form slides in the hot tub, and his eyes never leave my face. I look at him unabashedly, wanting to see every detail of him. His shoulders are broad, his abdomen flexes as his legs disappear beneath the bubbling water. He's hard, and if I hadn't already had him inside me twice before, I'd doubt just by looking at the length and thickness of his dick that I could. I lean back against the edge and push up out of the water slightly, letting my breasts rise above the water and arching my back enough to tease him. His eyes instantly darken, and I use my back to support my body against the side of the hot tub and my hands glide up from under the water and begin massaging my breasts. There's something different about him tonight. It's as if, despite the fact that we've started a war with the most influential and crooked people in Faircliff, he's more focused and clear headed. He's pouring all of his energy into me, and I've never felt closer to him.

"That's it, baby. Touch yourself for me," he moves over to stand in front of me, his hands braced on either side of me. He towers there, biting his bottom lip as he watches me pinch and pull on my already hard nipples. After everything we've been through, the water feels amazing lapping against my tight muscles. I tilt my head to the side, trying to keep my mass of hair from getting wet, and curse myself that I left my scrunchie in my hoodie pocket.

"Does it feel as good as when I touch you, Carrington Jane?" he asks, brushing my hands out of the way. I'm

surprised when he doesn't touch my breasts, but instead, his hands move to my ribcage, and only his thumbs brush the undersides. His eyes move from mine, following the water droplets lazily sliding over my chilled skin. He appraises me, almost like he's trying to burn this night into the deepest recesses of his memory before he lowers his mouth, capturing one of my nipples in his mouth.

“Nothing feels as good as you, Sebastian,” I admit, but my eyes are trained on his lips as they suck the rosy flesh into his mouth. My pussy clenches as he bites down, and his fingers dig into my skin. He's so handsome, and I love when the lines of his face aren't so hard with anger and annoyance etched into them. I live for these moments when he softens just for me. I let out a little moan as the sounds of the water lapping around us mingle with the noise of Sebastian's tongue flicking my nipple.

Sebastian finally pulls away and leans up to brush his lips across my forehead. His lips descend to mine in a deep, but gentle kiss and he rubs his cheek against my own before dropping his face to the crook of my neck. His fingers slide down my stomach and then quickly find my clit. His hips jerk forward, and I feel his hardness pressing into my stomach as my body jolts with the pleasure his fingers are giving me.

“Turn around, and I'll give you what you need.” It's not an offer or a question, and something that feels like a spring inside me coils at his authoritative tone. So I do just as he's told me and twist in his hold to face away from him. He doesn't disappoint and immediately begins kissing the sensitive sweet spot on my neck. His hard cock presses against my ass in the most delicious display of his intention to claim me. One of his hands reaches around and finds my pussy once again, but this time he avoids my clit and begins rubbing two of his fingers along the length of my slit before pressing just the tips of them against my entrance. I groan at his teasing because all I want is for him to sink the entire length of them inside my pussy. His other hand moves slowly from my belly button to cup my breast. Just as he pinches my nipple, he bites down on my neck and then sucks on the skin so hard that I know I'll have a mark there in the morning.

He buries his face in my hair and inches his fingers just to the first knuckle and I buck back against him, but he has me pinned in a way that I can't maneuver so his fingers will fill me. He moves my hair back with his face and kisses the back of my neck. A chill runs through me and it occurs to me that if my hair was out of his way that he'd have better access to kiss me anywhere he likes. I try to push away from him to lean over the side of the tub and reach for his hoodie. I don't get far enough to grab my hair tie because he pulls me back against him easily with one hand.

"Leave it." He presses his hips against my ass harder and I arch my back into him. "I like it down. I like feeling your hair slide against my skin while I'm fucking you," he whispers darkly as one of his hands grips an ass cheek and the other lines the head of his cock up to my entrance.

"Sebastian, please," I whine when he doesn't move to push inside me, and I feel his chest bounce with laughter because he's succeeded in making me beg him to fuck me.

"I need you to know something, Carrington," he says gruffly, sliding his flat palm up and down my stomach and it's nearly impossible to concentrate on the words he whispers. I lean my head back against his shoulder and look up at him, silently asking him to tell me what he wants me to know.

"I'm so fucking *obsessed* with you that nothing else matters." The arousal in his voice makes the last few words sound raspy and cracked. I shiver when the sound reverberates through my back and I feel it catch in my chest, resonating there. "I will do anything to keep you. No matter the cost. No matter who it hurts. I'll never let you go." I only nod because I'm not sure why his voice hardens when he says that, but the words make me feel warm all over and nervous with anticipation of what he might be capable of. I'm not sure I want to know what he would do to someone if they tried to take me away from him again.

I open my mouth to speak, but he cuts me off with a shake of his head that I feel rather than see, not allowing me to interrupt him. "Tell me what you want me to do to you, Carrington." His hands move down to my hips, and I can hear

the need in his voice when he says in a harder tone, “Now. Tell me now.”

“I can’t wait anymore, Sebastian. I need you to fuck me,” I barely hear my voice over the growl he lets out.

“Here? You want me to push inside your tight, wet pussy?” he asks as he nudges me forward. I feel him rub his cock back and forth along my slit, and I place my hands on the side of the tub, pushing back against him. I know exactly what he needs in this moment. Complete control over me.

“I want you to stretch my pussy,” I whisper when I feel the head of his dick push into my opening again. “Fuck me like that first night, don’t hold back,” I tell him, and he obliges because it’s barely a half of a second and he’s gripping my hips and plunging his cock all the way to the hilt. He’s so deep inside me, filling me, but holding completely still. He grips my hair in one hand and lowers his mouth to my ear. “You fill me all the way up, don’t you?” I breath out the words, trying to urge him on, make him give up trying to tease me. He wants to have all of the control, but I want him to lose every ounce of himself in me right now.

I feel him arch into me, trying to press himself inside me further, even though he’s fully seated within me. “Fuck,” he groans when I purposely tighten around him. One of his hands slides down my stomach, palm rubbing flat against my skin, and his other hand grips my hip so tightly that I know I’ll still feel his fingertips in that spot for days to come. The thought makes my sex clench harder around him and that’s what makes him break.

He pulls all the way out and then slams back inside me one, two, three more times and then finds his pace, needing release, and I press back against him just as hard, the sound of the water splashing around us heightens the sense of urgency. His fingers on my hip migrate down to find my clit. I immediately reach for his hand trying to stop him. I know that it won’t be long before an orgasm rips through me and spins my world off its axis because of the combined stimulation he’s inflicting on my clit and the way he’s pistoning inside me, stretching me to my very limit. He’s too quick, grabbing me by

the waist and flipping me so I'm seated on the edge of the hot tub, and he can drill into me even harder.

"Don't ever push me away from touching what's mine," he demands, slamming his cock back inside me hard and staying there as he brings his fingers back to my clit. He rubs me in tandem as he punctuates his words, "Do. You. Understand?"

"Yes...fuccckk," I gasp in pure unadulterated bliss as my pussy tightens beyond anything I've ever felt before. I glance down to see Sebastian smirking at my pussy almost as if he knows something I don't. I watch as he presses down on the top of my pussy with one hand, and he pinches my clit and I come hard all over his dick. My eyes roll back into my head and next thing I know I've released a stream from deep within me. I realize here tonight that I'll do anything for him, just like he will for me. I think he finally knows that now too.

"That's my filthy fucking good girl," he rasps. "Fuck me. You just squirted all over my dick, Carrington, and it's the hottest fucking thing I've ever seen." He lifts a hand to grip my hair roughly, the pain mixing with the pleasure of our bodies slamming together. "Look at me while I fuck you," he demands and when our eyes meet, I feel his other hand loosen, and then grip me tighter, pulling me towards him, thrusting deeper. "You're going to look at me as I come inside of you." Then his mouth is on mine, and the kisses he gives me are rough, but so full of everything he's been holding back from me. He hits a place so deep inside me that I feel strange bubbling begin at the base of my stomach. I'm going to come with him, and the way he smiles against my mouth tells me he already knows that and is so fucking excited for me to soak his dick.

"Don't you dare fucking close your eyes," he grits out the words, and that's when I fall over the edge, staring into his eyes and gripping his shoulders like he's my anchor.

His name rolls off my lips and I feel his hands all over me, finally finding and squeezing my breasts as he thrusts his hips harder than he ever has before. I feel the familiar spasm of his cock jerking inside me as he pushes over the cusp and spirals with me.

He slowly pulls out of me, and I know it's because he wants to watch his come spill out of me in some kind of caveman posturing. I feel him pull my pussy lips apart and feel the sticky release seep out of me and close my eyes halfway and his fingers make their way down my slit, and he dips them into me. I have no fucking idea what he is doing but he's staring at me with a look of rapture on his face before moving his fingers from my pussy down to my ass.

“Nothing will ever feel this good.” He groans, before pressing his come covered digits into my tight asshole and I feel myself tense up before relaxing and letting him play. He inches one finger into me and then the other pushing his come into my ass and I shouldn't be this turned on but fuck everything he does to me is like a hit of ecstasy.

“Now I'm in every part of you Carrington, one day I'll own this hole too.” He smirks at me before bending down to press a chaste kiss so unlike him to my forehead.



There was another note left on Delaney's front door when we woke up this morning. It was held by a knife again and like before, the message is unclear. All it said was *Enemies are amongst your best friends*. The guys had thankfully fixed the door that Bennett and Mason broke. I shiver when I imagine what could have happened if the person was able to get inside the apartment. I reach out to hold Sebastian's hand as we walk across campus and instead of accepting it, he takes my hand and places it on his bicep. I look up at him and he grins down at me. I tighten my fingers when I feel him flex even with the thick material of his coat separating our skin. “Payback for not holding your hand the other night?” I ask and he doesn't answer at first.

“Maybe I just found out I like this better,” he finally says, his chest puffed out like he's a king escorting his queen. It really is such an odd feeling to have everyone staring at us as they pass by in the quad. The Wolves command attention everywhere they go, but with everyone buzzing about me

almost burning up in the mausoleum, it's ten times worse. I haven't heard any of the rumors yet, but I'm sure people are speculating everything from Sebastian throwing me in there and lighting the match to me doing it for attention.

I don't feel shy or embarrassed when I catch people staring like I thought I would. I feel empowered and respected as we walk toward a group of Kappa Alphas. They immediately stop staring and whispering conspiratorially when Sebastian snaps his head to the side to glare at them. He tugs his arm free from my hold to wrap it around my shoulders and there's just enough underlying possessiveness in his gesture to make my stomach tingle with desire. As we pass the library, I think of Delaney who called out from work sick today to watch Ella. Declan and Cruz are skipping class today to try and find out where Talon's sister could possibly be. Nathaniel and Wilder are supposed to be stalking Talon and his father to see if they can gather any intel that might lead us in the right direction. Declan suggested that I go to class because I rarely ever miss class and whoever is watching us is not going to fuck around with me while I'm sitting in a lecture hall.

"Isn't that Jesse?" I look up at Sebastian and follow his gaze to see Blaine's best friend hunched over on the edge of the fountain where my belongings were strung up not so long ago. He has his face in his hands and his back moves with wracking sobs.

"Jesse? Are you okay?" I ask once we are in earshot, and he looks up, sniffing. His face is bruised, much like Ella's, and his eyes are dark and so puffy it's clear he's been crying for hours.

"He-Hey." He hiccups and I go to move toward him, but Sebastian holds me at his side, and he doesn't have to verbalize he's wary. I understand that even though he has a spotless reputation, tried to help when I was being threatened, and I've never heard him raise his voice, we still can't trust him.

"How did that happen? Have you been to the infirmary?" I try to keep my voice even. I don't know who I can trust anymore, besides the Wolves and Delaney. And as ridiculous

as it sounds, I trust Wilder's psychotic cousin and his friends who live further up the mountain. But I can't just leave Jesse here. Blaine would be so upset if he saw the state his best friend is in right now, and he'd want us to at least get him help.

"No, I'm fine. It was a misunderstanding," he says softly, standing up and almost losing his balance, but catches himself by grabbing onto the stone rim of the fountain.

"I've never punched someone repeatedly in the face on accident," Sebastian barks out, and Jesse flinches at his tone. "What the fuck happened and who did it? And don't give me any bullshit answers. I'm not in the fucking mood."

"Did you get another note?" I ask, carefully, but I don't move a muscle away from Sebastian. Instead, I lean into him, letting him know where I stand, and that's always with him.

"Yes. Did you?" He nods his head and takes another couple steps toward us before glancing left and right as if he's afraid someone is going to see him talking to us, or maybe attack him again. Looking at the way his hands are shaking and the grotesque bruises on his face and neck makes me feel like I'm going to throw up. He looks even worse than Ella, and I wonder if Mr. Sanderson is responsible for hurting him as well.

"Yes." Sebastian and I clip out the word at the same time.

"Who do you think is doing this?" Jesse asks before letting his eyes dart around.

"Maybe we should start with whoever fucked up your face," Sebastian says, his tone is annoyed, unsympathetic. "That sounds like a really good place to start. Or maybe where you've been since Blaine died? You've been sketchy as fuck."

I look up at Sebastian, unsure what's going through his head. I can't imagine that Blaine's literal best friend, the only person who was closer to him, knew him better than even I did, would have anything to do with the people who hurt him. At the very least, I can't see Jesse being involved with the people who covered up his death and tried to murder me for

something that I don't even know. I've been wracking my brain trying to figure out what they think I know, and the only conclusion I've come to is that they think Blaine told me what happened to Elizabeth, and they're afraid I'm going to let it slip.

"Did Mr. Sanderson or Talon do that to you?" I finally blurt out, grabbing Sebastian's hand and tugging him with me to stand closer to him. I know there's literally nothing I can do to help him through this. If there's one thing I know about Jesse, it's that he loved Blaine and I could totally see him putting himself in bad situations to try and find out what happened to him. I'm not sure Jesse will ever get over losing Blaine. I think he's probably taken it even harder than Sebastian.

"Speak of the fucking devil," I snap my head up when I hear Sebastian's annoyed tone and see that his eyes are on Talon who is approaching us. He's walking quickly, his head tipped down like he doesn't want to look at any of us.

Sebastian goes rigid, and when I look up at him, he's sporting the most disgusted look he can manage.

"You need to stay away from them." Talon practically growls at Jesse, still making a point not to make eye contact with me or Sebastian. I watch as Jesse flinches, turning his body as if he's contemplating trying to run away. Jesse's pleading eyes lock with mine and he reminds me so much of Blaine in this moment. I want to help him in a way I couldn't help Blaine. I move to...I don't know what I'm even trying to do, but Sebastian must anticipate that it's going to make things worse because his grip on me tightens to the point that there's a bite of pain.

"Get behind me," Sebastian says, trying to push me to move, but I stay locked to his side. I'm so fucking angry, just flat out exhausted and it's all bubbling over.

"Leave him alone, Talon. I think you and your family have done enough. Don't you?" I'm shaking with rage, and for the first time since I've known him, Sebastian is the one keeping me from exploding.

Talon turns to glare at me, his waves of blonde hair are unruly, unkempt and the circles under his eyes make me wonder if he's been getting any more sleep than we have. "Where is she?" he snaps at me, and that's all it takes for Sebastian to let me go and grab his fraternity brother by the neck.

"Do it. You've wanted to kill me for as long as I've known you. Just get it fucking over with," Talon leers up at Sebastian, daring him to do something this publicly.

I do it for him. I reach out, slapping him so hard across the face that my palm stings and he grimaces.

Talon grits his teeth, trying to yank out of Sebastian's hold. "Where is she?"

"Elizabeth?" I snipe. "Maybe you could tell us. Is she why you had to silence Blaine? I don't know anything. The only things he told me about her turned out to be a lie!" I just want this to be over. I haven't been able to mourn the loss of Blaine and that's becoming abundantly clear right now. I soften my voice when I say, "I don't know who he was protecting, but that's the only reason he would have lied to me."

A look of confusion passes over Talon's face before anger replaces it. "You know exactly what he did to my sister!" Talon screams at me, but he's pointing at Sebastian who finally shoves him away. Talon stumbles and falls, but quickly rights himself, brushing off his coat and slacks out of habit rather than necessity. "I was talking about Ella! Where is she?" He's looking at Jesse now.

"I have to go," Jesse ducks his head in fear and pulls his collar up around his neck before walking off toward the side of campus that leads to the fraternity house. I'm not surprised he's skipping class with his face busted up like that. In fact, I'm surprised he was brave enough to be seen at all. Even though Woodsboro is a place where secrets go to die, the rumor mill is intense, and everyone will be speculating what happened to him by the time darkness falls.

