

RENOVATING AN INN,  
UNLOCKING HEARTS.



# A ROOM FOR FOUR

A REVERSE HAREM ROMANCE

CARMEN BLACK

# A Room for Four

Carmen Black



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This book contains sexually explicit scenes and adult language.

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# Chapter 1

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Rosie

The letter had arrived on a nondescript Tuesday. It bore the unmistakable cursive of Aunt Caroline, elegant and purposeful, even in her will. My hands trembled as I opened it, scanning the dense legal jargon, until one sentence stopped me in my tracks. “I hereby bequeath my beloved Driftwood Dreams Inn, Azure Cove, to my dear niece, Rosie Sutton.”

My heartbeat echoed in my ears as the reality of the words sank in. My mouth had gone dry. A creaky old inn in a sleepy coastal town was now mine. Driftwood Dreams Inn. I could hardly believe it. My aunt’s paradise, the very place that hosted my summer vacations as a child, was in my hands now.

Later that day, as I wandered aimlessly through the corridors of the old inn, my mind buzzed with ideas. The dust-covered surfaces and peeled wallpaper seemed less of an eyesore and more like a canvas begging for color.

“I could repaint the dining room in a warm shade of coral,” I murmured to myself, fingers tracing the faded floral pattern on the walls. “And replace those cracked window panes with

tinted glass, the ones that can turn the sunset into a magical dance of colors.”

Each room held a memory of Caroline; her laugh echoed through the empty spaces. I could still picture her in the kitchen, humming to herself as she baked scones that melted in your mouth. The realization of her absence brought an unexpected lump in my throat.

But I couldn't afford to be swallowed by grief. Not now. I had a promise to keep. A promise to breathe life back into the place that once bustled with guests and laughter. And if anyone could make it happen, it was me.

A vision started to take shape. This place would be a sanctuary for people to escape the rush of their daily lives, a place where they could rest and rejuvenate, and fall in love with Azure Cove as my aunt and I had.

Emboldened by the prospect, I knew there was someone I needed to share this with - Viv. Her infectious enthusiasm and knack for creative solutions were just what I needed to navigate this unfamiliar terrain. The fact that she also owned the town's most successful bakery made her the perfect partner in crime.

A smile curled on my lips as I reached for my phone, eager to spill the news to Viv. The dream of reviving Driftwood Dreams was no longer a mere flicker in my mind. It was a blazing fire, ready to transform this forgotten retreat into a place that truly felt like home.



The door to the bakery chimed merrily as I pushed it open, the warm, sweet aroma of freshly baked pastries enveloping me instantly. Viv, with her fiery curls bouncing as she moved, was behind the counter, dusting powdered sugar on a batch of raspberry tarts.

“Rosie!” She exclaimed, her blue eyes lighting up behind her glasses. “You’re here early. What’s up?”

“I have something to tell you, Viv,” I replied, a sense of excitement bubbling within me.

She looked at me, her hand stilling mid-motion. She dusted off her hands and led me to a small table by the window. “You look like you’re about to burst. What is it?”

I took a deep breath, ready to spill my secret. “You remember my aunt’s inn?”

“The one in Azure Cove? Of course, I do. We spent our summers there, remember?” she said, her face softening at the memory.

“Well, it’s mine now,” I said, the words still felt surreal even as I said them aloud.

Her eyes widened. “What? Rosie, that’s...that’s incredible! But why?”

I explained Caroline’s will and how the establishment was now my responsibility. She listened, her eyes filled with understanding and excitement. “And now, I want to bring it back to life, Viv. I want to restore it.”

Her face lit up like a Christmas tree. “Rosie, that’s a brilliant idea! It’s a big project, but if anyone can pull it off, it’s you.”

“I’m thinking of turning it into a retreat, a place where people can unwind and fall in love with the cove, just like we did,” I said, my heart pounding with the possibilities.

Viv leaned forward, her hands clasped together. “I can see it now. A charming inn, with your unique touch. It’s going to be amazing, Rosie.”

I grinned, relief washing over me. “I was hoping you’d say that, Viv. I’m going to need all the help I can get.”

She raised an eyebrow, a mischievous glint in her eyes. “Does this mean I get to taste test all the new menu items?”

Laughing, I nodded. “Absolutely. It’s all part of the job.”

We spent the rest of the afternoon discussing ideas, my friend’s infectious enthusiasm fueling my own. As I left the bakery, the weight of my new venture felt a little lighter. I was no longer alone in this. With Viv by my side, I felt ready to face whatever came next.

Back at the old inn, I pulled out my sketchpad, ready to put our ideas to paper. I walked through the dusty rooms, seeing past the years of neglect, and envisioning the potential beauty hidden beneath.

As I roamed the rooms, I felt the echo of past lives lived within these walls. The inn was a grand old dame, standing tall against the relentless march of time. Each creaking floorboard, each faded wallpaper held a story, a whisper of the past. The

dilapidated condition was daunting, but it was the kind of challenge I thrived on.

Sketchpad in hand, I began to draw, my pencil dancing over the page. I started with the entrance, imagining a welcoming foyer with a large rustic chandelier casting a warm, inviting glow. The front desk would be made of reclaimed wood, paying homage to the inn's history.

Moving on to the dining room, I visualized an open space with large windows that framed the azure ocean. I wanted the guests to dine under the stars, to feel the sea breeze as they savored their meals.

The bedrooms would be a blend of comfort and elegance, each one offering a breathtaking view of the cove. Soft pastel colors would adorn the walls, creating a soothing atmosphere. The bathrooms would be a modern oasis, complete with rain showers and plush towels.

My heart pounded with excitement as the inn began to take shape on the paper. It was a labor of love, a tribute to Caroline, and a gift to the town she loved.

I was so engrossed in my work that I didn't notice the sunset painting the sky with hues of pink and orange. It was only when the room started to darken that I realized how much time had passed.

Satisfied with my preliminary designs, I gathered my sketchpad and pencils, ready to head home. I paused at the entrance, taking one last look at the inn. It was a daunting task,

but the prospect of breathing life back into this old beauty was invigorating.

As I locked the door behind me, my thoughts drifted to my brother, Danny. I hadn't shared the news with him yet, but I was eager to do so. I knew he'd be surprised, but I also knew he'd be supportive. After all, he was the one who always encouraged me to follow my dreams.

I couldn't help but smile at the thought of his reaction. Danny was always full of surprises, and I had a feeling he would have a few suggestions up his sleeve. Little did I know, his idea of enlisting the help of his friends Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, would be the key to unlocking the full potential of the inn. But that was a conversation for another day. For now, I was content to let the dreams of the inn dance in my mind as I headed home under the starlit sky.

Arriving home after spending the day discussing plans and walking through the inn, I spotted Danny on the porch, engrossed in his book. Seeing him, my heart swelled with affection. He had always been my rock, my voice of reason. He looked up from his book, surprise written all over his face.

"Hey, what brings you home? Bakery run out of flour?" he teased, a familiar glint in his eyes.

Ignoring his jab, I settled beside him. "I need to talk to you, Danny. It's about Caroline's inn."

His brows knitted together, a flicker of concern in his eyes. "What about it?"

I began unveiling my plans for Driftwood Dreams Inn. I told him about my vision to restore it into a retreat, to transform it into a place where people could unwind. He listened in silence, his eyes studying me.

“That’s...that’s quite an undertaking, Rosie,” he finally said, his voice filled with awe. “Are you sure about this?”

I nodded, resolute. “I’ve never been more sure about anything, Danny. I want to bring Caroline’s dream back to life.”

He studied me for a moment longer before a smile spread across his face. “I’ve always admired your spirit, Rosie. If anyone can pull this off, it’s you.”

My heart warmed at his words. My brother’s faith in me meant the world. But then, a thought occurred to me, an idea so perfect that I wondered why I hadn’t thought of it before.

“You know what, Danny?” I said, my voice steady. “I could really use some help. Maybe you could pitch in?”

His laughter filled the porch. “Me? Rosie, you know I can barely hammer a nail straight.”

“Not you,” I corrected him, my eyes sparkling with mischief. “Your friends. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They’re all handy, aren’t they?”

Danny looked at me, stunned. “You want my friends to help renovate the inn?”

I shrugged, grinning. “Why not? Dylan’s a carpenter, isn’t he? And Logan knows his way around a toolbox. As for

Ryder, he's got that landscape business. It's perfect."

He was silent, his eyes on the horizon as he pondered over my suggestion. I held my breath, hoping he'd agree.

Finally, he turned to me, his expression serious. "You know what, Rosie? That's actually a pretty good idea. They're always looking for new projects. I can't promise anything, but I can certainly ask."

I beamed, hugging him tightly. "Thanks, Danny. You're the best."

He chuckled, ruffling my hair. "I know. Now, let's go inside. I'm starving."

As I followed him inside, my heart fluttered with anticipation. I was ready for the journey ahead, eager to restore Driftwood Dreams to its former glory. I knew there would be challenges, but with Danny, Viv, and hopefully Dylan, Logan, and Ryder by my side, I felt ready to take them on. This was just the beginning of my dream, and I was ready to embrace whatever came my way.

## Chapter 2

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Dylan

A wave of cool ocean air greeted me as I arrived at the grand structure of Driftwood Dreams Inn. Looking up, I took in the decaying facade, envisioning the potential it held. The crunch of gravel alerted me to Rosie's arrival.

"Hey, Dylan," she spoke, her tone both anxious and hopeful.

Turning to her, I admired her petite frame draped in a sundress, the morning sun casting a halo-like glow around her. She looked like an eager angel determined to restore her inherited property.

"Hey, Rosie," I said, giving her a reassuring smile.

We headed towards the inn, a quiet wrapping around us, reflecting the stillness of the morning. She seemed apprehensive, a small wrinkle creasing her forehead as her bright eyes inspected the deteriorating building. I couldn't blame her. The task she had undertaken was considerable.

"It's... it's a bit daunting, isn't it?" She admitted, nervously running her hands through her hair. "When I said I longed to

restore it, I hadn't quite envisioned the magnitude of the task."

"Don't worry, Rosie. It's not as bad as it looks," I assured her, placing a comforting hand on her shoulder. "The place has good bones. We can work on this."

Rosie nodded, exhaling a deep breath. "So, where do we start, Dylan?" she asked, tucking a loose strand of hair behind her ear.

"First, we assess the structure," I began, gesturing towards the inn. "Once we know what we're working with, we can start to plan the renovations."

For the rest of the morning, we did just that. As I guided her through the house, Rosie's zeal slowly resurfaced. I was relieved to see her regaining confidence.

As we explored each room, I inevitably found myself admiring her ability to visualize transformations, painting the old spaces with the colors of the new. Every time she pointed out a potential change, her face lit up with an irresistible glow.

Her passion was contagious, and I found myself getting swept up in it. This project was no longer just about fixing an old inn, but about supporting Rosie in making her dreams a reality.

"And the fireplace?" Her words cut through my thoughts, "What do you think, Dylan? Should we keep it or replace it with something modern?"

"The fireplace stays," I responded firmly, examining the handcrafted stonework. "We restore it. Trust me, Rosie. On a



cold winter night, the charm of a roaring fire in a traditional fireplace cannot be replaced.”

She grinned, excitement twinkling in her eyes, and it was then that I knew. This renovation, daunting as it may be, was not only going to revive Driftwood Dreams Inn but also kindle the flames of an unexplored affection budding between Rosie and me.

For the first time, the mere thought of it didn't intimidate me, it intrigued me. In fact, it excited me.

Under the midday sun, we made our way through the inn, noting the areas that required immediate attention. The inn's grandeur was masked by years of neglect, but its charm was undeniable.