"That's it, run away, you little bitch. WHERE IS SHE?" Talon is screaming now, and I look up at Sebastian in

confusion. He's really gone off the deep end. Either that or he's taking his theatrics way too far and he's extremely believable for someone who's lying.

I roll my eyes. "Don't act like you have no idea what's going on. Ella's face is all busted up just like Jesse's and she said *your father* was the one who did it." I glare at him, and he grits his teeth as he stares back.

"Do you know where she is?" He asks me again.

"Do you know what happened to Blaine?" I ask in a low tone, and he grunts in frustration, and I feel Sebastian tense beside me ready to pounce if Talon makes a move toward me.

"Stay out of this," Talon finally says, rubbing a frustrated hand over his face and then looking darkly at Sebastian before adding, "someone's lying and I'm going to find out who it is." With that, he turns on his heel and stalks off in the same direction Jesse went.

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SEBASTIAN

“Sebastian.” I’m startled awake by Carrington tugging at my arms. I have them so tightly wrapped around her; I’m surprised she’s even able to breathe. I’m instantly in fight mode even though I’m half asleep and have no idea what’s happening. It could be anything from Ella escaping to the apartment being on fire, or even Wilder’s mountain friends letting themselves in for a sleepover. Jesus Christ, it better not be the last one. I hear it, just before Carrington verbalizes it.

“Someone’s banging on the front door,” she whispers and we’re both up off the floor and I see everyone else starting to wake up. I instantly notice that Cruz is missing and suspect that he’s probably down the hall in Delaney’s room. I grab a gun off the table as the pounding starts again. I quickly shove Carrington behind me as we walk through the living room, and step over Wilder who is still snoring. I grab ahold of Nathaniel’s arm and take his attention away from the hallway, torn between going to the fucking door or down to where Delaney and Cruz are.

“Stay with Carrington. Don’t let her out of your sight and go get a weapon, for fuck’s sake,” I bark out the words and close my eyes when I feel Carrington grab onto my bare back.

“I’m going with you.” And I realize I don’t have time to argue with her. I shove her into Nathaniel’s arms and glare at her. I’m satisfied that she’s going to comply when she huffs but relaxes her posture like she isn’t going to fight me on this. I see that Declan is already at the front door looking out from the peep hole.

“It’s Talon,” he says in that calm tone he only uses when he’s anything but tranquil on the inside.

“Could be a set up,” Wilder says, cocking back the safety on the gun in his hand. “Did you see anyone else?” Jesus this dude was just snoring louder than a chainsaw and now it’s like he’s all jacked up on caffeine and ready to fight.

“Good morning, sunshine,” Declan says sarcastically, never looking away from the door. After a beat, he says, “Nope. That dipshit is out there by himself acting like he’s going to do something.” Declan sounds bored now that he realizes it’s only Talon. I’m not. I’m fucking pissed.

“I’ll go out the back and see if I can see anything,” Cruz says as he enters the living room, shoving Delaney to stand with Carrington and Nathaniel. “Don’t fucking go anywhere.” He points at her and then at Carrington. “You either.” And then he’s quickly wielding a knife in one hand, and a loaded handgun in the other.

“Ella! Are you in there? Ella!” Talon screams from behind the front door. “I know you’re in there. You’ve gotta come with me. I’ll break this fucking door down.” He sounds absolutely devastated, like he’s going to break down crying if we don’t let him in to see that she’s okay. She’s fine. She’s been able to shower, we’ve fed her, let her use the bathroom whenever she wants and other than keeping her restrained, we haven’t done a God damned thing to her. We were hoping that by keeping her here, it’ll draw out whoever is leaving the notes. Clearly it wasn’t her because we got one yesterday morning.

“Take them in the kitchen and stay away from the doors and windows.” Nathaniel nods at my order and grabs both girls by their arms. “Don’t fucking grab her like that or I’ll fuck you up next,” I snap which only makes him grin and make a show of delicately holding Carrington by my hoodie that she’s wearing.

“Get down, sit on the floor, okay?” Declan calls after them once they’re inside the kitchen. “Keep as low to the ground as you can, just in case anyone else is out there.” All I hear in

response is Delaney's whimper and Carrington's hushed reply that everything will be okay.

"Open this fucking door, or I'll break it down. You think because your brother is dead you can fucking mess with my girlfriend?" Talon is screaming and if we didn't live on campus, the police would have already been called, I'm sure.

"What the fuck? His girlfriend?" I say to Declan and we both look over at Ella who is bound on the couch but sitting upright. She rolls her eyes and tips her head up as if to say she's not going to dignify us by giving us any answers. I don't know the full story, but Carrington told me about how Ella approached her asking about Declan and about the threesome she had with him and Wilder. Why isn't Talon on their fucking asses instead of mine all the damn time.

"Do you wanna lose Carrington? I can fucking arrange that. Is that what you want, McCoy? Get the fuck out here! I know you're going to hurt Ella just like you hurt my sister!"

Oh, that'll fucking do it.

I don't listen when Wilder tries to hold me back, or even when Declan tries to hold the door shut. I'm already swinging it open and grabbing Talon by the throat. I back him down the stairs, and he grabs my arms, trying to ground himself so he can breathe. But I'm like a machine, I've already dropped my gun and I throw him into the wall directly across the expansive hallway.

"Don't you fucking dare say her name." I pick him up and hold him by his neck, gritting my teeth. "I will end your fucking life, you hear me?" He gasps and I let him go when all he can muster is a nod. "How many times do I need to kick the shit out of you for you to understand that you're not going to win this one? I wouldn't know who your fucking sister is if I fell over her and I sure as shit don't want your bitch of a girlfriend."

"Let her go!" he screams.

I'm vaguely aware of other doors on this floor opening up when Wilder yells at them to go back inside.

“Did your father beat up Ella?” I squint at him, pulling him to stand up straight and then folding my arms, trying to keep my hands from strangling the life out of him. I could easily kill him right now and get him the fuck out of my life, but if I do, I’ll never find out what happened to Blaine, and I’ll never find out who tried to kill Carrington. And if I find out it was Talon, I’m going to kill him with my bare hands.

I hear the guys moving to stand behind me, but they’re letting me have this. They’re letting me have this for Blaine.

“Ella needs to come with me,” Talon gasps out, and his voice is gritty and cracked.

“Ella doesn’t need to do shit. If she’s really not in on any of this shit like you say, then she’s safer with us than she is with you. Clearly.” I bang my fist on the wall, punching a hole in the drywall, right by his head. “Are you going to let them make her disappear like Elizabeth?” His eyes flash up to mine and for the first time I see a fire, a fight, any kind of emotion in him.

“My sister has been committed to the psychiatric ward because you fucking used her and threw her away and she couldn’t handle it!” He shoves me back, and I take one step back, unsure of why he sounds so fucking sure of himself.

“Are you still playing this game? Your sister was never actually sent there. She was admitted, her things were brought there. But there is no indication that Elizabeth Sanderson ever stayed one night in the Woodsboro psychiatric ward.” Declan’s cool tone must send Talon over the edge because he shoves me again, but I grab him by the arms this time, holding him back against the wall.

“What happened to Blaine?” I grit out, and he looks up at me, and I see pain there. “Where is your sister?”

“I don’t fucking know.” He tries to yank out of my grasp, but I won’t let him have any of the control. This ends tonight. One way or another.

“Did you leave any of those notes about Carrington on our doors?” Cruz asks, walking up to flank my side.

“No, I’ve been fucking getting them too. I was 99 percent sure you fuckheads were leaving them for me, but clearly now I’m not sure.”

“Why the fuck would I spend time leaving you notes, I can’t fucking stand you.” I growl because this whole thing is getting ridiculous.

“Are your notes about CJ?” Wilder asks and I’m starting to lose my mind because Wilder is the one asking the good questions.

“No. They’re from CJ!” He shakes his head, his face screwing up in annoyance and I shake him, my hands trembling because I really want to bash his head on the floor until it cracks open for making something up like that. “The last one I got was tonight. It’s in my back pocket,” he takes a deep breath and I feel him go slack like he’s finally giving up fighting me.

“I got it,” Cruz says gruffly, reaching around and ripping the folded-up paper out of Talon’s back pocket. He unfolds it and I read it quickly. It’s dated for today and is handwritten in all capital letters: *Meet me in the graveyard tomorrow night where they tried to burn me alive. I know what you’re hiding. - CJ*

“I didn’t write that,” I hear Carrington say from the doorway. I glare at Nathaniel for letting her and Delaney move to the door instead of staying in a safer spot.

“No shit. Like Sebastian would leave you alone for five minutes for you to write a note, let alone find a way to leave it somewhere for Talon to find it,” Delaney snickers. I don’t snap at her because she’s not wrong and I’ve got more pressing issues at hand.

“So let’s do it then. Let’s go to the graveyard tomorrow night and find out who wrote the note,” I say it, grinning down at him and I’m hoping I look as psychotic as I feel.

“I came here to get it over with. I just want it all to be over,” Talon says, and I shove him away from me to Cruz who grabs him, pulling his hands behind his back.

“Great, another hostage to add to my collection,” Delaney mutters, linking her arm with Carrington’s who won’t budge out of the doorway. She’s watching me intently as I turn around to pick up the gun I dropped. I watch as the girls move out of the way for Cruz to shove Talon into the apartment.

“You’re a crazy sonofabitch,” Delaney says, pointing at me.

“Excuse me?” I quirk an eyebrow, because while I think the shit she does to Cruz and Nathaniel is mildly funny, I don’t know who the fuck she thinks she’s talking to right now.

“Running out there with no shirt on like a loon not even knowing who was out there. There could have been half the fraternity waiting to ambush you.” She puts her hands on her hips. “They could have killed you.” I feel Carrington let out a little gasp at the thought and then glare at me. She’s clearly not happy with my choice, but she’s not too mad because when I pull her into my arms, she buries her face into my chest, letting me squeeze her closer.

“Yeah, well, he shouldn’t have brought Carrington into it.” I shrug.

CARRINGTON

The next night seems so surreal. Wilder and Sebastian lead us, while Cruz walks behind us and Declan and Nathaniel flank the sides. Delaney and I are sheltered in the middle of them while Talon and Ella are made to walk a few feet in front. Their hands are bound behind them and Wilder took pleasure in putting duct tape over their mouths so they couldn't cause a commotion on the way out here.

“Are you sure you want to do this?” Delaney asks softly as we approach the cemetery. “I mean, if I were you, I wouldn't want to come back here, even if it meant finding who killed my brother.” She reaches over and places a comforting hand on my arm.

“That's because if Declan ever turns up dead, you're probably the one who did it,” Sebastian remarks with a dark chuckle.

“He's not wrong,” Declan says dryly, causing Delaney to reach over and smack him hard on the arm.

As we get closer, Wilder directs the hostages, as Delaney refers to them now, to walk toward the woods instead of the entrance of the cemetery. It's not a well-worn path, but one the Wolves know from when they used to hold their fights out here.

Wilder shoves Talon and Ella to sit next to each other and lean up against a large tree. Talon leans his head back against the tree and Ella's eyes are darting everywhere, trying to see what's going on.

“What are we looking for exactly?” Cruz’s voice rumbles and I cringe, hoping he’s not being too loud. From where we’re standing, we have a clear view of the mausoleum where I almost died.

“Fuck if I know,” Sebastian huffs, wrapping his arm around me.

We’re here for maybe an hour and there’s been absolutely nothing going on except for Sebastian threatening to murder Wilder if he tries to spook us one more time.

“Is that your father, Bash?” Declan asks, and my eyes flash over to the dark figure that has emerged from the entrance of the cemetery and moves to stand in front of the Sanderson mausoleum. It’s dark, but even I recognize the person as my stepfather. Declan is holding a small camera up, and I assume it’s night vision. At least now we’ll have definitive proof of whatever happens tonight, and we can go outside of this fucked up town to make the well-kept secrets of Woodsboro go up in flames and watch as the ashes rain down on the twisted elite.

“What the fuck, should we say something to him? Warn him that—” Nathaniel starts, but Sebastian holds his hand up to stop him from talking.

“No. Let’s just see how this plays out. If he does have something to do with covering up Blaine’s death, then it’ll come out,” Sebastian says in a low voice, his eyes never leaving his father. I hear the gun click in his other hand before he says, “And if he had something to do with what happened to Carrington, well then, he’s not going to have to worry about waking up tomorrow.”

The doors are closed, and the chain is still across it. He seems to be waiting for something to happen or someone to show up, and I’m hoping whatever happens that Declan will be able to catch it on video.

“Look, it’s Mr. Sanderson,” Wilder says loudly which causes Cruz to elbow him hard in the ribs. He doubles over, wheezing and Nathaniel pats him on the back.

“Talon, why is your fucking father here?” I hear Declan whisper, but it’s Cruz who stomps over to Talon.

“If you make a fucking sound other than to answer my question, I’ll shoot you in the fucking forehead,” Cruz growls right before he crudely rips the tape off of Talon’s mouth. “Why the fuck is your father out here with McCoy’s?”

“Maybe they received a note also, I don’t fucking know,” Talon snaps, but his tone is hushed. “I have no reason to lie. You have me bound and tied up in the woods and will most likely put a bullet in my head before the night is over. When my sister started acting out, my mother freaked out because she was doing shit in the middle of class, the dining hall, she was having meltdowns in public and that’s all my mother cares about. She wants everyone to think our family is perfect, so to get my mother to stop bitching, my father arranged to have her put in the psychiatric ward. I was told not to ask questions, and I didn’t. Now everything is shit and I don’t know what’s real and what’s fake.”

Talon shoves back against the tree, bracing his legs as if he’s trying to push up to a standing position, but Cruz walks by, cigarette hanging from his lips and swipes his booted foot under Talon’s legs and makes him fall back into place with a soft thud. Ella doesn’t make a sound or even really move. Her eyes are trained on the two older men that seem to be looking at something in their hands with a flashlight.

Ella making a muffled squeaking noise is what makes us follow her line of sight to the row of graves situated on the back side of the crypt. Jesse is walking up, with his head down and his hands in his pockets. We watch as Mr. Sanderson and my stepfather regard him carefully, but none of them move or appear to be raising their voices. Suddenly Jesse moves toward the crypt, and I feel my chest constrict. Memories of being shoved inside, tossed into the wall, and falling to the ground flash in my mind so vividly I can almost feel the cool stone I was lying on before the fire was set. I can smell the gasoline he poured all over. I hear the strike of the match. I gasp, and it’s only a millisecond before Sebastian is cradling my face in his hands.

“Breathe. What happened? Did you remember something?” He’s searching my face, trying his hardest to read my mind. His brows furrow, frustration written all over him and I suspect it’s because he’d like to crawl inside my mind and know my every thought.

“What if it was your father who...” I swallow back the words because it’s too hard to say them. “Whoever threw me in there that night...it felt familiar. Not like you or even Blaine, but like I’d been in close proximity with him before.” Sebastian’s mouth presses into a hard line and I feel his fingers tighten on my face.

“I’ll kill him and let you watch if that’s the case,” he growls.

“Motherfucker, I’m going to have to edit that out,” Declan huffs, shutting off his camera and shooting a look of disapproval to Sebastian.

“Murder is fine, just not on video,” Cruz chuckles, rubbing his cigarette out on a tree and grinning at Talon as he drops it onto his lap.

“He is a St. James, after all,” Delaney says sweetly in all seriousness which makes Cruz snort, trying to hold his laugh in.

We watch as all three men walk into the crypt. Mr. Sanderson pulls the door shut and I nearly jump out of my skin as the heavy chain falls to the cement slab in the archway.

“We need to help Jesse. They’re going to kill him. What if they think Blaine told him something about where Elizabeth is? She has to be dead. They wouldn’t go through all this trouble if they sent her away. Taking her off campus wouldn’t make any sense,” I interject.

“Let’s just go down there and see what the fuck is up.” It’s Cruz’s voice that cuts through the silence. Sebastian doesn’t verbalize his agreement, but he cocks the gun in his hand.

“Should one of us wait up here with the girls?” Wilder asks, craning his neck, trying to see if anything is happening down at the mausoleum.

“Not Nathaniel. They don’t listen to him,” Declan says without looking away from where the men disappeared.

“Delaney is persuasive,” Nathaniel says, raising his eyebrows suggestively.

“She threatened to cut your dick off if you didn’t let us out of the kitchen,” I say, which makes his face fall and Delaney grin.

“Too much bad shit can happen if we split up. We’re all going. We outnumber them.” Delaney grabs onto Ella and helps her stand and Nathaniel does the same for Talon.