“We need to fix the roof first,” I suggested, pointing towards the leaking ceiling in the living room. “The last thing we need is water damage.”

Rosie nodded, taking down notes on a small notepad she carried. “And the plumbing?” she asked, biting her lower lip, a habit I had noticed when she was nervous.

“That too,” I replied, “but let's focus on one thing at a time. We can tackle the plumbing after the roof is fixed.”

We continued to survey the property, from the shaky staircases to the peeling wallpaper. Despite the state of disrepair, I could see Rosie's plan coming to life. She had a knack for seeing beauty in the most unexpected places, a trait that I had always admired.

“What about the garden?” Rosie asked as we stepped outside to the unkempt landscape, once a lush garden but now overgrown with weeds and brambles.

“It has potential,” I said, scrutinizing the unruly surroundings. “With a little bit of work, it could be a beautiful spot for guests to relax.”

A small smile appeared on Rosie’s lips as she pictured it, her worries visibly diminishing. “I can see it,” she murmured, “a small coffee table here, a swing there, surrounded by blooming flowers...”

Her voice trailed off as she lost herself in her vision. Seeing her so passionate and excited was infectious. The daunting task ahead seemed a little less intimidating with Rosie by my side.

The day progressed, filled with comfortable silence, occasional idea sharing, and laughter evoked by old memories. Despite the demanding task ahead, the day had been surprisingly enjoyable. Rosie’s vitality was infectious, and her determination was admirable. She had taken on this monumental task with such grace.

As the sun began to set, painting the sky with hues of orange and pink, we found ourselves standing on the inn’s front porch. We were both tired, but there was a sense of accomplishment in the air. We had made a good start, and I was confident that we could restore the inn to its former glory.

“I can’t thank you enough, Dylan,” Rosie said, her voice soft with gratitude. “I couldn’t have done this without you.”

I looked at her, her face glowing in the soft light of the setting sun. I wished to tell her that I would do anything for her, that her happiness was my happiness. But I held back, opting instead to offer her a small smile.

“You’re welcome, Rosie,” I said, my voice barely above a whisper. “I’m looking forward to seeing your dream come true.”

As she beamed at me, I felt a tug at my heart. There was something brewing between us, something more than friendship. But for now, I chose to keep my feelings to myself. After all, we had a long journey ahead.

Late into the evening, we found ourselves in the dusty, old library, pouring over some of her Aunt’s old architectural blueprints. As we hunched over the fragile paper, I was continuously stealing glances at her. The lamp cast an inviting glow on her features, and it was all I could do to keep my hands from reaching out to her.

She looked up suddenly, meeting my gaze, and for a brief moment, I held my breath, hoping she’d seen my longing. Instead, she laughed, pointing at her face. “Do I have dust on my face?”

Suppressing a sigh, I simply smiled and nodded, brushing the imaginary dust off her cheek with a thumb.

By the time the day ended, my feelings for her had become an undeniable fact. Rosie was the woman I had fallen for. But for the sake of our friendship and this project, I resolved to keep this secret to myself. After all, I had an inn to restore and

a heart to guard. Little did I know, the challenge had just begun.

As the day turned into night, I found myself in my sanctuary, my carpentry workshop. The familiar scent of sawdust and timber filled the air, providing a comforting atmosphere as I sorted through the tools scattered on the workbench. I was lost in thought, my mind replaying the day's events.

"Dylan, you're here late," a soft voice called out, interrupting my reverie.

I turned to see Vanessa, my older sister, standing at the entrance. She was clad in her usual elegant attire, her soft blonde hair cascading down her shoulders.

"Couldn't sleep," I confessed, shrugging my shoulders.

She scrutinized me for a moment before making her way towards me. "What's on your mind, little brother?" she asked, leaning against the workbench.

I hesitated, unsure of how to put my thoughts into words. Vanessa had always been my confidante, but this... this was different. I glanced at her, her bright blue eyes filled with concern.

"Rosie," I finally admitted, my voice barely above a whisper.

Vanessa's eyebrows shot up in surprise, but she didn't interrupt, allowing me to continue.

"I've... I've been in love with her for a long time, Vanessa," I confessed, my gaze fixed on the wooden floor.

There was a moment of silence before Vanessa spoke. “Rosie? Our Rosie?” she asked, her voice laced with surprise.

I nodded, not trusting myself to speak.

“Dylan, why didn’t you tell me before?” she asked, her tone gentle.

I shrugged, running a hand through my hair. “I didn’t want to complicate things,” I admitted. “But now, with this project... I can’t help but feel this is my chance to be closer to her.”

Vanessa scrutinized me for a moment before breaking into a smile. “Dylan, that’s wonderful,” she said, reaching out to squeeze my hand. “But you have to tell her.”

I shook my head, a grimace forming on my face. “I can’t, Vanessa. Not now. Not when we have so much at stake.”

“But Dylan...”

“No, Vanessa,” I interrupted, “I won’t risk ruining our friendship or this project.”

Vanessa sighed, nodding in understanding. “Alright, Dylan. But promise me you’ll tell her when the time is right.”

I nodded, feeling a sense of relief wash over me. It felt good to finally voice my feelings, even if it was only to Vanessa.

As I returned to my work, Vanessa’s words echoed in my mind. ‘Promise me you’ll tell her when the time is right.’ I could only hope that when that time came, Rosie would feel the same way about me. Until then, I had an inn to restore and a heart to protect.

## Chapter 3

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Logan

A knock echoed through my office at Anchor Capital. I glanced up from my spreadsheets and data, catching sight of Rosie Sutton standing in the doorway.

“Hi Logan, hope I’m not interrupting anything,” she said, her hazel eyes dancing with curiosity.

“On the contrary, you’re rescuing me from financial analysis hell. I’ve been expecting you.” I invited her into my office, matching her infectious smile. Her impromptu visits always brightened my day. Memories of her interrupting our childhood play to join the boy’s club flashed through my mind. Now, she was a radiant woman, seeking help to realize a dream that had suddenly become her reality.

Rosie sat across from me, her hair swept into a loose bun, a faint line of worry creasing her forehead. She produced a stack of papers, invoices and renovation blueprints. The Driftwood Dreams Inn and her aunt’s legacy were at stake, and I could see that the magnitude of her inherited dream was

overwhelming. Yet, a spark of excitement in her eyes was unmissable.

“Now,” she said, tapping the pile of documents with her forefinger. “Let’s turn Aunt Caroline’s dreams into reality.”

“So serious, Rosie?” I said, joking lightly to coax the twinkle back into her eyes.

“Well, I’ve been tossed into unfamiliar territory. The only numbers I know are in bakery recipes. Not budget estimates, cost evaluations or cash flow statements,” she retorted, sticking out her tongue playfully.

A hearty laugh erupted from me as I reached over, giving her hand a reassuring squeeze. “Don’t worry, Rosie. That’s why you’ve got me here, your personal financial advisor. I’ll ensure this project won’t lead you to bankruptcy.”

Rosie chuckled, some of her tension fading away. “Thank you, Logan. I can always rely on you.”

We plunged into the daunting world of finance, a dance between Rosie’s visionary dreams and my pragmatic numerical expertise. We navigated tight corners, our heads bowed together in concentration, our discussions peppered with heated debates and spontaneous laughter amidst the technical jargon. With each passing hour, I was pleased to see Rosie’s anxiety giving way to understanding, then elation.

When Rosie set aside the renovation blueprints, her eyes ablaze with determination, I realized my desire to help her was more than just the nostalgia of childhood friendship. Her

charisma, her boundless optimism, it had always been magnetic. But now, it was her courage to chase her dream that left me breathless.

Our financial odyssey felt like a triumph. It was no longer about saving the Inn from monetary ruin. It was personal. It was about aiding Rosie's dream, witnessing her transform an inherited burden into a beacon of hope for the quaint town of Azure Cove. The blossoming bond between us was merely a delightful by-product of the journey we had embarked on.

"Well, this looks like a plan," she exclaimed, her face radiant with gratitude.

Indeed, it does, I thought, echoing her smile. I allowed my gaze to linger on her a moment longer before she rose from her chair, signaling the end of our meeting. She thanked me and left the room, leaving me alone with my numbers. But now, they had a personal touch - each figure, each graph symbolizing a part of Rosie's dream, and a blossoming bond that would forever change us both.

Unbeknownst to us, our world of spreadsheets, shared laughter and unspoken affection was just the first step in our journey to renovate more than just the Driftwood Dreams Inn.

The silence that fell between us wasn't uncomfortable; it was a reprieve from the onslaught of numbers and facts. Our heads were abuzz with digits, but her smile outshone any spreadsheet on my screen. Her enthusiasm was infectious; I felt it pulse through my veins. I was her personal financial advisor, true, but at that moment, I yearned to be more. I wanted to be the



one to ease her worries, to ensure her dream wasn't compromised by economic hurdles.

“All right, Rosie. Let's take a breather. Your mind must be reeling with all these figures,” I said, offering her a teasing wink.

Rosie's laugh echoed in the room, a sweet, hearty sound that drew a grin from me. “Are you implying that I can't handle it, Mr. Financial Wizard?” she countered, folding her arms over her chest.

“No, merely suggesting we make it enjoyable. After all, business isn't solely about crunching numbers,” I responded, leaning back in my chair, folding my arms behind my head.

“Oh, really? Then what does it entail?” she queried, resting her chin in her hands, her hazel eyes wide and intrigued.

“Well,” I started, holding up a finger, “It's about strategy, about observing the bigger picture. It's about establishing connections, forging alliances. But above all,” I paused for dramatic effect, leaning forward, my gaze meeting hers, “It's about passion, Rosie. You possess that in abundance.”

She seemed to ponder my words, a slight frown creasing her forehead. The tension in her shoulders relaxed, replaced by a delicate blush that bloomed across her cheeks. “Well, then I suppose we make a formidable team,” she said, her eyes sparkling.

Chuckling, I gave her a thumbs up. “Indeed, we do, Rosie. Indeed, we do.”

Rosie and I continued our discussions into the evening, numbers and estimates evolving into a comprehensible financial plan. As we finalised the last details, Rosie let out a long sigh of relief.

“Well, that wasn’t as bad as I expected,” she confessed, a hint of laughter dancing in her eyes.

“I told you, didn’t I? It’s all about finding the right strategy, and Rosie, we’ve done just that.” I could see her visibly relax at my words.

“Logan, you’ve been incredible. You’ve made these numbers...manageable, and that’s no small feat,” she said, the warmth in her words flooding me with satisfaction.

I smiled, gazing at the budget laid out on the table. We had worked meticulously, taking into account every aspect of the renovation project. The budget promised to breathe life into the Driftwood Dreams Inn without draining Rosie’s finances.

“Rosie, this budget,” I began, my voice firm, “is airtight. We’ve accounted for all potential costs, even added a buffer for any unexpected expenses.”

Her hazel eyes studied the plan, scanning the numbers and notes. She bit her lower lip, a gesture I recognized as her deep in thought. Finally, she looked up, her gaze meeting mine.

“Logan, do you... do you really think we can pull this off?” she asked, her vulnerability making my protective instincts surge.

I reached across the table, covering her hand with mine. “Rosie, I have no doubt. You’ve got the vision, the passion. And I’m here to make sure it’s financially feasible. We’re a formidable team, remember?”

A radiant smile broke out on her face, and she nodded. “Right. A formidable team.”

Our conversation gradually shifted from budgets and costs to more personal matters. We shared stories from our childhood, talked about Aunt Caroline and her dream for the inn, even speculated on how the inn would impact Azure Cove. Our bond was strengthening, and the budget before us was not just a financial plan, but a symbol of our partnership.