“You’ve gotta untie us if you’re going to take us down there. My father will have no problem killing me or any of you. As long as his pristine school isn’t blemished.”

“Absolutely not,” Declan murmurs, watching intently and holding up the camera to capture if the men emerge from the crypt. “We don’t know for sure if you lured us here for your father. We don’t know if they’re here to kill Jesse because they think he knows whatever they did to your sister. We don’t know if you and Jesse killed Blaine and your sister in some weird fraternity sacrifice. The possibilities are endless and the fewer people who can pull a knife on me, the better I like it,” Declan spouts off the words so elegantly and matter-of-factly that I don’t know whether to laugh or cry at how out of control everything has become in such a short time. Not too long ago the only thing I had to worry about was Sebastian trying to feel me up in the library and locking me inside overnight.

“I don’t even know what to think anymore,” Delaney says, leaning in front of Ella trying to peer through the space between me and Declan to see if anything is happening. “Look!” she whisper-yells.

All three men are out of the crypt and they’re fighting. It’s hard to tell who is attacking who at first but then my stepfather shoves Jesse to the ground and jumps on top of him, punching him in the head repeatedly. It’s then that I realize that for as much grief as he gives Sebastian, they’re more alike than he’d care to admit.

“Should we go?” Nathaniel asks, waving his arm out as if to say what the fuck.

“And do what? Who are we fighting? Who’s the good guy in this scenario?” Declan asks.

It’s a few seconds before Mr. Sanderson manages to get them apart and it’s clear that he’s on my stepfather’s side when he shoves Jesse again, knocking him to the ground. Ella lets out a choked sob and closes her eyes so she doesn’t have to watch. I realize that she’s probably been through so much more than we ever knew.

The two men are yelling at Jesse, but I can’t discern what they’re saying. They watch as he struggles to get up off the ground, circling him slowly. He covers his head and begins screaming.

I bury my face in Sebastian’s coat when I hear Delaney say, “We’re just as guilty as them if we let this happen.”

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CARRINGTON

By the time we get through the woods and close enough for the men to realize we're there, Jesse is on the ground under Mr. Sanderson. He's struggling as the older man holds his forearm over his windpipe. Ella tries to run but ends up falling. My stepfather is the one who picks her up, gripping her hair and staring at Sebastian with nothing but pure disdain.

"Stay out of this! Your brother died for this school, and I won't let it happen to you too."

"Fuck," Nathaniel lets out, and I hear Delaney gasp as my stepfather moves Ella, using nothing but her hair to maneuver her. She's screaming, but her mouth is still taped. Sebastian shoves me to stand behind him, and I let him without any objection. I reach into the pocket of my jeans and pull out the knife that Wilder showed me how to open and retract earlier without chopping my finger off. I stick it in the front of my pants, just under my waistline so I can grab it easily if I need to.

"What the fuck is going on? Tell me now," Sebastian demands of his father, holding his gun up and pointing it straight at him.

"Don't point a weapon that you don't intend to use," Mr. Sanderson says, still struggling with Jesse. Sebastian keeps his arm locked but swings it to the side to point the gun at Talon's father. "Get the fuck off of him until we can find out what's going on."

“Sebastian...” Mr. Sanderson starts, easing up off Jesse, but not letting him up completely.

Sebastian raises the gun and shoots off three consecutive warning shots. “I have no problem shooting anyone who doesn’t start talking right now,” he brings the gun and trains it back on his father. “What happened to my brother?”

“Blaine was trying to protect our family. He knew what you and Jesse did to that poor girl and he was just trying to keep you out of trouble. It was always ME Sebastian! I always had to clean up your messes and then Blaine had to step in and fix the destruction your carelessness caused,” my stepfather grits out the words. “Jesse confronted him because he knew he was going to end up being exposed right along with you if Blaine kept trying to help her. In the middle of the fight, he hit his head and—”

“Say her name! She’s not *that poor girl*. She’s my daughter! That your son took her innocence and then threw her away like trash!”

“Sebastian didn’t touch her!” I step out from behind him, and he tries to move in front of me, but I sidestep him. “You’ve got it all wrong. You’ve lost one son. Stop blaming the only one you have left for things he didn’t do,” I snap, stepping out of Declan’s way so he can’t stop me. I’m sick of this and all the secrets. “Someone better start talking right now!” I look over and see Ella struggling in my stepfather’s arms. She’s kicking her feet, and she looks terrified. Her eyes are darting over to Jesse as if she’s worried about him.

“Not Sebastian. Blaine. Blaine was sneaking around with *my daughter* and because we couldn’t keep her quiet about what *they* did to her, they killed her.” He chokes on his words, and I think this is the first time I’ve ever seen any legitimate emotion out of him. “We couldn’t find her! We had to cover it up so no one would ask any questions.”

“Blaine told me it was Jesse and Sebastian,” my stepfather says, jerking Ella roughly when she kicks at him. He could let her go, but even after losing his son and everything that is transpiring right now, he’s still worried about the McCoy

image more than anything else. If she gets away, she can tell what's happening.

“I think I know what my daughter told me—” before he can get any other words out, he grabs his side and collapses on the ground, a puddle of dark liquid pooling around him as Jesse climbs out from under him and pushes to his feet. He's shaking, holding a small blade in his hands.

“Dad!” Talon screams, but Cruz pushes him to stand back. “Untie me. Untie my fucking hands! I didn't have anything to do with any of this shit. I just wanted revenge for what Sebastian did to my sister. I thought she was in the psychiatric hospital this whole time.”

“He's lying, Bash. Your brother didn't tell him that. Your father is the one who attacked Elizabeth,” Jesse says softly, raising his hand to his neck where Mr. Sanderson's elbow was digging into him. “Blaine told me that Mr. Sanderson gave her to him in exchange for Carrington. The problem was that you never left her alone long enough for him to grab her. You were always watching her, stalking her, obsessed with her.” I look over at Sebastian and I can't read him in this moment.

“You lying little bastard. I should kill you myself,” my stepfather seethes. He walks a few steps toward Jesse, dragging Ella with him.

“Tell him, tell your son that you and Mr. Sanderson tried to do the same thing to Ella. You would have been successful too if I hadn't walked in on it and stopped you.”

“What?” My stepfather looks confused, and he turns to look at Sebastian who still has his gun pointed on his father. I glance over and see that Declan is still recording and Wilder, Nathaniel and Cruz have their guns out, ready to shoot whoever they need to at Sebastian's word. “You're insane. You need help.”

Jesse is backing up toward us now and my stepfather is advancing on him, still pulling Ella with him. “Look at her. She's terrified of him. When I walked in on the two of them, they'd ripped her clothes. They were going to do the same thing to Carrington. They knew she was waiting for you to

finally get your shit together. They were going to destroy her.” Jesse backs up right in front of us. “Your father was the one who grabbed Carrington that night, dragged her through the gasoline and threw her inside the tomb, cracked her head on the cement and left her there to burn alive. He lit the match that almost took your whole life away,” Jesse says, turning his head to look at Sebastian.

“How did you know he used a match? Not a lighter?” I ask, trying to step back, but my back slams into Wilder. I see Jesse’s body stiffen at my question. “Sebastian, don’t!” I yell, trying to stop him before Jesse’s words get to him enough that he pulls the trigger on his own father. Before I can register what’s happening, Jesse pulls a gun out of his pocket and shoots my stepfather in the forehead. He spins around and grabs me by the neck and drags me to stand over where Ella has fallen to the ground. I try to stay calm and not make any sudden movements. Jesse is holding me up enough that my head is next to his. In order to get a clear shot on him, the Wolves will have to shoot me too. I’m looking directly into Sebastian’s eyes and all I see is monstrous rage. Jesse isn’t making it out of this cemetery alive tonight. It’s just going to be up to him if he takes me with him when he dies.

“It wasn’t him, McCoy,” Jesse sneers, jerking my hair just enough to make me squeak in pain. “Your brother was all for fucking the bitch until she went off the rails. Then he wanted to try and help her, repair the damage we did to her. He was such a fucking coward, and in case anyone was wondering, it was his idea to pin it on you. He said everyone would believe it because you’re such a fucking asshole to everyone.” He bangs his forehead against the side of my face hard enough to hurt but not rough enough to knock me out. I try not to let out any sounds and mask my pain because I can see Sebastian beginning to become unhinged. He needs to think clearly right now and watching Jesse jerk me around isn’t helping. Jesse mashes his sweaty face against the side of mine. I feel his nose snarled up in anger and his teeth clench as he spits out the words, “Then this bitch wouldn’t believe it. She wouldn’t turn on you. No matter how much she was threatened. No matter how many rumors went around. You treated her like a fucking

whore, and she still wouldn't believe that you were the reason Elizabeth ended up committed in the psych ward," Jesse hisses the words. I believe him. I have no doubt about anything he's saying. It makes sense why Blaine was so secretive, why he kept me away from her. Mostly it makes sense that he didn't tell me that bullshit story about Sebastian hurting her. He knew I'd never believe it, not even coming from him. I'd heard the rumors about him sleeping with her and then ignoring her, but that's how things are at Woodsboro. Nothing is told the way it actually happened, and sometimes it's a complete lie meant to distract from the real event.

"Let her go, or I'll kill you both. Without her I have nothing to lose." Sebastian aims the gun at Jesse's head. "I'll kill her myself before I let you hurt her."

"Sebastian," Delaney gasps, but Cruz snags her, pulling her out of the way before she can interfere. All it will take is a split second for Sebastian to become unfocused and Jesse could strike. I don't know what Jesse's motive is anymore. He can't kill the Wolves, not all of them anyway. The only reason he's still breathing is because he has me clutched so tightly, covering every major organ in his body.

"What is it you want?" Declan asks, and I notice he's tossed the camera in the grass. I blink rapidly, trying not to let any moisture pool there. If this is how my life ends, I'm not going out like that. "What can we do to make this go away? It's never too late. This is Woodsboro. We can all walk out of here like nothing happened." Declan speaks so easily, like he's practiced these words over and over, and I almost believe him. I almost believe that the words he's saying are true, but I know he's just grasping at straws, trying to save my life. When Jesse kills me, they'll kill him, and it won't be an easy death. Sebastian will make sure of it.

"Nothing. It's over," Jesse says, jerking his hand with the gun to my head and then begins maniacally laughing when Sebastian flinches. "Oh how sweet, he actually loves you. Blaine was wrong about a lot of shit and that was my downfall. I've been doing this to girls for years and only got caught because of your bleeding-heart brother." He kicks his

foot at Ella. “Stand up, the game is over.” I watch as Ella rolls her eyes and pushes herself to her knees looking at him expectantly. “Reach down there and take her tape off, or I’ll shoot your fucking boyfriend,” he growls at me.

I reach out and rip the tape off her roughly and she screams, “Ouch, you fucking bitch!” She’s able to get to her feet and stands in front of me, wiggling her hands at me. “Untie me.”

“I knew she was in on this somehow,” Declan says while I untie Ella who wiggles out her wrists before clapping sarcastically at him. I let my hand slide across my stomach and hold my breath as I grab the knife I stashed in my waistband.

“Do you want a prize or something, Declan? It’s going to kill you that you couldn’t figure things out in time to save your friends, huh?” She sneers. “Having to seduce you and Wilder to try and get in with the Wolves wasn’t the worst role I could have gotten in this thing,” she shrugs. “Jesse found out he likes to watch.” She winks and I see Wilder make a face of disgust.

“I wanted to kill her, feel the life drain out of her that night, Bash,” Jesse says, laughing and I see Sebastian’s jaw tighten.

“Look at me,” I say with conviction. I need him to calm down and trust me to get myself out of this situation. I rub my thumb along the knife without pressing the button to launch the lever that will open it. Jesse will hear that, and I need to figure out how I’m going to do this before he shoots me. Sebastian’s eyes flash down to my hand and then quickly look back to Jesse.

“For fuck’s sake, let her go. We’ll let you live if you do,” Cruz barks, taking a step forward, but halting as soon as he jerks my head back, exposing my neck. I tuck my hand to my side; afraid she’s going to walk around in front of me and see it. If I were just dealing with Jesse, I could take the risk and try to stab him before he can shoot me. But I can’t stab them both at the same time.

Ella giggles like she’s gone absolutely insane and leans in, running her tongue along the skin of my neck. Her tongue on

me makes my skin crawl. “Let me cut her, baby. Do you have a knife on you?” she asks when he finally pulls back and looks to Jesse for direction.

“There’s another one in my boot, baby,” he tells her, and I want to gag at the way the pet name sounds coming out of his mouth. I glance up and it’s the only time Sebastian’s eyes haven’t been on me since Jesse grabbed me. He’s looking at Declan and then I see that Wilder, Cruz and Nathaniel are all looking at Declan. Delaney has her hands over her eyes, and she’s huddled down on the ground. If I don’t make it out of this, I’m really going to miss watching her annoy the Wolves.

In the matter of a split second, several things happen. Sebastian’s eyes are back on mine, and he gives me a slight nod before looking at the knife in my hand and then his eyes are trained on Jesse. Ella bends over to retrieve the knife and I feel Jesse shift his weight, presumably so she can fish around in his boot for the weapon. Before she can stand back up, five gunshots ring out and she’s riddled with bullets. Jesse flinches, for only a brief second and I take my chance, twisting in his hold, pushing the release, and stabbing my knife as hard as I can into his stomach. I hear his gun discharge and a bullet flies past my head but misses me completely.

“Shit! I’m hit!” I hear Wilder say.

Jesse’s gun discharges again and I hear Talon let out a bloodcurdling scream. When Jesse’s grip on me loosens, I fight to duck out of his arms and tuck and roll onto the ground. I hear more gunshots and feel someone grabbing my arms and pulling me across the grass.

I hear Sebastian cursing at Jesse.

“Holy shit, that was so fucking badass, CJ,” Delaney whispers, pulling me to hunker down with her. I glance up and Jesse is dead, peppered with bullets and all five Wolves are standing around him. Wilder is holding his arm, but he’s standing on his own and glaring down at the man who almost ruined all of our lives.

Before I know it, Sebastian is in my face pulling me up to him. He cups my face, checking me over, and it’s only when

we hear Talon yell and Declan's grunt that we realize Talon's been shot. Talon is lying in the grass with his arms still tied behind his back. Nathaniel immediately moves to untie him, but he cries out in pain. We all approach, circling around him. He's been shot in the chest and he's having a hard time focusing. He coughs, and blood dribbles from the corner of his mouth.

Delaney kneels and brushes the blood away from his lips and I watch as his eyes focus on her face. He's smiling like he's remembering something that once made him happy. "We're going to get you some help," she tells him, but I can hear the worry in her voice. I lean down and place the back of my hand against Talon's forehead. His skin is clammy and he's not looking so good. When his eyes shift slightly toward me, I smile at him because I don't want him to be scared. He was a real asshole to us, but I think he had his reasons. I also think that Sebastian would agree that if he were in Talon's situation with his sister, he would have been an even bigger menace to Woodsboro.

Delaney uses the thumb of her free hand to wipe more of the blood from the side of his lip and he whispers Elizabeth's name.

"She knows you tried to avenge her. You didn't try, you did. You found out who hurt her, and she can rest now." Delaney blinks, letting tears fall and not bothering to wipe them away. "You're going to see her again really soon."

I hear Delaney gasp and let out a sob and my attention goes back to Talon. But it's too late. His unseeing eyes stare up at us, a smile still on his lips.

He's already gone.

Sebastian scoops me up and sits me on one of the flat gravestones and begins checking me over again before leaning down to kiss me. "Would you have actually killed me so he couldn't?" I ask, only half wanting to know the answer. A breathy chuckle leaves my lips because it's either laugh or cry at this point.

“I’m glad we didn’t have to find out,” he clips out the words before kissing me again and lifting my chin to look up at him.

“Your dad—” I start, but he shakes his head, cutting me off, but I still have questions. “Do you believe what Jesse said about Blaine? Doing that to Elizabeth? And blaming you?”

“Yes,” he glances over at the section of the cemetery where his brother was laid to rest. “There was a side to Blaine that no one knew. I always thought it was just reserved for me because he thought I was a fuck-up, the bad one. But I believe it, and I think my father knew and tried to pin it on me.”

“I never believed it,” I say, pulling him down to my eye level. I need him to know that I’ve always had his back, even when we loathed each other.

“It is a big deal. I was shot!” We both look over to see Declan inspecting Wilder’s arm. His coat and shirt are lying on the ground at his feet and Declan looks more annoyed than usual.

“You were grazed. The bullet nicked your arm. You’re barely bleeding. It’s a scratch,” Declan rights his posture and the two of them stare each other down for a long moment before Wilder picks up his shirt and coat and stalks away from Declan who tries hard to keep the smile that wants so badly to twist his upper lip from appearing.

I watch as Cruz and Nathaniel carry Jesse’s body into the Sanderson crypt, and I realize that they’ve already moved both Mr. Sanderson and my stepfather. Cruz walks over to grab Ella as well and disappears back inside the mausoleum.

“We found Elizabeth,” Nathaniel announces as he peeks out of the archway. “We moved the stone lid off of the coffin. That’s where they stashed her body.”

“So that’s why it was so easy for him to get the crypt open the night he attacked CJ,” Delaney says, her eyes still glassy from watching Talon die.

“Yeah, there’s a skeleton in there with her. Must be the grandfather,” Cruz says casually, like he’s talking about how to

bake a cake or something incredibly less sensitive than what we're all dealing with.

"We should put him in there with her and close it up. He would want that I think," Delaney suggests.

"He was a dickhead," Cruz says without any emotion, but Delaney puts her hands on her hips, daring him to argue with her.

He shrugs his shoulders and walks over to pick up Talon. He looks over at Wilder and jerks his head in a 'come help me' motion.

Wilder holds his arm out, showing nothing more than a red scratch on his golden skin. "I can't lift anything, I got shot."

"Oh my fucking God, if you say you were shot one more time, I'm going to actually shoot you," Sebastian snaps making Wilder grin. Wilder has this quality about him where he can lighten any situation. I feel sick to my stomach and my heart's still beating a little too fast, and I can feel the heaviness of exhaustion weighing my body down, but he still made me smile.

"So, this is it? We just lock it up and wait and see what happens?" Delaney asks as everyone walks over to stand with Sebastian and me.

"It's Woodsboro. Half the campus could drop dead in the middle of the quad and the news would never leave the front gates," Declan says leaning down to pick up his camera. "We've got all our answers, so I don't think we need to try and get the truth spread around."

"My mother was trained by my stepfather. She won't make a fuss or try to find out where he is. I know that much," I say, biting my bottom lip. She doesn't really love him, but she loves the lifestyle he provided and will still provide in his absence.

"Should we make bets on what the rumors will be?" Wilder suggests, leaning down to pick up the weapons that were dropped during the firefight.

"No." The other four Wolves say immediately.

“It sucks that we can’t tell anyone that I got shot saving CJ,” he adds.

“That is not even a little bit how it happened,” Delaney laughs out her words, shaking her head. Then her eyes narrow as she appraises Cruz and says, “I’d like to point out that I was right. *You* did miss something. Elizabeth was in that mausoleum the entire time.” She looks at him expectantly, but he only takes a drag of his cigarette and smirks at her.

“Absolutely not. No more fighting in the graveyard,” Declan says, waving his hands as if he’s banishing us out of his space.

As we’re making our way out of the cemetery and head toward the fraternity house, I hear Delaney and Cruz whispering. I assume he’s trying to convince her that she shouldn’t stay in her place alone tonight.

“You okay?” Sebastian asks, his voice low and raspy as he takes our linked fingers and moves my hand up to hold his arm just the way he likes. “What are you thinking?”

“Something morbid,” I say before I can catch myself.

“Tell me,” He says as he comes up to the cobblestone walkway.

I shake my head, feeling my cheeks heating.

“We both know I can make you say whatever I want. If you want me to do that here in front of everyone, I will.” He glowers at me.

“I was just wondering if since... we know everything about Blaine. Do you retract your apology for fucking me on his grave?” I let out a laugh at how absurd that question is. Technically he didn’t specifically apologize for that, but it was inferred when he said he was sorry for treating me so poorly.

“Yes, actually.” His eyes sweep over me with a heated stare. “I’m not sorry, and I’m probably going to do it again. Every day until graduation. Because that’s what he deserves.”

I let Sebastian lead me back to his room—*our* room actually, and I have a strange peace about me that things are

going to be okay. We're going to have ups and downs, and we're certainly going to have to deal with the harassment we've dealt with and the massacre we just witnessed. We have each other though, and that's all we can really ask for.

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EPILOGUE

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SEBASTIAN

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Nine weeks after graduation

“Sebastian, get in here! I am *so* mad at you right now.” I let out a low chuckle because she must have gotten the mail. “*How* did you even do this?” I grin when I hear Carrington continue yelling from the kitchen. We both received our trust funds the day of our graduation, as promised. A few days later, we settled on our first home together. She wanted something made of stone, and it was important to her that it was old because she said that means it has character. She wanted it far enough away from Woodsboro that she’d never have to see the campus again. I just want her in my bed every night with her legs spread and her pussy wet for me. So I got her everything she wanted, except maybe one thing.

“Wipe that smug look off of your face.” Oh, she’s fucking hot when she’s pissed at me. “Do you see this?” She waves a large piece of thick aged paper in front of my face as I walk closer. I don’t bother feigning innocence because I already know what she’s on about. I can’t seem to focus on anything except the way the strap of her sundress slides down her shoulder and I’m reminded of the night I had with her in the church. She can be mad later. I need to fuck her now.

“How did you get them to do this?” She swats my hand away from her shoulder just as my fingers are about to slide under the thin strap. Wrong move. I snatch her Woodsboro University Diploma that reads *Carrington Jane McCoy* out of her hand and calmly set it on the granite kitchen counter.

“I told you once not to push my hand away from what’s mine,” I appraise her body that’s clearly tight with tension and I see the heat in her green eyes. She wants to fight with me right now. I suspect that her wanting to fight with me has more to do with the fact that I just got home this morning after a three-day trip with the guys, checking out an investment company that Declan found and less to do with the fact that my last name is on her diploma. Carrington stayed here because the kitchen appliances were being delivered. Delaney came over and stayed with her so she wouldn’t be all alone in

this big house, but I know that wasn't enough. My stepsister misses me. How cute. The guys and I stayed in the city for an extra day so Declan could point out some fancy fucking shoe stores that his father owns and so I could do some shopping.

“McCoy is not my last name and you know that Sebastian,” she huffs out the words, glowering at me when I smile, that deranged smile she made the mistake of telling me she finds hot.

“I disagree,” is all I say before backing her up against the counter, placing my hands on the top of it, caging her in but not touching her. Yet. I lean in and whisper against her ear, “You’ve always been McCoy property, baby.” I feel her shiver when I press into her, my already hard cock digging into her hip.

She slides her elbows back to rest on the countertop and juts her chin up at me. Oh, she wants this to hurt in the best possible way. “Do you like when I’m rough with you? When I make it hurt until you come all over my dick?” I ask, reaching up to rip the bust of her dress over her tits, letting the fabric flip under her breasts which pushes them up for me.

She’s unfazed, unafraid and that both turns me on and makes me want to shake things up so I can see that flash of fear in her eyes I love so much. She pushes her palm against my chest, only my t-shirt separating our skin. My eyes shut for only a brief moment because I’ve missed her touch. I haven’t had her since I arrived home today, and I plan on staying up until the early morning hours licking, sucking, and fucking her until I make good on my promise of my come dripping from every hole. My cock jerks, my balls tightening at the thought.

“You know what else I like, Sebastian?” She pushes me back gently, and I let her because I want to see where this is going. I take in a deep breath, taking in the sensation of her small hand rubbing down my abdomen. I flex my abs, knowing that she can feel the contours of my muscles contracting under her touch. I love when she touches me, but mostly I love watching the arousal in her eyes when she explores my body.

“What do you like, baby? Tell me,” I’m practically begging her. That’s the thing with Carrington Jane and me, we push and pull each other in the best, most intoxicating ways. I need to feel her skin against mine. I don’t know where to start. I want to be inside her and taste her, fuck her, and eat her all at once and I’m fucking livid that that isn’t possible. I need her sinful mouth trailing over my skin and her teeth sinking into my flesh while I pleasure her. I want her mouth on me and I don’t care where. I just want to feel that soft, wet tongue dart out from between her lips and claiming me just as I’m about to claim her.

Abruptly she pushes me away, ducks under my arms and takes off running through the open floor plan kitchen, through the great room and doesn’t stop until she reaches the bottom of the spiral staircase that will lead up to our bedroom. I’m too stunned to even be angry until she leans over the railing and taunts me, “I like when you chase me.” I hear her bare feet padding up the wooden stairs and I shake my head with a knowing smile. She has no idea what she’s just done.



I don’t go after Carrington right away because that’s exactly what she expects me to do. I’m going to give her exactly what she wants, but I’m going to make her wait for it. Instead, I went out to my Maserati and retrieved the gift I bought for her while I was in the city that I hid in the console. I glance up at our house and my chest swells with the excitement of what our life is poised to be. I catch a glimpse of her long dark hair and she runs across the floor of the extravagant balcony that overlooks our land. She’s been up there for the last fifteen minutes with her heart racing, her panties soaked and probably flinching at every creak she hears the house make wondering if it’s me. I’m quiet as I walk through our bedroom, and I can hear her fidgeting as she tries to find a place to hide in our bathroom. She might be scared when I chase her, but this cool, livid demeanor I’m showing her now will heighten whatever she’s already feeling. I feel my dick harden even more at the thought of what I’m about to do to her. I toss off my shirt, kick

off my shoes and unzip my slacks before I rip the bathroom door open with such force that it slams against the outer wall and would bounce back shut if my body weren't already in the doorframe. The noise startles her enough to make her let out a little squeal of surprise.

I spot her hiding under the vanity that covers the entire expanse of the back wall and I walk slowly toward her. I expect her to cower down, curl up in a ball and let the fear overtake her, but instead she crawls out, gets to her feet, and glares up at me.

“Why didn't you chase me?” she snaps at me, and I have to work hard to keep the angry look burned on my face. If she wants to be scared, I'm just the motherfucker to do it. Instead of answering her, I grab her roughly by the neck and pull her to me. She doesn't have time to protest, because I'm already picking her up and forcing her to wrap her legs around my hips. I stay completely still, my entire body vibrating with desire. She opens her mouth to speak again, but when one of my hands move her dress up over her ass and the other one slaps each of her cheeks hard enough to make her cry out, whatever she was going to say to me is completely lost.

My hands massage the sting from my palm cracking against her skin as I walk her silently into our bedroom and abruptly turn right and head out to the balcony. She must realize what my intentions are because I feel her stiffen in my arms when the warm breeze makes her dress flutter up against the top of her ass. Her breasts are mashed against my chest as my fingers trace the silky thong all the way down her crack and over her lips. She's wet with anticipation, and I can't help letting out a groan as I press my fingers against her tight hole, nothing but a thin piece of satin keeping me from what I want.

“What if someone sees?” She whispers, sounding more like her normal self than the brat she was playing earlier. I let her slide down the length of my body, knowing that my silence is freaking her out, and I'm loving every minute of it. “Sebastian, we can't—” she moves to swing her arm out, to gesture over the balcony as if to say anyone might be able to see us. I know that the trees and shrubs are in the right places

that none of our neighbors will be able to see anything, and the chances of anyone coming down the driveway are slim because only Delaney and the other Wolves have the code to our gate. Before she can fully move away from me, I tangle my fingers in her hair, pulling hard just the way she likes it and turn her head to look at me.

“We can do whatever we want, *stepsister*,” I say darkly, and I’m rewarded with fear and desire swirling in the dark green depths of her eyes. I turn her around to face the balcony and rip her dress the rest of the way off. She tries to turn to face me and shield her naked breasts from anyone’s view, but I don’t allow it. Keeping her in place, I move to her side and lean down, taking one of her nipples in my mouth, sucking hard on it like I’m starving for her. I roll the other nipple between my fingers, and I feel her nails dig into my shoulders as she tries to keep quiet. She remembers that her moans, her cries, her screams...they’re just for me to enjoy and that makes me harder, if it’s even possible. I want to savor her, lick every inch of her taut body, but the anticipation we’ve built up and not being able to bury my cock in her for several days won’t allow that.

She throws her head back when I bite down hard on her nipple. I only pull my mouth away from her to reach down and pick up her thin dress. I use it to tie her wrists together behind her back similar to that night in the woods that will forever be burned into my memory. I nudge her forward, pressing my hand on her lower back to make her arch her tits out. The idea of putting her on display for everyone to see what’s mine, what they’ll never have has me ready to come without even fucking her. I’d of course, slit anyone’s throat who actually saw her naked, but the fantasy of it, her fear of someone seeing her has me ready to lose my mind. I keep my hand on the material binding her hands, holding her securely as her middle presses up against the railing. I debate taking her little pink panties off, but when I use my free hand to pull my dick out of my pants and the tip rubs against the silky material, I know I need to fuck her while she’s still wearing them.

I pull her panties to the side and rub my dick along her slit, biting my bottom lip when she flinches at the contact of the

head passing over her clit. She's so wet, and I've done nothing for the past few days except think about being inside her. I can't wait, and when she wiggles, pressing her ass back against me, the last of my restraint snaps. She moans my name, and then cries out at the intrusion when I press the head of my cock against her wet hole and slam inside her, one long stroke, bottoming out just like the night I took her virginity. "You're such a good little slut for me, Carrington. Did you miss having my dick in your tight little cunt while I was away?" I ask, but she can only nod her head and squeak out what I think is supposed to be a yes. I slowly start sliding my length out of her and it's fucking hot watching her pussy stretch around me. When I'm all the way out, I spit directly on her asshole and watch the saliva drip down her pussy. I line myself back up and slam all the way back in. I hunch over her, pressing my open mouth against the side of her neck and taking two fingers of my free hand and pressing them to her lips for her to suck on. "That's a good fucking girl," I groan when she opens her mouth wide, letting me slide my fingers all the way in. She tries to swallow, but it's too much and she gags making her whole body jerk and her pussy clench even tighter around my cock.

I lose it then and begin fucking her with wild abandon, chasing nothing but her orgasm around my cock and shortly after that, my come dripping out of her pussy and down the inside of her thigh. "Come for me, Carrington Jane. Squeeze my cock with that sweet little cunt of yours while you choke on my fingers," I demand, and she does as soon as I rasp the words against her ear. She gags harder, spit drooling down her chin as her wetness surrounds my cock and lets me slide inside her even deeper than before. I stay seated there, deep inside her as I feel the ripples of her orgasm overtake her. I pull my fingers out of her mouth, still keeping one hand on her bound wrists and I reach into the pocket of the slacks I'm still wearing and pull out the little black box. I manage to pluck the diamond ring out and toss the box to the floor. She's boneless, leaning forward, and not paying a bit attention to what I'm doing. I slip the ring on her left ring finger and my cock twitches inside her at the visual. She's going to be my fucking

wife. I quickly withdraw my dick from her pussy. As much as I want to come inside her right now, I need to see something.

“On your knees like a good little slut,” I demand as I turn her around to face me. Her eyes are glazed over, and her cheeks are flushed, she looks so goddamn beautiful. She slides down to her knees in front of me, and I can’t get the damn fabric constricting her hands off quickly enough for my liking. When I do, she’s immediately reaching out with her left hand to grip my dick. Her eyes immediately go to the diamond ring, and she gasps in surprise, her mouth going slack and her eyes shooting up to meet mine. I grin at her and take the opportunity to twist my fingers in her hair and push my dick inside her mouth. Her eyes are wide in surprise, but she breathes through her nose, taking as much as she can until I hit the back of her throat. She gags hard on the fourth thrust, swallowing forcefully, trying to take as much of my length as she can. That’s enough right there for my balls to tighten. I pull out and let my come splash on her tongue and bottom lip and then her tits and stomach. Jet after jet hits her delicate skin and I groan, pulling her to her feet so I can rub my fingers over her nipples. I coat two of my fingers with the liquid and spread her legs with my knee before shoving them in and out of her tight hole. It feels like no matter what I do, how many ways I claim her, it’ll never be enough, I’ll always look for new ways.

I scoop her up and carry her into our bedroom, leaving the balcony doors wide open so the breeze can fill the room. I toss her on the bed and lie on top of her, nuzzling my face against her neck while I recuperate. I’ll take her many more times tonight, but these in between moments are some of my favorites. “Did you just propose to me without even asking?” I hear the disbelief in her little chuckle as she tries to push me off her. It’s not fucking happening, but I do push myself up on my forearms so I can look down at her as she admires her new ring.

“It’s not a question. You *are* going to be my wife,” I rasp, and she spreads her legs a little so I can lie fully between them. She raises her eyebrow at me, but then her eyes go back to the ring, and I can see the absolute delight shimmering in

her expression. After a long moment, she wraps her arms around me pulling me back down on top of her.