By the time Rosie left, we had a finalized plan, one that gave the Driftwood Dreams Inn a fighting chance. More importantly, we had cemented our partnership, one that promised to see us through the trials that lay ahead.

Yet, beneath it all, a mutual affection was blooming, its roots burrowing deep within us, though we remained oblivious. As I watched Rosie collect her belongings to depart, her smile persisting on her face, I was besieged by a sense of unease. I was beginning to recognize the protective emotions that were emerging within me.

This renovation project had evolved beyond just saving an old inn. It was about safeguarding Rosie. Defending her dreams, her hope, her radiant optimism. The upcoming challenge was more formidable than any figures or

spreadsheets, and as she exited my office, I knew I needed to confide my fears to someone who might comprehend.

And there was only one person who came to mind: Landon Carter. My competitor.

Feeling an unusual urgency, I quickly grabbed my coat and headed out of the office, the day's interaction with Rosie replaying in my mind. As I made my way towards Landon's office, a surge of adrenaline coursed through me. I was about to reveal my deepest fears to my biggest rival.

The receptionist nodded me through, and I found Landon sitting behind his mahogany desk, engrossed in a thick file. He looked up, surprise etched on his face as he saw me.

"Logan, what brings you here?" he asked, raising an eyebrow.

"I need your advice," I confessed, the tension in the room escalating.

Landon leaned back in his chair, curiosity gleaming in his eyes. "Well, this is unexpected. Shoot."

"It's about Rosie Sutton and the Driftwood Dreams Inn," I started, watching as his surprise turned into interest.

"Ah, the Sutton girl. Heard she inherited the old inn. Quite a challenge," he commented, folding his arms over his chest.

"Yes, it is. But she's passionate about it, and I'm supporting her financially. The thing is, I... I feel responsible for her, Landon. More than just as a financial advisor," I admitted, my heart pounding.

A slow smile spread across Landon's face. "You're smitten, Hunter. That's what it is."

"I am not!" I retorted, but the protest felt hollow. I sighed, running a hand through my hair. "Maybe I am. But that's not the point. The point is, I don't want to see her hurt. Financially or otherwise."

Landon's expression softened. "That's a noble sentiment, Logan. But you need to remember, business is business. Don't let your personal feelings cloud your judgment."

I nodded, acknowledging his words. "I know, Landon. But this is Rosie. Our childhood friend. I can't just stand by and watch her potentially crash and burn."

He regarded me for a moment before responding, "Then don't. Guide her, protect her. But remember, Logan, she's a grown woman. She needs to make her own decisions, face her own consequences."

I mulled over his words, a sense of clarity washing over me. "You're right, Landon. I guess I just needed to hear it from someone else."

As I left his office, a weight seemed to lift off my shoulders. I was still concerned about Rosie, about the project, but Landon's words had given me perspective. I needed to trust Rosie, trust her decisions, while being there to support her. And perhaps, this journey we were on would reveal more than just the transformation of a run-down inn. It might also unearth feelings that were far deeper, far more profound than either of us could have anticipated.

## Chapter 4

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Ryder

When I stepped into the overgrown garden of the Driftwood Dreams Inn, my pulse quickened with anticipation. Nature has always spoken to me in a language I instinctively understood and the sight of the tangled wilderness yearning for care whispered an inviting challenge. But my enthusiasm wasn't solely from the thought of taming the wild foliage. No, the main reason was Rosie.

Behind me, the soft shuffle of feet on the worn stone path alerted me to her arrival. A spark of excitement ignited in me at the prospect of sharing my vision for the garden with her. Turning, I found Rosie approaching, the evening sun casting an enchanting halo around her red curls.

"Ryder," she greeted, her tone echoing the warmth of her smile.

"Rosie," I replied, returning the smile.

She stopped next to me, taking in the mess of green. Her hazel eyes reflected her optimism. She had a dream, a vision to

revive the inn, and I could see in her eyes that nothing, not even the desolate state of it, could deter her.

“You’ve seen it, haven’t you? A garden flourishing with life, brimming with colors.” I asked her, tilting my head towards the wilderness before us.

“I have,” she replied. “In my dreams, mostly. But now with you here, I think it might just be possible to bring those dreams to reality.”

Our eyes met, and I read the unspoken challenge. It was a silent promise of dedication and trust. A shiver of anticipation prickled my skin as I began to explain my plans.

“First, we start by clearing out the deadwood. Then, we set about repairing the pathway, marking out seating areas...” As my words flowed, so did the ideas, pouring out of me like a wellspring. The more I spoke, the brighter her eyes glowed. There was no mistaking it, we were connecting over our mutual passion.

The project was demanding, the work would be hard, but at that moment, I was convinced that nothing could stand in our way. After all, isn’t love - even when it’s for a place, a project - the strongest of motivators? I didn’t notice how closely we had moved, how her breath fluttered the collar of my shirt, how her scent filled my senses, as if the garden had started blooming already.

“There’s much to do, Rosie. But when it’s done, it’s going to be magnificent,” I found myself saying. But it’s future beauty wasn’t what caught my eye, it was the woman in front of me.

As I finished, our eyes locked and we both felt the undeniable pull, yet neither of us dared to acknowledge it.

She broke our shared gaze and turned towards the building “It’s getting late, Ryder.”

“Of course, Rosie. Tomorrow, we start in earnest.”

She left, leaving a hint of her perfume on the wind, the shared promise hanging in the evening air. We’d barely begun and I could already feel a change in the atmosphere. This wasn’t just another project, it was a journey. A journey that had just taken a significant, and intriguingly complicated, step.

I watched her retreating figure, my mind a whirl of thoughts and feelings that seemed too big to contain. But, as always, my attention was drawn back to the project at hand. Turning my attention to the untamed wilderness before me, I could see the outlines of the paths we would carve, the corners where we’d place benches for guests to relax, and the flower beds we’d plant to bloom in season.