“Yes, I’ll marry you. I love you so much, Sebastian,” she says, and I can hear the emotion in her voice just before I drop my lips to hers, kissing her slowly, deeply, and thoroughly. Until I realize what she said.

“I love you too, *Carrington*. But you can’t say yes because it wasn’t a question. It’s a fact,” I tell her, my lips hovering, only a breath away from hers, and my hand coming up to wrap around her throat, just the way she likes it, just where it belongs.

“When I tell everyone, I’m going to tell them you asked,” she says, a grin spreading across her swollen lips.

“They won’t believe you,” I growl, my cock hardening as she struggles beneath me.

“Someone once told me that I was a good liar,” she whispers softly against my mouth and that makes me smile.

“He sounds awful,” I tell her.

“He is, but in all the fun ways.” Her giggle is cut short when my fingers tighten around her neck.

I’d burn the world down and bathe in the ashes for this girl. She’ll always be my forever.

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EPILOGUE

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SEBASTIAN

I'm in a bad fucking mood and someone is going to pay for it. I don't know who yet, but there are plenty of dumbasses in my line of vision to pick from. I look out at the beach and see Wilder chasing Delaney with some sort of crustacean that he found. My eye twitches because Delaney has done nothing but talk about anything and everything that crossed her mind on the drive down to Crooked Cove. Carrington says that I need to be nice because the Wolves, and I guess Delaney too, are the only family that we have. Delaney is miserable because the wedding her parents have arranged for her is quickly approaching, and Declan asked us to come along to distract her. I said no, but Carrington swatted at my chest like she does when I'm being rude and said we'd be happy to join. So here I am carrying a cooler full of beer down to the ocean while Nathaniel and Cruz play cornhole and Declan appraises everyone with disappointment. My eyes land on Carrington Jane as she lays out our towels. She's in a bright red bikini and her hair is in French braids. I've wanted to pull her bottoms to the side and sink myself so deep inside her that she does that little intake of breath that lets me know I'm stretching her in all the right ways since she put it on. There was no time, the Scooby Doo crew showed up and I've been trying to cop a feel since we left the house.

I set the cooler down under the large beach umbrella where Declan has chosen to hide out. He's engrossed in a book called *As I Lay Dying*. Pretentious motherfucker wants everyone on the beach to know he's smarter than them. I want to knock it out of his hands and bury him in the sand for getting me into

this shit. I'm keeping a secret from him. Well, really, Carrington asked me to keep a secret from him, so he doesn't know the wrench he put into my day, but that doesn't make me any less irritated. She asked me while her tongue was gliding up and down my cock, and I would have agreed to anything at that point, so I'm doubly irritated. I shove my hand in my pocket and let the cool metal I find inside move across my fingers. Declan glances up from his book to smirk at me and I wonder how much he knows that he isn't saying. I'm about to tell him to go fuck himself when a volleyball smacks Carrington in the side of the head. I watch as she tosses it in the air and angrily swats it out into the sand.

That's my girl.

"Jesus Christ, lady. You didn't have to be a bitch about it," some kid who can't be more than ten years-old snaps at her, kicking sand on her towel, and toward her face as he turns to head for the ball.

"Don't," Declan says calmly, but I'm already over to the kid with a couple ground-eating strides, grabbing him by the scruff of the neck.

"Sebastian, no!" Carrington Jane whisper-yells because she knows better than anyone that I will snap him in half for disrespecting her. "Put him down. He's a child!"

"What the fuck man?" The kid tries to elbow me, and he's got me so fucked up I think my brain is short circuiting from rage.

"What did you say to my *wife*?" I peer down at him, and he glares right back at me.

"Your what?" Declan asks, and I realize then that he's out of his chair, his book forgotten. He pulls the brat away from me and pushes him to run away toward his ball.

"Shit," Carrington whispers under her breath, but stands up, brushing off the sand that the kid kicked on her when he ran up. "We were going to tell you," she says in that shy voice that gets me every time. I'm suddenly less angry, and 100

percent more focused on the way her mouth is moving; the way the ends of her braids fall on the outside of her breasts.

“You eloped? Delaney is going to have a fucking fit.” Declan smiles genuinely, slapping me on the arm in congratulations. “You know how mad she was that you proposed without all of us there.”

“We’re still going to have a ceremony with everyone, we just—” Carrington bites her bottom lip and suddenly I’m feeling very protective of her.

Declan shifts, which distracts me, so I focus enough to tell him, “But everyone fucking annoys me so we didn’t.”

“You didn’t what?” Delaney pants out the words as she runs up to stand next to Carrington. Her pale skin is turning pink, and I don’t know if it’s from exertion or sunburn. I hope it’s both. I feel Carrington’s intake of breath right where my palm rests on her ribcage and I know she’s about to start explaining herself. She doesn’t get the chance though because Delaney eyes me up and down. “Did I see you put a kid in a headlock?”

I furrow my brow because this sea witch is the whole reason I’m here right now and not in my bed, balls deep in my wife like I want to be. “I don’t know what the fuck you saw,” I tell her, and she grins, which irritates my soul.

“He didn’t want to come to the beach today,” Carrington tells Delaney with a shy smile, turning her body toward her friend, and allowing me to pull her back in my arms.

“So he decided to kill a child in broad daylight?” Delaney asks, flipping her long blonde hair over her shoulder, overdramatizing the whole event. He’s lucky I didn’t drag him out in the water and toss him to a shark. Carrington is every fucking thing to me, and no one disrespects her.

“Tell her what happened,” Declan says, planting his ass back down in his chair and cracking open his book again. Cool and calm like he doesn’t think I will beat his ass right here in front of all these people.

“Bitch,” I spit the word at him because he’s trying to get shit started. He grins at me, and Carrington doesn’t scold me when I flip him off with both of my middle fingers.

Carrington pulls out of my arms and makes a noise of disappointment before she grabs Delaney’s hands in hers. “Look, I’m sorry. You’re going to be so mad and with everything else going on, I didn’t want to tell you just yet.”

I can see that my wife is waffling, not wanting to hurt her friend’s feelings or cause any problems in our group. So, I do it for her. I reach into my pocket and slip my wedding band on my ring finger, careful not to let Carrington’s fall out before I hold it up like I’m flipping Delaney off. “She officially has my last name now, cry about it or don’t, I don’t give a fuck. This is all stupid, tiptoeing around and shit. She’s my wife. I had her all to myself for the entire ceremony and the entire honeymoon just the way *we* wanted it. We’ve been through some shit if you haven’t noticed, and we wanted something just for us.” I huff, but when she opens her big mouth to interject, I start up again, “I would have had her all to myself today too if you’d just either marry the old geezer your parents picked out or run off and join the circus where you belong.” I can hear Declan cackling from behind his book, and that’s the only thing that stops my tirade. Delaney doesn’t look anywhere near offended. Instead, she purses her lips and narrows her eyes at me in a way that only a St. James could pull off.

“Sebastian McCoy, you’ve been doing so well, I...” Carrington is cut off by another burst of Declan laughing like a fucking hyena which has both me and Delaney glaring at him. I fucking hate him for making me be on the same side as the platinum headed demon spawn.

“You just got engaged two weeks ago!” Delaney shouts and then looks at Carrington with sympathy as if I’m holding her hostage. “Was anyone there?”

Carrington steps in front of Delaney, placing her sun-kissed hands on her shoulders. I fucking hate that shit. There’s nothing sexual or romantic about it but my God, I hate when she touches anyone else. I’m obsessed, probably a little

unhinged if I'm being honest, but it is what it is. She vowed to take me as I am, psychotic behavior and all.

“No, it was just Sebastian and me. He picked out my dress. Nothing was traditional at all, but I felt so beautiful. It was perfect for us. We just—” Carrington clears her throat and looks over at me with a disapproving look as if to say *do not make this worse by saying anything*. I smirk at her, because I already told her friend she belongs in a circus, what else is there to say? “After everything we'd been through and our parents being how they are, we just wanted to do it by ourselves. Live in the moment, share something truly special. I didn't keep it from you to hurt you, I just thought with your wedding being something you're dreading, our wedding might stir up bad feelings.” I exhale an annoyed breath which causes both girls to cut me a look because apparently, I'm the bad guy in this whole thing.

“Hey, don't look at me like I'm the one making her marry the crypt keeper. Why don't tweedle dee and tweedle dum do something about it?” I jut my thumb toward Cruz and Nathaniel who are now burying Wilder in the sand a few feet away.

“It's not that simple, Bash,” Delaney bites out the words, which makes me want to bite her head off.

“It *is* that simple. I don't give a fuck.” I sweep my arm out as if that's going to convey how much I mean what I'm about to say. “If my father was trying to marry Carrington off to one of his friends, I'd burn the whole fucking house down with him in it.”

“You'd do that because he blinked at her the wrong way,” Declan chimes in, getting glares from both of us for the second time in just minutes.

“It doesn't matter,” Delaney says, doing a little shoulder wiggle like she's trying to shake off the bad vibes her brother and I are bringing to the conversation. “What matters is that you're happy, even if you married an ogre with abs.” She cuts her eyes at me, and I try hard not to let my lips twitch up into a smile at how much my existence annoys her.

“We’re going to have a celebration with you and the guys, it just didn’t seem like the right time with—” Carrington is cut off yet again by Delaney’s dramatic sigh.

“Don’t remind me,” Delaney says with a little chuckle, but I can hear the sadness seeping through her words. She tries to play it off by throwing an arm around Carrington’s shoulder and then looking me up and down with disdain. “I can’t believe you’re a McCoy. Like... willingly.”

“It’s not so bad. He’s a good snuggler,” Carrington says playfully, moving over to wrap her arms around my abdomen. She tilts her head back and looks up at me. My chest tightens with a crowded feeling that I only get when I’m with Carrington Jane. She loves me unconditionally, even when I’m acting like a bag of dicks. She’d do anything for me, and I’d do the same for her. Except be nice to Delaney. I’m not doing that for anyone.

“Gross. He probably sleeps on top of you so you can’t run away while he’s dreaming about locking you in a basement.” Delaney reaches down and grabs one of those blueberry spritzers we buy for her and Carrington. The ones Wilder gulps down like they’re Kool-Aid.

“Is that why you won’t stay on your side of the bed?” Carrington jokes, sliding her hand up my chest to reach my shoulder and if she doesn’t stop touching me, she’s about to add exhibitionism to the list of things we’ve tried. Nathaniel runs toward us and scoops Delaney up in his arms making her shriek and kick her legs, trying to derail him. He slaps her on the ass before reaching down and getting a beer and taking a seat under the umbrella with Declan. I don’t have to look behind me to know that Wilder and Cruz are headed toward us too to grab drinks. It’s as hot as a mausoleum at Woodsboro today, and I’m so close to calling it a fucking wash and dragging my wife back to our house where we should have stayed.

I sit down in one of the chairs and lean forward to swipe her legs out from under her. She has no choice but to land on my lap with that girlish squeal that makes me rock hard whenever I hear it. I feel her soft gasp before I hear it and I

know she feels my dick pressing against her ass cheek. If I wasn't so possessive of every inch of her body, I'd bend her over right now and fuck her until she collapsed in my arms. I'm used to having my fill of Carrington Jane several times a day, whenever I want, and because of this bullshit trip I haven't had my cock in any part of her since yesterday.

I expect my wife to pull away from me because she knows how unhinged I am when it comes to her, but she surprises me by leaning back against my chest, and in doing so, sliding her ass along the length of my dick, and letting it nestle right up against her pussy. Even though her bikini bottoms and my board shorts are unwanted barriers between us, I can feel the heat of her, and I know her well enough to make an educated guess that she's soaking wet for me. My dick twitches at the thought of sliding inside her and watching her eyes roll back at the initial intrusion. I've given this woman more orgasms than I could possibly ever count, but that look on her face when I haven't been inside her yet for the day and the head of my cock stretches the tight hole of her pussy, that alone could make me come.

I barely hear the surrounding chatter, only picking up stray words here and there. It sounds like Wilder and Declan are arguing over chess, which doesn't surprise me. Since we left Woodsboro, the two of them would bicker over the color of the sky. I brush Carrington's hair over her shoulder and press my mouth to the side of her neck. I feel her shiver and that makes a devious smile stretch across my face. I love what I can do to her because I know no other man could touch her and get this same reaction. She rocks back against me in a way that I know is subconscious, but I decide she's going to pay for it anyway. I grip her hips roughly, yanking her back against me, ensuring that my dick rubs against her pussy.

"You either need to get up and come with me or I'm going to fuck you right here in front of everyone," I say low enough that the rest of the group can't hear me over Declan and Wilder's theatrics, but loud enough that she knows I'm serious. Nothing matters right now except the pleasure I'm about to receive by fucking her until I can watch my come drip out of her tight cunt.

“Sebastian,” she starts to protest, but immediately sucks in a sharp breath when I let my hand slide up from her hip and cover her breast with my palm. It pleases me immensely when her nipple instantly hardens under my touch. I can’t wait to have her spread out beneath me, her tits bouncing with the movement of my hips thrusting against her. There isn’t a goddamn position I don’t like having Carrington in, but that’s the one I want right now. I want her splayed out in front of me, I want my hand around her throat, and I want to watch her opening clench around me when I fuck her.

“Your choice, Carrington Jane,” I whisper huskily against her ear, and let my fingertips rub along the cup of her bikini top.

“You’ll have to catch me first,” she says, surprising the fuck out of me. She jerks up off my lap and takes off running through the sand toward the water.

“Fuck,” I mumble under my breath, unable to get up until my raging hard-on calms down a little. I was planning on using Carrington as a shield on the way over to the rocky cove where we’d be shielded from prying eyes. I stare at Delaney because I figure if anything will kill my libido, it’s her. She makes a face at me like only a bratty sister can and it works. I stand up and look toward the water to see Carrington wading in it and grinning at me. She knows I’m going to ravage her when I get a hold of her, and judging by the look on her face, she’s more than okay with that. I start stalking toward my wife, fully thinking that she’s going to make me chase her, but to my surprise, she takes off running toward me and jumps in my arms. Her body is soaked, and her hard nipples press against my bare chest.

I kiss her roughly but pull away quickly because we’re on a crowded beach and I don’t know how much restraint I can have with her legs wrapped around me like this.

“Put me down so it doesn’t look so obvious,” she squirms against my dick that is now raging hard again. She points to the rocky cliffs nearby that overlook the water. “Declan was telling me earlier that they’re closed off because some people got hurt up there, but...” she trails off, but I don’t need her to

finish her thought. We can be alone up there. I let her slide to her feet and relish at the feeling of her body moving against mine.

Carrington Jane grabs my hand and links our fingers and I look down at her profile as we walk toward the entrance to the cove that is clearly blocked off. I squeeze her hand and even though she doesn't look over at me, I see a look of satisfaction pass her face and I get a crowded feeling in my chest. I wouldn't say it to her because I don't want her to remember that there was ever a time where I doubted what we have together, what we could be, but sometimes it still shocks me that she's mine. She's the only thing that will ever matter to me and the thought that I could have lost her still wrecks me, but I fight every single day to prove to her just how much I desire her.

I look behind us to make sure no one is going to cause any problems or follow us up on the rocks. I let Carrington slip in front of me and I'm not disappointed in the view as I watch her climb over the barricade so she can reach the walkway that leads to the top. From what I can see there's an overlook to take in the beach, but I'm betting there are alcoves that will be perfect for what we're about to do. I let my hand slide up the back of her thigh and over her ass, pushing her bikini bottoms over toward the crack of her plump ass. She squeals, but doesn't head to the walkway until after I get a good squeeze of the flesh.

"Patience has never been your strong suit," she tells me as I hop over the barricade to stand next to her.

"I'm about to show you what my strong suit is, baby," I tell her, swatting her ass hard and the sound of my palm slapping her skin makes my dick jump. I love that fucking sound.

Carrington makes a couple quick steps to get ahead of me. She turns to face me, and she dips from side to side to see behind me. I realize she was making sure no one was following us when she tucks her fingers under the edge of both sides of her bikini top, letting her tits bounce free solely for my viewing pleasure. She continues to walk backward,

giggling as I advance on her. A jolt of pleasure shoots straight to my dick when I see her pinch her nipples, pulling on them and letting go. Her tits bounce with the movement, and I practically growl. I can't wait to get her somewhere semi-private. I need her now.

I scoop her up, swallowing her squeal in a searing kiss. I press her back against the rock head and her legs wrap around my hips. I grind into her and rip my mouth away from hers only to dip my head to capture one of her taut nipples between my lips. I suck hard and she arches her back, pressing herself closer to my mouth. The fingers of my other hand dig into the tight flesh of her ass. It takes every bit of restraint not to shove my shorts down, pull her bikini bottoms to the side and slam inside her until she screams so loud the entire population on the beach knows my name. I bite down on her nipple, and I can't help but chuckle when she cries out, lifting her hand to swat my shoulder.

“Ouch, you're lucky I don't leave for that,” she barely gets the words out before I roll my hips against hers, causing her to moan.

Rationally, I know she's not serious and that she's only talking about leaving me with a raging hard dick, but something about her saying she's going to leave me stirs up a feral part of me I haven't tapped into in a while.

Before I realize I'm even doing it, my hand is around her throat, holding her immobile against the rock. “You will never leave me for any reason,” I thrust hard against her pussy, and I see her wince at the force as I'm pressing her into the hard, rough surface of the stone behind her. “Till death do us part, baby. Remember your vows?” I bite out the words, my mouth hovering over hers and my fingers digging into her neck, restricting her airway just enough to make her gasp and press her body against mine.

“Sebastian,” she whispers, her fingers coming up to dig into my chest, her eyes wide and focused on my face.

“Say it.” I loosen my grip just as I say, “Tell me, baby, let me hear it from your pretty little mouth.”

“Till death do us part.” Carrington’s voice is a little quivery, probably from the adrenaline pumping through her veins right now. She knows I’ll never hurt her, but I like to keep her guessing what I’m going to do next. “I need you inside me,” she finally tells me when I dip my head to draw her other nipple into my mouth. I make a show of sucking and licking, letting my lips make a popping noise when I pull away from the taut peak.

“What do you want inside your pussy?” I tease her, rocking my hips again and using my free hand to cup her other breast. I want to touch every part of her right now, but I don’t want it to be over too fast. I need this to get me through the rest of the night because it’s going to be a long drive home.

Carrington grabs my face and forces me to look her in the eyes when she says, “I want your cock inside me, *husband*.”

Fucking hell.

I pull back and unwind her legs from around my hips, letting her slide to her feet. I begin walking up the rest of the walkway, careful to sidestep the fallen pieces of rock. “Where are we—” she starts, but swallows down whatever it is she was about to say because I pick up my pace, pulling her behind me.

“Somewhere I can lay you out and admire my fucking prize,” I snap at her, turning to the left when I see an alcove with pieces of rock lying in the opening. Just as I suspected, there are large chunks of rock lying in the hidden space. My eyes zero in on a flat piece that’s a few feet off the ground. It’s the perfect height for what I want to do right now. It’s not as bright in here as it is outside, but sunlight floods in from the opening and from small cracks in the ceiling.

“Get on your hands and knees,” I tell Carrington and my chest tightens with some kind of emotion I don’t want to explore right now when she immediately does as I tell her. She makes a big display of crawling up on the flat rock in front of me. She looks over her shoulder at me and I don’t know what’s sexier, the look in her eyes or her pert ass swaying in front of me at the perfect level to sink my dick in any hole of

my choosing. I walk up closer to her and press my hips against her ass, my hands gripping her hips roughly. I pull her bottoms to the side and without warning sink my pointer finger all the way inside her slick folds to the knuckle.

“Oh my God,” she whispers when I abruptly pull it all the way out and add my middle finger on the way back in. I use my free hand to keep her bottoms pulled away from the view in front of me. I’ll never get tired of seeing any part of my body spreading her pink pussy apart. I drop down to my knees without warning and pull my fingers all the way out and lean forward to devour her sweet cunt.

“You’re such a good girl, Carrington. So wet just for me, aren’t you?” I ask her, and she cries out when I spread her open and lick from her clit up to the entrance to her pussy. I dip my tongue inside her, and she pushes back against the intrusion.

“Please,” she begs me, and it’s enough to make me reach down and tug my dick out of my shorts.

“Please what?” I tease her, blowing warm breath across her glistening pussy.

“Fuck me. Please, Sebastian,” I can hear the need in her voice, and it almost makes me lose my control and fuck her just like this with her ass in the air.

I stand up and flip her over on her back with ease before setting her back down on the rock. To my dismay, her bikini top is covering her tits again. I reach down and rub her pussy through the fabric of her bottoms, instantly finding her clit. She arches her back in pleasure, proving that I was right for wanting to fuck her in this position. When I glance down, I see the glint of my wedding ring on my finger and a dark thought crosses my mind. I use my hand that isn’t making her hips buck in pleasure to retrieve her ring from my pocket. I stop my ministrations to lean heavily over her, making sure she’s trapped against the hard surface of the rock. I tighten my fingers around her neck, my eyes boring into hers. “This ring will never leave your finger again. Not for any reason. Not for anyone. You are mine in every fucking way and anyone who

looks at you will know it.” I growl the words, surprising even myself. I was agitated earlier, but I hadn’t realized how deeply it bothered me to see her finger without my ring on it.

“Yes. Yours. Only yours,” Carrington whispers, gasping when I tighten my fingers a fraction before letting go all together. I slip my ring on her finger and then give her enough space to allow me to pleasure her.

I reach up with my hand that isn’t teasing her and tug the fabric away from her tits. “You’re beautiful, baby,” I tell her, and I watch as her eyes rove from my chest, down my abs and settle on my dick. I grip my length, rubbing from the tip to balls and back up. “Is this what you want? Do you want me to fuck my cock into your wet little pussy?” I ask, using one hand to pull her bottoms to the side and the other to rub the tip of my dick over her clit and down her slit, pausing at the opening. Instead of pushing inside her, I move it back up to her clit. “Answer me and maybe I’ll give you what you want,” I tell her as I move back toward the tight hole begging to be fucked.

“Yes. Please. Fuck my wet little pussy with your cock. I want to feel you all the way inside me.” I’m pleased when she uses the exact words I said to her, and even more thrilled when she props up on her elbows and tells me, “I want it to hurt. I want you to take what you need from me,” and that’s all it takes for me to snap. I grab her by the hips, pulling her toward me and slam inside her without easing in. She cries out, lying completely flat on her back and I lean forward, kissing just under her breasts while I let her adjust to the intrusion for only a few seconds. I still remember that first time I sheathed myself inside her that night in the cemetery and I’ll never tire of being this fully connected with her.

“That’s it, baby,” I tell her, pulling out and then slamming back inside, her breasts moving in tandem with my thrusts. I look down and watch her pussy swallow my dick, and I feel it jerk inside of her, making her hum in approval. “Look how good you’re taking my cock. Your pussy was made for me to fuck,” I tell her, and I know I’m not going to be able to last

with how she looks right now, the things she's saying, and the way her cunt is gripping me just the right way.

"You're so deep inside me," she pants out the words as I pick up my thrusts, my hips slapping into her inner thighs. I won't allow myself to come until I see her roll through an orgasm and feel her pussy spasm around my hardness. I reach down and rub her clit and I feel her walls squeezing my dick, milking it.

"What do you want? Tell me what you want right now." I want to hear her say it, and she knows exactly what I need.

"I want you to come inside me. I want you to fill me up, Sebastian." I groan when I hear her words. I spit, letting it drip down and land on her clit, and rub the wetness in with my thumb. I don't know if it's the movement of my ministrations or the sight of my spit dripping down on the taut button that gives her so much pleasure, but something gives inside of her, and I feel the telltale sign of her orgasm starting. She grips me, and her whole body goes rigid, arching up toward me as I piston inside her.

"Fuck," I curse, leaning forward to slam inside her and capture her mouth in mine. I pull back only to say, "Wrap your legs around me, baby. Give me everything you have," I plead, shoving so far inside her that my balls are slapping against her ass. I last two more long, fast strokes and then I feel everything tighten, my dick twitches and jet after jet of my hot come sprays inside of her, coating her walls and filling her to the very brim. She's mine. No one can ever take her from me and my chest swells at the thought.

I have the insatiable urge to pull out slowly and then shove all the way back inside, burying my cock to the hilt in her come-filled pussy just the way we're meant to be. I kiss her gently this time, rocking my hips back and forth. "I love you so fucking much," I tell her, and she opens her mouth to speak, but I swallow her words of love and deepen our kiss, reaching down to pull her leg up around my hip. I don't want a drop of my come leaking out of her, I want it to stay deep inside of her where it belongs.

“I don’t want to leave,” I tell her, kissing her forehead. “I just want to stay inside you all fucking day,” I say, and I feel her pussy clench at my words telling me that she likes that idea.

“As much as I’d love that, I think we should probably head back before the Wolves start a search party for us,” Carrington tells me with a sleepy laugh, rubbing the side of my face with her soft hand.

“I’ll fucking kill them if they come up here,” I growl, making her laugh harder and lean up to kiss me softly. My dick jerks inside her, hardening from the way she’s kissing me.

“Maybe we could stay for just a little longer,” she says sweetly, smiling up at me and I glower at her choice of words.

“We’ll stay for as long as I say we’re staying.” I thrust inside her and the way her eyes roll back in pleasure tells me I won’t have any arguments from my wife.

“Whatever you say, Sebastian, just keep doing what you’re doing,” she says breathily, wrapping her arms around my neck, trying to pull me closer to her. Just where I want to be every fucking second of every day.

“Always, baby. Always,” I groan out the words, gripping her hips and slamming inside her, because with Carrington Jane I can never be close enough.

INDECENT INFATUATION

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Chapter One - Elijah

I want to bash his face against the counter and crack his skull for smiling at her. But instead, I lean back in the booth I'm seated in. I watch as the Ivy League fuckwit leans too far forward on the breakfast counter in this shitty diner. I can't hear him, but he must tell some joke that makes Cadence smile when she puts the plate of eggs and bacon in front of him.

"Are you okay, Eli?" Nicole asks, and I finally look at her. She reaches across the table and puts her hand over one of mine. She's my girlfriend, but not the love of my life. That title was given to Cadence a long time ago. She's my little fox. The fucked up part is, she also happens to be my cousin.

"Yeah, I just don't like that guy," I tip my head toward the sunburned momma's boy wrapped in designer clothes and boat shoes. Colt has been friends with Cadence since we were kids, and the only reason he's still alive is because she asked me not to hurt him. Otherwise, he'd have gotten a baseball bat to the back of his skull. One clean crack. Not that I've thought about it a couple hundred times over the years or anything psychotic.

Nicole dramatically snatches her hand away from me, like she's been burned. The only reason she's here, or I entertain her at all, is because of Cadence. We got caught again this morning cuddling in my bed by Aunt Angela. I talked our way out of it, mostly by pointing out the fact that I've had the same girlfriend since I moved in with them. I know it's wrong, I shouldn't use Nicole the way I do, but I really don't give a shit. Cadence is all I care about, and if that means I need to keep Nicole around, that's what I'll do. I moved in with Cadence's family after my father died under the guise of helping them pay their bills. Of course Aunt Angela twisted the narrative, telling everyone she took me in because I needed emotional support. My father was a drug addicted prick, and I don't miss him. If my aunt was half as bright as she pretends to be, she'd realize that I don't give a fuck about anything other than her daughter.

“You don’t like *any* males who show any interest in Cadence, you mean.” *Jesus, does this bitch ever shut the fuck up?* I cross my arms, letting my fingers rub over my tattoos because if I don’t distract myself in some way, I’m going to reach across the table and throttle her. I’ve got one nerve left and she’s hellbent on bitching until it snaps.

“Are you even going to deny it?” Nicole harshly whispers.

“She’s my little cousin.” The words are bitter as they roll perfectly practiced off my tongue. She’s nineteen, I’m twenty-one and we’re not blood related, but we grew up together like real cousins and that makes everything murky. I’ve always been fiercely protective of her, and I’ve been the one she’s sought comfort from. It wasn’t until we got older that her mother took issue with Cadence sitting on my lap or us cuddling on the couch. The night her father was arrested, and her family was publicly shamed for his crimes, she climbed on my lap and asked me to hold her while she cried. Only instead of letting her legs hang off to the side and curling into my chest the way she normally would have, she straddled my lap. Her dress rode up her thighs, and instinctively, my hands migrated there, pulling her closer and letting her bury her face into my neck. That’s when my attraction to Cadence turned into a full-blown obsession. She’s a virgin, so sweet and innocent. But I also know my hands on her body make her feel something she could never feel with anyone else. So I haven’t pushed her for more than what she offers me. For now.

“You don’t act like you want to murder someone when guys flirt with me,” Nicole complains, but she quickly replaces her scowl with a fake smile as Cadence approaches our table.

“Sorry guys, it’s been like a madhouse in here this morning.” She’s the prettiest thing in this dumpy diner, and I hate that she has to work here. But when you’re the daughter of the former police chief who turned out to be selling the drugs he confiscated from dealers, not many places will hire you. He’s the one who got my father hooked on the pills that killed him. He’ll be out of prison soon, and even though Aunt Angela says she won’t let him back in the house, we all know that’s a lie.

“We’ll have two breakfast combos,” Nicole decides without asking me, but I don’t give a fuck. It’s not like I come here for the food.

“White, Wheat or R-r-rye?” Cadence stumbles on the last word when I let my knuckles drag from her knee to just under the hem of the pale pink dress and white apron they make all the waitresses wear. I love that she gets flustered by such a simple touch. It’s barely sexual, but my dick is hard just remembering the little tank top and panties she wore when she crawled in my bed last night. Trying to keep her from scooting her ass back against my hard dick before she falls asleep is my fucking villain origin story. But I’m tall and she’s five-foot-nothing, so I’ve been skating by. Barely. I might not know what her pussy feels like, but I will soon.

I realize I’ve tuned out when Nicole kicks me under the table. “What planet are you on, Eli? God, you can be such an asshole. What do you want to drink?” I glare at her, but she doesn’t know that it’s because Cadence shifts on her feet, pulling her silky skin away from my reach. I want to know which panties she slipped on after her shower this morning. Are they the pink lacey ones that will forever be my favorite?

“You know he’s grumpy in the mornings,” Cadence teases me, but I can hear the shakiness in her voice. I fucking love that I can do that to her. I playfully flip her off, and she grins, grateful that I’m playing the grouchy older cousin role effortlessly. She’s never said it, but I know she thinks about what it might be like if I took it too far. She gets this soft, needy look in her eyes just before her eyelashes close and dust the apples of her cheeks. The only reason I haven’t taken her, made her fully mine, is that I know once I do, I won’t be able to stop. There isn’t a motherfucker I wouldn’t murder if they got in my way.

It’s Sunday, so I’ll have to entertain Nicole all day. Since the mechanic’s shop I work at is closed on the weekends, I can’t use an extra shift as an excuse. I’m not sure I’ll make it the entire day listening to her incessant bitching when my mind is still on Cadence’s panties.

“He’s grumpy all the time,” Nicole whines and then gives me a little smirk that would be cute if it wasn’t from her before she adds, “is Colt in town just to see you? He looks pretty smitten.”

Cadence shifts uncomfortably, brushing away strawberry blonde wisps of hair that have fallen from her messy bun. “Colt? Ah, no. He’s home from MIT visiting his family before winter comes. It’s supposed to be brutal this year.” Colt is a trust fund kid, and the only reason he knows Cadence is because he got kicked out of that ritzy private school and had to slum it with the rest of us for a few years.

“You two would make such a cute couple,” Nicole looks me dead in the eye when she speaks before turning her attention back to Cadence.

“Well, he did say there’s something he needs to ask me. Maybe he wants to marry me and take me away from this dump,” Cadence chuckles lightheartedly, clearly joking. She’d never marry someone for their money, but the thought of his hands on her, his ring on her finger makes me want to break every bone in his body.

“What did he get kicked out of Hollow Hill Prep for again?” I’m being a dick, but I don’t give a shit. She’s mine. She might not fully grasp it yet, but she fucking belongs to me. When she just stares at me wide-eyed, her lips parted in confusion because my tone is so harsh, I add, “go put our order in, I don’t have all fucking day.” Something inside me is pleased when hurt flashes in her green eyes. Barely past midnight, she’ll be climbing in my bed, curling into my chest like it’s a fucking mold for her. That’s how fucked in the head I am over this girl. I enjoy upsetting her because I know I’m the only one who can make it better.

“All I’m saying is maybe you should give him a real chance instead of spending all of your time with Elijah.” I can hear the anger simmering, even through the condescending tone she’s using.

Cadence immediately looks at me at the accusation, but recovers, turning to Nicole when she says, “I-I don’t spend all

my time with Elijah, but he..." Her words are cut off by Nicole.

"Every time I call him, you're with him sweetie. You need to stop depending on *my* boyfriend for emotional support. I let it slide because your dad is in prison, but..."