The next morning, Rosie arrived early, a bundle of energy and enthusiasm that was infectious. We dove into the task, starting with clearing the overgrown brush and weeds. Our conversation flowed naturally, veering from the project to stories of our childhood, shared dreams, and occasional bursts of laughter that echoed in the quiet morning air.

“Remember that summer we tried to build a treehouse in the old oak tree behind your house?” she asked, grinning at the memory.



I chuckled, “And Danny fell out of the tree. Scared us half to death.”

“We were quite the team back then,” she mused, pausing in her work to wipe her brow.

“And we still are,” I said. I could see the light flush creeping up her cheeks, but she didn’t break away from my gaze.

Throughout the day, we worked side by side, the lines between our professional camaraderie and personal friendship blurring. There were moments when our hands brushed against each other or we laughed over a shared joke, that I could sense an unspoken connection growing between us.

By late afternoon, we had managed to clear a significant portion of the area. Standing side by side, we looked at our day’s work. I could feel her shoulder brushing against mine, her breath warm against my skin.

“Ryder,” she said softly, breaking the silence. “Thank you, for doing this with me.”

“Rosie,” I turned to her, our faces inches apart. “I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

As the sun began to set, casting long shadows across the now visible garden paths, we stood there, lost in our unspoken emotions. The project was not just a job for me anymore; it had become a passion. A passion I shared with the fiery-haired woman standing beside me.

The day had been long, but the night promised to be longer. With our work done for the day, we said our goodbyes, her

smile lingering in my mind as I walked away. As I made my way home, I couldn't help but wonder how the project, and more importantly, Rosie, were beginning to change me. I had always been a quiet man, keeping my feelings close. But with Rosie, I found myself wanting to share more, to open up, to let her see the real me.

With the setting sun as our backdrop, Rosie and I lingered in the partially cleared garden, our tired bodies leaning against each other. The day's work had left us dusty and worn, but a sense of accomplishment hung in the air.

Rosie broke the silence, her voice soft, "You've always been good at this, Ryder. Even when we were kids, you could make any patch of dirt look like a secret garden."

I laughed lightly at the memory, my eyes not leaving the garden, "It's always been more than just a job for me, Rosie."

I felt her turn to look at me, her hazel eyes searching my face, "How so?"

Her curiosity was sincere, pulling words from me I'd never thought to say aloud. "Every space has a story to tell, a potential to unlock. When I walk into a garden, I can hear it whispering to me. Telling me what it needs, what it wants to become. It's not just about shaping the earth, it's about bringing a vision to life."

I glanced at her, catching the surprise flickering in her eyes. "Does that sound crazy?"

She shook her head, her smile radiant in the dying sunlight. “No, Ryder, it doesn’t. It sounds... passionate.”

Her acknowledgment, the understanding in her face, made my heart beat faster. The unspoken words, the growing emotions within me, suddenly seemed to want to break free. But I held them back, not ready to complicate our camaraderie.

She nudged me gently, her voice dropping to a whisper, “I wish I could see the world as you do, Ryder. Through your eyes.”

It was an innocent statement, but it carried an intimacy that took my breath away. I turned to her, the words slipping out before I could stop them, “You can, Rosie. You already do. That’s why this project means so much to me.”

She stared at me, her eyes wide, a question on her lips. But she didn’t voice it. Instead, she leaned into me, her shoulder resting against mine, as we looked out at what the garden would become. It was a simple gesture, but it felt like a promise. A promise that we were in this together, that whatever came our way, we would face it side by side.

Our conversations, our shared laughter, and even our silence seemed to draw us closer. We were more than just friends; we were partners, kindred spirits. I was beginning to understand that what I felt for Rosie was more than just admiration or camaraderie.

As the day gave way to the cool night, the inn behind us bathed in the soft glow of the setting sun, I felt a profound

sense of contentment. I was standing next to a woman who shared my passion, who believed in my vision, and who had become an essential part of my life.

Yet, I also understood that the stakes were high. It was not just a project for Rosie; it was a dream, a legacy. I wouldn't let my growing feelings for her complicate our friendship or the project. So, as the night closed in, I decided to move forward carefully, knowing that every step from now on was crucial. Not just for the inn, but for both of us.

Despite the thrill of the work and the intoxicating company, I couldn't shake off the gnawing uncertainty that had started to fester within me. As I walked home under the soft glow of the moon, my thoughts were consumed by Rosie and the complexity of our situation.

As much as I wanted to explore the growing connection between us, I knew I had to tread lightly. Rosie had placed her trust in me, believing in my vision to transform the dilapidated garden into a paradise. It was a responsibility I didn't take lightly.

The next morning, as we delved back into our work, the atmosphere was subtly different. The comfortable conversation that had marked our previous days was now laced with a tension that neither of us acknowledged. It was as if we were both acutely aware of the delicate balance we were maintaining, each wary of tipping the scale.

"Ryder," Rosie called out, breaking my train of thought. She was struggling to lift a heavy stone, her face scrunched up in

determination. Without a second thought, I rushed over, taking over the task. Our hands brushed in the process, sending a jolt of electricity through me.

“Thanks,” she mumbled, her cheeks flushing a soft pink. The intensity of my gaze must have unnerved her because she quickly busied herself with another task, avoiding my eyes.

This wasn't like us. We'd always been comfortable with each other, and the awkwardness was a new, unpleasant experience. I wanted to reassure her, to tell her that everything was alright. But how could I when I wasn't even sure of it myself?

## Chapter 5

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Rosie

“Hey, hey, everyone!” a boisterous voice boomed across the courtyard. We all turned to see Danny, my brother, standing at the entrance of the inn with a wide grin.

“Danny boy!” Dylan broke away from his workbench and engulfed my brother in a manly hug. Logan and Ryder chuckled from their spots, clearly amused by their friends’ display of affection.

“I came as soon as I could, little sis.” Danny wrapped an arm around my shoulder, his proud smile mirroring mine. His eyes sparkled with appreciation as he surveyed our ongoing project. “Look at this place! You’ve done an amazing job so far.”