"ENOUGH!" I bang my fist on the table, and it's jarring enough to cause the entire restaurant to go silent for a few seconds.

Nicole feigns innocence, like she wasn't just trying to manipulate Cadence right in front of me. "I'm just trying to help her—"

"If I need relationship advice, I'll be sure to let you know since yours seems to be going so well," Cadence chirps, and I have to cover my mouth with my hand to hide my surprised smile. Cadence is usually so sweet, and it's so fucking hot when she asserts herself.

"Eli! Are you going to let her speak to me that way?" Nicole cries when Cadence walks away stiffly without saying anything else. Nicole's crocodile tears don't distract me from the satisfied smirk pulling at her lips as she tucks her short blonde hair back into a clip. Her nipple piercings are visible through her thin white t-shirt as she arches her back into her over-exaggerated stretch. She got them because I told her I liked them, but she whined and bitched about the pain, trying to guilt trip me about it. I mentally roll my eyes when I recall the way she wouldn't speak to me on the way home because I didn't get jealous that the guys in the tattoo shop saw her naked tits. I really haven't given a shit about her since day one, and sometimes I wonder why she sticks around waiting for me to prove it. All I can think about is Cadence's untouched skin and how she would look with silver bars through her pink nipples. Would she get them if I told her to? Would she do that for me?

"What is your problem today?" I realize Nicole has been talking and I haven't heard a word of it. She looks like I've slapped her in the face, but even that brings me no pleasure, just annoyance.

I've had enough of her shit, and I can't keep my cool any longer. I lean in and snap, "The only reason your mouth should be open is to suck my dick, so shut the fuck up."

"What are you doing here?" Cadence asks as she practically skips up to the driver's side of my truck. She cocks her head to the side, biting her bottom lip before she whispers, "Why were you so irritated with me earlier? Is it because I snapped at Nicole?" Her lips purse in distaste, like she's remembering the incident from earlier.

I ignore the question. I had to drop Nicole off at her parents' house after a whole fucking day of her pawing at me. Even after she started crying in the diner in an effort to make Cadence feel bad for talking back to her. She thinks she's so much smarter than everyone, but I see right through her. As soon as we were alone in my truck, she acted like a bitch in heat. I'm not sure how much longer I can put up with her, even to hide my feelings for Cadence. Her last words before she got out of my truck were *'We need to talk, Eli.'* I'm probably the only guy in the world who can't keep a girlfriend he doesn't even want.

"Why didn't you tell me you were working a second shift?" I know I'm being curt with Cadence, but I'm in a bad mood. I'm fairly certain that telling her I want to bash her friend's head in with the baseball bat I keep in my truck isn't going to make anything better.

"Talk to me nicely, Elijah." Cadence pouts her lips and I'm fucking hard as a rock just looking at her. She's clearly exhausted, and that makes me angry that she works so hard. But the sick part of me is excited because I know how pliable she'll be in my arms tonight. I just want to take her away from here, from this life she doesn't deserve. She reaches up and touches the side of my face, and that instantly calms my racing thoughts. "It's only a couple blocks. You don't have to worry about me all the time. I can walk, ya know," she tells me, smiling sweetly.

How many fucking guys in this grimy city could pull over and do fuck knows what in the twenty minutes it would take her to walk home. I only glare at her and tell her, “Get in.”

We don't speak most of the drive, and a better man would take her directly home, draw a bath for her and let her get some sleep. But I'm not a good man, and I'm fucking obsessed with her.

“Where're we going?” she asks sleepily, and I can feel her watching my profile as I drive out of the city.

“Violent Peak,” I teasingly tell her, because we used to go on vacations to Hollow Hill Mountain when we were kids, before our families became a fucking joke. Before I knew what a miserable sonofabitch I'd turn into because I can't have the one thing I want more than anything else. I'd love nothing more than to take her to the very top of the mountain, all the way to Violent Peak, and keep her all to myself. I've always craved the wilderness of a remote place like that. Cadence is the only thing that has kept me here for so long. I'm not above kidnapping her and keeping her willingly or not. As the days go by, the dark part of me that doesn't care about anything except for owning her is winning out, and it's only a matter of time before it wins out. It would be the perfect time of year to disappear and start building our new life before the winter comes. I've thought about it so often, I know how I'd do it, step by step.

I glance over to see her reaction, and I'm not disappointed. She's kicked off her shoes and her pink tipped toes are resting on my dash. I want to reach over and run my hand from her knee to her thigh, but I grip the steering wheel instead. She smiles at me, like running away to the mountains together sounds like a good idea. She's always loved the wildness that the mountains offer, the trees and landscapes that aren't overwrought by buildings and the smog this city has to offer. I know she'd be happy there with me. She wouldn't need anyone else.

I fully intended on driving around for a while until my hard-on finally went down and then taking her home. But there's a car riding my ass, and I'm not in the mood to get

another ticket for doing sixty in a twenty-five. I pull off to the side of the road and the car flies around me, gunning the motor as it passes. I watch the taillights as they disappear into the darkness. I couldn't place whose vehicle it was, but whoever it was knew it was me. I've got a lot of enemies in this city, mostly because I won't roll over and do whatever is asked of me. And also, because I'm a fucking asshole most of the time. I need to take her home before whoever it was circles back and starts some shit with me. I've got my baseball bat behind my seat and a gun in my center console if they do decide they want to play games tonight. But I don't want Cadence seeing all that shit. I try to protect her as much as I can, shield her from the seedy shit that goes on in this city, but I know she's seen her fair share. She's been in tears over things customers of the diner have done and said to her, and I've always taken care of it. She'll never know the brutal things I've done to protect her. I've broken kneecaps, smashed fingers, and shattered jaws. I've watched the horror in their eyes as I doused them in gasoline and smiled when I struck the matches. I've killed men for the simple act of making her uncomfortable. She might not know the gory details, but she sure as fuck knows she's never had to deal with the same asshole twice.

Cadence shifts on the bench seat to face me. My eyes are drawn to her tan legs as she pulls them up on the seat and her uniform rides up. Instinctively, I reach over and cup my large hand around her delicate ankle. She stretches her legs out on my lap, and I grip her a little too hard, adjusting her so that she won't feel how fucking hard she makes me.

I fucking hate that I can't get inside her head, know everything thought that crosses her mind. At one point, Cadence and I shared every thought, every breath, and now I've got to hide my indecent desires from her to protect her. She has to feel the shift, because it fucking kills me too. I see the way she appraises me, unsure if I'll lash out at her like I did at the diner today. "Did you make up with Nicole?" she asks, and I can't quite place the look she's giving me. Sad? Uncertain? "She was crying pretty bad." She bites her lip, and

I wonder if she's picked up on the fact that Nicole doesn't like how close we are.

"She's being a bitch as usual," I mumble the words, sliding my hand from her ankle to her knee. Her breath catches in her throat, and a rush of adrenaline hits me straight in the dick. I don't give a shit about anything except this fucking feeling. My gaze flicks from her wide eyes to her full lips.

"I've always wondered why you bring her around." Cadence looks away shyly and then finally locks her eyes on mine. "She's so petty. I don't dislike many people, but I can't stand her. I don't think she likes that you're my *best friend*," she says and the tension in her voice as chooses her words carefully has me hanging on her every word. I'm rock hard and the more she dances around the state of our relationship just turns me on even more. "Sometimes I think she's jealous because of the way you look at me." I can see the blush dust across her pale cheeks, and I'm not sure how far she's going to take this. It's the first time that either of us has acknowledged that there's something more than a friendship or familial bond between us.

I clear my throat before I ask in a low voice, "How do I look at you, little fox?"

She covers her face in embarrassment, but I'll have none of that. She won't hide any part of her from me. I want to know her deepest, darkest thoughts and I want to bring them to life. "Tell me," I growl.

I'm not sure what I expect her to say, but I'm not prepared for her to push forward on her knees moving to straddle my lap. I catch her by the hips, keeping her from sitting on my lap. There's that needy look in her eyes again, and it makes me want to rip her panties to the side and fuck her right here on the side of the road.

Maybe she knows more about what I'm hiding from her than I thought. "You're fucking playing with fire, Cadence." I warn her as her hands come to rest on my shoulders, her nails dig into the flannel shirt I'm wearing, and it makes my dick jump.

“I don’t mind if I get burned,” she whispers, one of her hands coming up to cup the side of my scruffy face. “I know it’s not right, but—” she doesn’t get the rest of her thought out because my resistance has snapped.

I pull her down on my lap hard and her knees spread so her ass is flush against my thighs. The feel of her pussy pressed against my throbbing dick is enough to make me groan. She gasps and I’m not sure if she’s surprised that I’m already hard, or if she’s never been this close to a man before. I slide my hands under her dress and grip her hips, my thumbs sliding under the thin band of her panties.

I lean my head back and watch her face as I lift my hips. Even with my jeans and her panties separating us, it’s the single best thing I’ve ever felt in my life. She tilts her head to the side and her eyes close in pleasure on my third thrust. One of her small hands slides up my neck, and I know she must feel the tension I carry there. I’m trying with every nerve in my body to not rip her out of this damn truck and fuck her on the hood.

When she rubs the side of my face and her thumb brushes against my bottom lip, I squeeze her down on top of me harder, rolling my hips up to grind against her pussy. Of all the times I’ve fantasized about taking her virginity, I never imagined it would be like this. Anyone could walk up and see us, and I should care. I really should, but I don’t give a shit.

Before she can react, I’m ripping the buttons off the back of her dress and tugging the fabric down over her full breasts. I relish in her surprised squeal for a moment and take in the rich red, lacy bra contrasting against her pale skin. She bites her bottom lip shyly, and I realize that she probably feels exposed. I should ease her into this, ask her if she’s comfortable. But when she fidgets nervously, shifting her ass on my lap, all coherent thought is thrown out the window.

“Fucking hell, little fox,” I growl, tugging the soft lace to rest below her tits exposing her pert, dusty rose-colored buds to my greedy eyes. The small silver bars pierced through both nipples sends a zing of pleasure straight to my cock. I lean forward and devour her, flicking my tongue across the

hardened peak before sucking it between my lips. I groan into her sweet skin; she's so fucking perfect. I couldn't have imagined that she'd taste any better. It's only when my fingers find the other nipple, and that's when realization hits me.

I pull my mouth away and shift, sitting up so we're eye to eye. Her plump lips are parted as she moans softly in frustration. I grip her hip roughly, to still her movements. If she keeps grinding against my dick like that, I'm going to forget why I'm pissed right now. I pinch her pierced nipple and then roll it between my thumb and my forefinger. "Who the fuck pierced your nipples, little fox." My rough tone doesn't come out as a question, but I want fucking answers and I want them now.

Even with only the moonlight shining in the cab of my truck, I see the blush spread across her cheeks as she averts her eyes and tries to move her hand to cover her perfect breasts.

I pinch harder, causing her to cry out and look at me with a pout. I fucking love when she pouts those full lips. Pleasure courses through my dick and I have to restrain myself from pressing up into her.

"Answers. Now."

"Danielle took me a while ago, we stopped one day after work when she was giving me a ride home." She moves her hands to my chest, playing with the buttons on my flannel shirt. "She was getting hers done, and well, I..." She glares at me when I grab her by the jaw, forcing her to look me in the eyes instead of at the buttons we both know she doesn't find that interesting.

"*Who* saw your tits?" I can't keep the anger out of my voice, and realistically I know I'm acting insane. It's her body. She can do whatever she wants. She's *not* my girlfriend.

I just don't give a fuck.

She's so much more than that to me and the thought of another man's eyes on her bare flesh makes me want to beat him until he can't remember what her body looks like.

When she doesn't answer me, I growl, "Did you strip your clothes off and let some asshole put his hands on your body?" *I'm the only one who should be able to touch you.*

She catches me off guard when her lips turn up into a brilliant smile. Her eyes get all big and soft, like they do when I've said or done something to please her.

"Are you jealous, Elijah? You didn't care when your *girlfriend* let some man see her naked," She whispers against my lips, just barely grazing her skin against mine and I nearly snap right then. I need to feel her naked beneath me, I want to feel her wet heat around my dick while her eyes roll back and her only conscious thought is my name.

"Tell me who it was and I'll show you how jealous I am," I bark the words out, and I'm satisfied that her smile is gone. She believes me. She knows I'd murder someone for her and that thought makes my chest tight with some emotion I won't try to figure out. She's the only one I feel that way with, and the only one who will ever bring this side out in me.

She rubs the side of my face gently with her palm when she sputters out the words, "Danielle...you know the waitress who gives me rides sometimes? Her sister-in-law, Jen, works at a tattoo shop. It was just me and Jen in the room, and it was a spur of the moment decision. I wasn't sure I even wanted them." She huffs out a giggle, flicking her finger against the cold metal. I feel my dick twitch at the sight. "You're the only guy who's ever seen me like this, Elijah. I just thought maybe..." she trails off, looking away from me with that shy demeanor that makes me want to conquer and claim her as mine.

"Look at me and tell me what you thought," I say, rubbing my thumb along her plump bottom lip. "Why did you go through with it?"

With a little huff, she admits, "I got them done after I heard Nicole complaining about how much it hurt and how you owed her for getting hers pierced." I'm very still, nearly holding my breath as I wait for her to finish whatever she's about to say. "I thought you must like it, if you asked her to...I

don't know." She's blushing again and it's the sexiest thing I've ever seen in my goddamn life.

I cup her jaw gently this time, gripping her thigh with my free hand. The constant pressure of her slight weight pressing down on my dick is slowly driving me mad, and I welcome it.

"You pierced your nipples because you thought I would like it?" She gives me a little nod, but that's not enough for me. I'm a greedy bastard when it comes to this girl. I want it all. "Tell me. *Say it, little fox.* Tell me who you did this for."

"You. I did it for you," she admits before whispering, "I didn't think you'd ever find out."

The fact that she did something to please and I didn't even have to ask her makes the beast inside me roar to life. It's gone too far. She's mine now, there's no backing out. Now that the rage inside me has been suppressed, I want to watch her play with her nipples.

"Touch yourself for me. Don't be shy, little fox," I demand roughly, and she complies. A soft moan escapes her as she tugs on the taut peaks and arches her back. The movement juts her tits closer to my face, and I can't restrain myself for one more fucking second.

I nudge her fingers away from one of her tits and cup it firmly, bringing it to my lips. I devour her, alternating between sucking and flicking my tongue against the sensitive nub.

I move my hands to her hips and grind her against my hardness. I want her to feel what she's doing to me. I realize now that I haven't kissed her. Not the way I need to kiss her.

Just as I move my hand to the back of her head to pull her mouth to mine, bright headlights appear, and I realize that someone has pulled over directly behind us.

VIOLENT PEAK

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Chapter One - Lexington

“What’s a little thing like you doing out here by yourself?” I’m startled by the man’s voice, but I don’t flinch or look him in the eye. He’s pretty far away, so I’m not worried. He’s probably lost. We get a lot of wanderers around here trying to forget their past, hide out and start over where nobody knows them, but usually not this late into the season. I ignore him and continue looking for small sticks and branches I’ve been collecting from the floor of the dense forest near our cabin. Most of the time people like him are harmless, just looking for abandoned or uncharted parts of the mountain to hide out for the winter. It’s also that time of year where people in Violent Peak get restless, looking for anyone to sate their needs before the winter overtakes our world and we’re isolated to our own backyards for several months. I used to love the winters before my stepbrothers moved away, but now I feel claustrophobic at the thought of being confined with my stepfather and my sister. Our cabin has plenty of wood and kindling stocked up for the winter, but my stepfather, Mr. Graves, asked me to get more today. He was very specific about where he wanted me to gather the wood from, but now I’m regretting listening to him. I rarely wander this far out on the property on my own because of things like this.

I’d wanted an excuse to get out of the house for a while. Away from him, but also from my younger sister, Darcey. I used to be close to her, but lately anything I do or say seems to upset her in some way or another. She’s become argumentative, rude, and even physically violent. Mr. Graves doesn’t encourage her behavior, but he doesn’t try to stop her either. They’re like two peas in a pod, which is unsettling, because Mr. Graves has never been known to be particularly warm to anyone. Not even his own sons or my late mother.

My mother married him when I was eight years-old and passed away before my ninth birthday. I never got to say goodbye to her because she’d been on a hike with Mr. Graves when she stumbled and fell, plummeting to her death. She was

his second wife, and also the second wife to die. I'm not sure how his first wife died, he refuses to speak about it. But apparently it wasn't an accident, and that's why my stepbrothers left a few months ago. They'd been searching their entire adult lives for the man who was responsible for their mother's death, and six months ago, a lead finally came through. I shouldn't blame them for leaving, but in the deepest part of my heart, I do. I miss them, and nothing soothes the gaping hole they've left in my chest. But I also understand why they left. I would want to know what happened to my mother, if I'd been left wondering about her death my entire life. It sounds gruesome, but Mr. Graves assured me and Darcey that our mother died instantly, and very likely didn't feel any pain before she passed. I don't know if he just told us that so we wouldn't cry, or keep asking questions, but I'd like to think that's how things happened. And even though it's hard to fully remember her, I'm certain she never really loved him. But he had the money and the expansive cabin on a hundred acres in Violent Peak. It got us out of the shelter, and away from my biological father. I don't remember anything about him, but he couldn't have been a dutiful husband and father if Mr. Graves was the better alternative. I only recently found out that Mr. Graves was a mafia associate turned whistleblower. It makes sense why he chose Violent Peak to rebuild his life, and why he's so secretive about his past. I only discovered it after my stepbrothers left six months ago. I'd been trying to keep busy, keep my mind off of them and how much I missed them, despite how angry I was at them for leaving me. I found newspaper clippings and court documents my mother had kept in boxes in the attic. I doubt the boys know, but I don't think they would be surprised if I told them.

My stepfather used to ignore me when I was younger, but since the boys left, he's made it clear that he doesn't like anything about me and that I remind him of my late mother. Darcey and I are complete opposites physically. I'm tall and lean and she's petite and curvy. My blonde hair is wavy, and her dark hair is pin straight. Mr. Graves hasn't put his hands on me in anger, but I really believe that's because he's not sure if his sons will ever return. If he did hurt me, he knows that would be a death sentence for him. I'm not so sure anymore

though, lately I've given up hope that they'll return. I don't worry about their safety, because Mr. Graves trained Jasper, Hendrix and Cooper how to expertly use a myriad of weapons. I've seen them kill trespassers, would-be burglars, and hunt animals for the fun of it. They had no remorse, no guilt, and the only alliance they have is toward each other and to me. And I was their little doll, their best friend, their biggest fan, which meant that because I tagged along for everything, Mr. Graves was teaching me too whether he wanted to or not. I feel my nipples tighten at the nickname they gave me. It was purely innocent at first, stemming from the fact that I'm so much shorter and smaller than the three of them. They could easily pick me up, toss me around, and it just kind of stuck. But as we got older, things shifted a bit, with all three of them.

We never talked about the way the platonic playfulness turned into soft touches and cuddling. Two years ago, after I graduated high school, their resolve broke. We didn't have sex, and I'm not quite sure why they held back from that particular thing because we did plenty of things that we shouldn't have. I learned what they liked, what their deepest desires were, and I thrived, wanting to give them everything that they wanted. They brought me pleasure too, because I was their little doll, the only one who knew everything about them.

I found that Jasper liked to wake me up by touching me and kissing me. And it wasn't long before I realized that slowly being pulled from a deep sleep by his tongue slowly licking my clit was the best kind of way to wake up. Cooper had a thing for rope, fishing line, or really anything that he could wrap my body in, leaving me immobile so he could take his time to play with his little doll. He preferred the abrasive rope from the garage that would scratch my delicate skin and leave behind little reminders of our time together. Hendrix liked to make me beg. He'd often deny me orgasms because he liked when I struggled, fighting against him, until I finally gave up, allowing him to slide his hard cock down my throat. He liked to spank me, usually outside on the property where someone might catch us. He'd pin me against a tree, and pull my skirt up and my panties down so that he could spank me hard enough to turn my ass red.

I glance back at the man, and an eerie feeling fills my body because he's still staring at me. I've never killed anyone, but sometimes I wonder if I'm a psycho like my stepbrothers are. It didn't bother me to see the men they killed writhing in pain, begging them to let them go. They'd trespassed into our little bubble, and in my mind...death was the consequence for that. If I was honest, I wished it could just be us four, in our own little world with nothing to interfere. I know they felt the same way. Because two years ago, after I graduated high school, I brought up the idea of moving down to the bottom of Hollow Hill Mountain where I'd more easily be able to find a job. They'd instantly vetoed that idea, not really giving me an explanation, only saying that they wouldn't allow it. I didn't really want to move anyway, painting is my passion, and also my career. I travel down the mountain a few times every spring and summer to sell my work, and my brothers were okay with that as long as they accompanied me. I'm sure a lot of people would find our relationship strange, especially the physical aspect of it. But I like how possessive they are or *were* until a few months ago.

Heat fills my chest when I think of them and how they left me here to fix all the broken pieces of my heart. I haven't heard a word from them since they left. Not even one call to our landline, which works most of the time except for when there's a heavy snowstorm. They offered no explanation, no apology for leaving me behind, and no promise of when or if they might return. I was hopeful for a few months after they left, waiting on pins and needles like the silly little girl I am for them. But I'm a twenty-year-old woman and I have to be realistic, that maybe they won't return for me. I don't think they realized how much they protected me just by being around. Even though they taught me to fend for myself, I never had to, because no one—not even people just passing through wanted to mess with the Graves brothers' most prized possession. Their little doll. Or maybe they did know, and just decided I wasn't their problem anymore. They deserve a life, and there isn't much living to be done in a place like Violent Peak. Most people couldn't survive a winter in the rough terrain up here at the very top of Hollow Hill Mountain. But I

love this mountain. It's my home. And I wouldn't trade it for any other place in the world.

I shake off the thoughts and glance back at the man who called out to me, as he is steadily moving closer, but getting slowed down by all the brambles he's walked right into.

"Stay right there, Lexington." I feel the tiny hairs at the nape of my neck stand up at the man's domineering tone, and I realize right then that he's not what the residents of Violent Peak would call a wanderer. He's not here by accident. He didn't stumble by and decide to see what he could take from me. I don't know how he knows my name, but I'm not afraid of him. I've become numb to fear over the last six months, shoved my feelings as far down as possible. I don't paint anymore or do anything that used to bring me joy. It's almost laughable that he thinks that he's intimidating. Judging by the way some prickly brush almost took him out, he's no match for the wilderness or for me. I duck through a line of trees to get him off my trail.

The mountain isn't welcoming, and neither are its residents. He's wearing slip-on dress shoes and fitted slacks, and the expensive jacket that covers what looks like a button up shirt isn't made for harsh weather. He for sure doesn't have cellphone service because none of us do. He probably doesn't even know what kind of weather is headed our way in the next couple days. I'm not sure why someone like him would be looking for me, but the only thing I can assume is that he knows my stepfather in some capacity, because Hendrix, Jasper and Cooper would never associate with someone like this. If he makes it off our land alive today, he won't make it through the winter. No one will willingly take him in, and Violent Peak winters are harsh, even for those of us who are prepared.

Instead of giving him the response he's looking for, I continue to walk away from him. He isn't brandishing a weapon, but I'm not going to stick around and find out what he wants from me or how he knew I'd be out here. I keep moving in the direction of our cabin. My emotions are all over

the place right now because as much as I wish my stepbrothers were here, I'm so angry at them that they're not.

The day they left, I begged, pleading on my knees for them not to go. They were secretive about why they wanted to leave, and I couldn't imagine a good enough reason. I'd only found out where they went a few weeks after they left because I overheard Mr. Graves talking to Darcey about it over dinner. Despite the shitty situation with my stepfather, I can't imagine calling another place home.

The day they left will forever be the worst day of my life, even over the day they had to console me when Mr. Graves told us that my mother had died. Cooper, the one who always had a slick remark or funny quip, even in the worst situations, didn't crack a smile the morning they told me they were leaving. *For a while*. The only answer he'd give me echoes in my mind as I remember the way he gripped my thighs and picked me up to hold me one last time. I can almost feel the way he buried his face in the crook of my neck before letting me slide to my feet. Hendrix was cruel, brushing me off like their decision to leave had nothing to do with me. Like I shouldn't have a say in it at all, like they didn't owe me an explanation. He acted as if they hadn't spent the last several years sneaking me into their rooms, cuddling with me, caressing me, calling me their little doll. They were fiercely protective, but it wasn't in a brotherly way. They never looked out for Darcey, in fact, they often acted as if she didn't exist. That's how it always was with the four of us, like we were the only ones on this planet, and I savored every moment of it. They could never explain to me what they felt for me, or why they would go absolutely feral if another guy was giving me attention, but they never seemed jealous of each other.

I didn't think Jasper was the one who would be compassionate. Because emotionally, he's the most reserved of the Graves brothers. Hendrix has a short fuse and an explosive temper, and Cooper is playful. But Jasper liked to twist my mind, so I wasn't surprised when he wouldn't tell me the truth about where they were going. I never expected him to say he would miss me and that things would be okay. He barely spoke to me that day, and I knew it wasn't a game when he

kissed me on the forehead when I cried against his chest. Rage courses through my veins as I remember what it felt like watching the three of them pack their bags into the bed of their rusted, old pickup truck and drive away without looking back.

Sometimes late at night, in the darkness of my lonely bedroom, I can still feel the way Hendrix's fingers felt around my throat as he gritted out the words, "Suck it up, little doll. You'll be fine without us." His fingers squeezed as his lips hovered over mine. I remember wishing he would just fucking do it, kiss me hard and rough so I could convince him to stay.

When he let me go, leaving me standing on our front porch, he headed to one of our old sheds where all the cars and hunting equipment were kept. I'd looked to Jasper for some sort of answer, but he stared right through me like I wasn't even there.

Cooper, the youngest and only two years older than me, was the one who alerted me that Hendrix was on his way back when he said, "Let me do it. It's our thing." I glanced at Hendrix's hands and my stomach dropped when I realized he'd gone into the garage to get rope. For me. Hendrix didn't argue with Cooper which was another huge red flag that something really bad was going on. He tossed the wound up rope to Cooper. He was right, tying me up was something only Cooper liked to do. But this time there would be no writhing against his hardness, pretending that I wanted to escape. There would be no giggles after we both came, no snuggling and falling asleep listening to his heartbeat. There would be no getting woken up by one of the other guys pulling Cooper's hands out from beneath my sleep shirt, scooping me up and taking me back to one of their rooms because they needed time with their little doll.

I'd been so inconsolable, crying out for them as Jasper and Hendrix held me down while Cooper tied me to his bed. I was making it difficult, fighting against them, and I know they could have easily overpowered me, but some sick part of them liked the struggle. And despite the emotional turmoil I was in, the feeling of all three of them holding me down, taking control of their little doll was enough to have my panties and

shorts soaked. Jasper's hardness pressed against me, and it must have been a wakeup call, that they were starting something that they couldn't finish. He left the room immediately after Cooper secured my wrists and legs, and I never saw him again. Hendrix pulled my hair tight in his fist, forcing me to look up at him as Cooper tightened my binds. "Be a good little doll. Don't fight us," was the last thing he said to me before they left the room, slamming the door behind them. A few moments later I heard their trucks starting up and speeding down the lane lined with trees. Even at the mere memory, something that happened over six months ago, my face heats with embarrassment.

If it's one thing that this mountain has taught me, it's that men are the same as animals. If they sense fear, they'll pounce and rip apart their prey. I can handle myself though, I'm not prey for anyone anymore. I've been fending for myself for the last six months since they left. The only reason I've hung around here is my younger sister, Darcey. She's eighteen now, and she looks at Mr. Graves as her real father, even though he isn't. I just can't bring myself to leave. I hype myself up to pack my stuff and leave every spring, yet by the time winter comes I'm still here, trying to look after her the way our mother would have wanted me to.

"Speak, you little bitch," the man practically growls at me. An audible huff of annoyance leaves my lips, if my stepfather didn't keep the guns locked up, I wouldn't be in this situation right now. When the man reaches out, almost grabbing the tail of my braid, I begin walking away from him at a faster pace, still feigning as if I don't see or hear him. I watch him out of my peripherals and revel at the stunned look on his face before it contorts into anger.

"Hey! Get back here!" The man trips over a downed tree, and that's when I lose my resolve. I look at him and laugh, something I haven't done in a long time. He's so fucking stupid to think I'm out here alone without any weapons. I have two knives, one in my back pocket and one in my boot. It probably won't escalate far enough for me to use them on him because I'm fast. I know I can outrun him. If he's dumb enough to chase me back to the house, there's a good chance

nature will take care of what I didn't. He doesn't know our land like I do. I know every dip, crevice, every ditch that is now covered by fallen leaves.

I'm pulled out of my thoughts as the man moves closer, but I already anticipate his movement and toss the armful of twigs at his feet. He lunges, but I've already got one of my knives out. He dwarfs me by over a foot, but I don't fear him.

"There's no way out, sweetheart. I'm twice your size. And I'm betting your daddy can't hear your screams from all the way out here." He taunts me, clearly thinking that he can overpower me and take my weapon. I can hear the lust in his voice, and it makes my stomach churn with repulsion. Are all old men this disgusting?

I see the surprise on his sun weathered face when I laugh sardonically at him. "Are you trying to scare me?" I smirk. "I grew up with the most brutal men on this mountain. You're a little late for that."

"You sure about that?" My body goes rigid when I hear the voice from behind me. Another wanderer. I try not to panic, but I'm feeling a lot less confident now that I'm outnumbered. I hear the leaves crunch under his boots as he moves closer, and I'm penned in between them, reaching for one of my knives, but he's faster, grabbing my arms and jerking them behind my back violently. I scream and kick my legs out when he pulls me back against his chest.

The first guy advances until he's close enough to grab my flailing legs. "I'll take that," he sneers, prying the knife out of my hands. The man holding me covers my mouth so I can't scream while his friend unbuttons my jeans and rips them down my thighs. He doesn't bother to take my boots off, and just lets the jeans pool at my ankles.

"Hurry the fuck up," the man holding me growls when the other man fumbles, cursing as he tries to get my jacket undone. "Just fuck her, leave the shirt." He doesn't listen though; he uses a knife to cut my jacket and then my flannel shirt open. He nicks the skin between my breasts, not cutting deeply enough to be fatal, but it stings and he draws blood that

begins to slowly drip down my stomach. I'm not wearing a bra, and I watch in horror as he loses focus, his eyes devouring my bare skin. He quickly recovers, shoves his pants and boxers down to his ankles.

I manage to bite the hand covering my mouth and I let out a scream when he removes it. I let out another guttural cry when he hits me in the side of the face. "You fucking bitch!" He punches me again, and I kick my legs at his friend. The other man grabs my legs, struggling to get my boots off so he can get rid of the jeans that are blocking him from stepping between my legs.

"Turn her over, I can't get them off," he demands, but the man holding me doesn't budge. "The little bitch made me chase her."

Panic finally sets in, and I'm unable to suppress the scream that leaves my lips. I try to calm myself, stay as quiet as possible, because the only person who could help me within earshot is my stepfather. And he always finds a way to make everything my fault, I'm not even sure he would stop them from violating me. I'm in over my head, and I'm losing hope that I'll be able to get out of this on my own and suck in a sharp breath when the man holding me grabs my hair roughly in his fist. I jerk my head back, headbutting the man holding me so hard that he groans in pain. I'm sure it'll be painful tomorrow, but the adrenaline coursing through me numbs me. I realize that my legs are free when the man struggling with my shoelaces suddenly stills and then falls to his knees.

"Paul, what the fuck are you doing?" The man holding me growls just before the one called Paul slumps over to the side and the arrow sitting out of his back is visible. I'm instantly dropped to the ground and the man who was holding me starts running, not looking back at his fallen friend. I'm lightheaded and dizzy from the blow to the head, but I scramble to my feet. My stepfather doesn't have a bow, and I need to get out of here before whoever shot Paul aims for me. Once the snow arrives, there will be no way to get to medical care, and it's iffy if the satellite phone will even work.

I struggle to untie my laces. I need to get my jeans off and run as fast as I can. I hear the man let out a blood curdling scream and I realize that whoever is out here must have gotten him too. I somehow manage to get my other shoe off and my jeans kicked to the ground. I take off running, leaving my discarded clothes behind. I know the man is mortally wounded, but he's still alive, and I'm not sticking around to see what comes of him. I don't even flinch as the sticks and rocks slice up the bottoms of my feet. I just want to get into the cabin and count my blessings. But before I can make it out of the tree line, I'm scooped up by a familiar set of hands and tossed over a strong shoulder. His large hand cups my ass cheek like it's meant to be there.

“Going somewhere, little doll?”

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The Banned Baddies: Your support through everything I've thrown at you book wise is everything!!!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I like toxic, touch-her-and-die, antiheroes, and that's exactly what I write. I have a weird sense of humor, so sorry in advance if you follow me on social media.

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