“Thanks, Danny.” I returned his smile, squeezing his hand in appreciation. “But I couldn’t have done it without these guys.”

Dylan, Logan, and Ryder stood by their workspaces, watching us interact with amused smiles.

“Yeah,” Danny admitted, nodding at the trio. “You guys... You’re something else.”

Dylan rubbed the back of his neck, a little flustered, while Logan just flashed one of his charming grins. Ryder, on the other hand, just nodded and gave a curt, “We’re glad to help.”

“That you are.” Danny pulled away from me, crossing his arms over his chest. “Thanks, guys, seriously.”

Logan shrugged, his nonchalant smile belying the concern in his eyes. “It’s no biggie, Dan. Anything for Rosie, right?”

“Darn right!” Dylan chimed in, thumping his chest playfully.

“Yeah,” Ryder agreed, meeting my eyes briefly before glancing away. “Anything for Rosie.”

For the rest of the day, Danny shadowed each of us, watching as we brought our late aunt’s dream back to life. He made it a point to thank each of the guys, and they downplayed their efforts, claiming it was all part of their friendship. We maintained a façade of casual camaraderie, careful not to let Danny catch on to the romantic tension simmering under the surface. After all, the last thing we wanted was to add any more complications to our situation.

“Danny, you don’t have to worry about us,” Dylan said, as I stumbled onto their conversation. Dylan was crossing his arms over his chest and leaning against the wall of the inn. “We’re in this until the end. We’ll bring Driftwood Dreams back to its former glory.”

Danny turned his gaze towards him, his expression thoughtful. “I know you guys are committed,” he admitted.

“But it’s a huge task. And it’s not just about the physical work, but also the emotional toll it’s going to take.”

“Your concern is valid, Danny,” Logan chimed in, adjusting his glasses and looking every bit the financial advisor he was. “But we’re not just doing this for the project, we’re doing it for Rosie.”

A ripple of agreement went through Dylan and Ryder. “She’s our priority,” Ryder added, his smoky eyes serious. “The project is important, but Rosie is more important. We’re not going to let this overwhelm her.”

Danny seemed taken aback by their fervor, his gaze moving from one face to another. “You guys really care about her, don’t you?” he asked, his voice barely a whisper.

“We do,” they chorused, their voices resolute.

I watched the exchange, a lump forming in my throat. I knew they cared about me, but hearing them say it so openly, seeing the determination in their eyes, made it more real. It wasn’t just about the inn anymore; it was about us, about our friendships, about the unspoken feelings that were slowly surfacing.

“Alright,” Danny finally said, clapping his hands together. “I believe you guys. And I trust you with Rosie and the inn. Just...take care of yourselves too, okay?”

“We will, Danny,” Dylan assured him, a small smile playing on his lips. “Don’t worry.”



With a final nod, Danny turned to leave, his departure leaving a palpable change in the atmosphere. As I watched him walk away, I couldn't help but wonder about the complexity of the situation we found ourselves in. My heart fluttered at the thought of what lay ahead, the tangle of emotions threatening to consume me.

Dylan was the first to break the silence once Danny was gone. "Phew! Didn't realize how tense I was until he left."

I raised an eyebrow at him. "Tense? About Danny?"

He shrugged, running a hand through his disheveled hair. "Nah, not really about Danny. More like... you know..."

"About how he would react if he caught onto something more going on here?" Logan finished for him, his voice a strange mix of amusement and seriousness.

"Exactly," Dylan replied, meeting my gaze steadily.

"I don't see why it would matter," I countered, crossing my arms over my chest defensively. "We're all just friends helping each other out. Isn't that right?"

Their exchanged glances spoke volumes, their awkward silence hanging in the air as heavy as the scent of fresh-cut wood.

"Rosie, it's not about helping," Ryder finally spoke, his quiet voice cutting through the tension. "We're all glad to do that. But... well, you've gotta admit there's been... tension, yeah?"

My face grew warm, but I met Ryder's smoky eyes unflinchingly. "Yes, I noticed," I admitted. "But whatever it is,

it can't come before the project.”

“I agree,” Logan chimed in. “But that doesn't mean we can ignore what's happening either. We just need to... navigate it carefully, without damaging the project or our friendships.”

Their honesty left me reeling, a cacophony of emotions playing out within me. There was surprise at their blunt admission, a touch of annoyance that we were discussing this, and a hefty dose of confusion as I realized the intensity of the emotions surrounding our work on the inn.

“But right now,” Dylan stated, standing from his workbench and brushing off his carpenter's apron. “We focus on this inn and making it something incredible. Everything else, we figure out later.”

“Yeah,” Ryder agreed, offering me a comforting smile that spoke of unspoken understanding and promises of discretion.

For the rest of the day, we fell into a comfortable silence. A cocoon of unspoken emotions surrounded us, fragile yet resilient. Despite the confusion, I couldn't deny the strength and resolve in their eyes. A wave of gratitude washed over me; for their support, their dedication, and most importantly, their respect for my dream.

As the shadows lengthened and the sun began its descent, we finally called it a day. Our conversations faded, our smiles softened, and our glances became more thoughtful. Our facades fell away in the quiet intimacy of dusk, the promise of another day full of shared dreams and growing tensions awaiting us. With a heavy heart, I locked the inn for the night,

my thoughts preoccupied with our discussions, their implications, and the undercurrent of unspoken emotions amongst us.

I watched as they left one by one, their forms disappearing into the encroaching dusk. The echoes of their laughter, the ghost of their shared glances, and the remnant warmth of their presence clung to the old walls of the inn. The silence that settled was thick, laden with unspoken words and simmering emotions.

As I stood there, in the heart of the inn we were breathing life into, I found my mind teetering on the edge of thoughts I'd carefully tucked away. The affection and admiration I held for each of them began to unravel, morphing into something far more complex. Each brought a unique element into my life, weaving a captivating narrative that was hard to ignore.

Dylan, with his steady presence and unrivaled dedication to his craft, made me appreciate the intricate details of woodworking. His patience and quiet determination drew me in, stirring emotions that went beyond mere admiration.

Logan, the charismatic man with a razor-sharp mind, was a source of constant support. His charm and ability to lighten the most tense situations had often saved the day. The protective instinct he exhibited, his drive to ensure my dream didn't lead to my financial downfall, it was touching and confusing all at once.

And then there was Ryder. Quiet, thoughtful Ryder, whose love for nature and his skill at transforming spaces left me in

awe. His introspective nature provided a comforting silence, a shared understanding that bloomed in the quiet moments we spent together.

“Damn it,” I muttered under my breath, pushing away from the window and rubbing my temples. These weren’t simple feelings of friendship or admiration anymore. It was more complex, more profound. An amalgamation of fondness, gratitude, respect, and an underlying current of attraction that I was beginning to acknowledge.

Sighing, I walked from the center of the inn, the place where we often gathered after a day’s work. My fingers trailed over the aged wood of the table, the ridges and grooves reminding me of the numerous meals we had shared, the countless plans we had discussed.

As I moved around the room, each corner, each piece of furniture echoed their words, their laughter, their presence. It was as if the inn was silently bearing witness to our growing camaraderie, the subtly shifting dynamics, and the budding romances.

“I really need to sort this out,” I muttered to the empty room, the weight of my emotions sinking heavily in my heart. Yet, as overwhelming as these feelings were, they were not unwelcome. They added a new depth to my life, a complexity that was both intriguing and unnerving.

For a long while, I stood there, the only sound being the distant crashing of waves against the shore. In the silence of the night, I made a silent promise to myself. Tomorrow, I

decided, would be a new day. A day to embrace these complicated emotions, to understand them without letting them disrupt the harmony of our friendship or the progress of the inn.

And with that thought, I closed the inn for the night, the promise of a new day lingering in the quiet darkness.

## Chapter 6

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Rosie

The warmth of the morning sun filtered through the dusty windows of the Driftwood Dreams Inn as I navigated to the main lobby. I found Dylan there, engrossed in his woodwork. His strong, calloused hands worked expertly, breathing life into the inanimate object.

“Morning, Rosie,” he greeted without breaking his focus.

“Morning, Dylan,” I returned, watching in awe as he chiseled away with a calm intensity. The more I observed him, the more I was drawn to his quiet strength and dedication to his craft.

The sound of footsteps echoing through the hallway snapped me from my thoughts. Logan sauntered in, looking dapper as always, with a ledger under his arm. He flashed me a charming grin that never failed to stir something in me.

“Morning,” he greeted, taking a seat next to Dylan. He started flipping through the ledger, making quick calculations

in his head. His commitment to securing the inn's financial stability was nothing short of impressive.

Before I could respond, the door swung open, and Ryder walked in, a pencil tucked behind his ear and dirt smudged on his cheek. He offered a small smile that reached his smoky gray eyes, a sight that always warmed my heart.

"Morning, Rosie," he said, his voice a soft murmur.

"Morning, Ryder," I replied, my gaze lingering on him for a moment longer.

As the day progressed, we fell into a comfortable rhythm. The inn filled with the sounds of our shared laughter and occasional banter. The line between professional collaboration and budding romance began to blur as we worked side by side.

During lunch, Dylan would regale us with tales of his woodworking escapades, making us laugh with his self-deprecating humor. Logan, in turn, would lighten the mood with his playful wit and flirtatious remarks. And Ryder, he'd offer insightful comments, adding depth to our conversations with his quiet wisdom.

"Hey, Rosie," Dylan called out, breaking me from my thoughts. "Could you hand me that hammer?"

I obliged, my fingers brushing against his as I passed him the tool. Our eyes met, and for a brief moment, the world seemed to pause. The intensity of his gaze stirred an unfamiliar feeling within me.

“Dylan, that looks amazing,” I said, watching him caress the wooden surface with a final touch.

He flashed me a grin, a hint of pride twinkling in his blue eyes. “Thanks, Rosie. It’s coming along well.”

In the next room, Logan was buried in a pile of papers, scribbling calculations and ticking off numbers. His mind functioned in a way I could never fully grasp, each figure and equation a testament to his intelligence.

“Logan, you look deep in thought,” I commented, glancing over his shoulder at the sea of numbers.

He looked up at me, his green eyes bright with amusement. “Just trying to make sure we stay within budget, Rosie.”

“I trust you,” I replied, warmth spreading through me at his dedication.

Later in the day, I discovered Ryder in the garden, his shirt stained with dirt and a sketchpad in his hand. His focus was entirely on the sketch, his hand moving fluidly as he breathed life into his vision of the garden.

“Ryder, it’s beautiful,” I breathed, taking in the detailed sketch of the garden, complete with blooming flowers and trimmed hedges.

He offered a humble smile, the soft afternoon sun illuminating his face. “It’s a work in progress, Rosie.”

As the day unfolded, each interaction, every shared moment, subtly stoked the embers of my growing attraction towards



them. Their talents, their dedication, their personalities, everything about them was magnetic.

Yet, despite the burgeoning emotions, I found solace in the familiarity of our camaraderie. The comfort of their company, their collective laughter, their playful banter, it was a balm to my turbulent heart. I was falling for them, slowly but surely, yet I was determined to tread carefully, to preserve the sanctity of our bond.

With each passing day, the line between professional collaboration and personal affection was blurring. As the sun dipped low in the sky and the day's work concluded, I found myself yearning for their company even when they weren't around. As I stood alone in the heart of the inn, their laughter still echoing in the silent halls, I couldn't help but acknowledge the romantic hue that had subtly influenced our interactions.

In the quiet solitude, I pondered my feelings, my heart caught in a tumultuous whirlwind of emotions. As the moon shone brightly in the night sky, I knew that I was stepping onto a tightrope, a precarious balance between my heart and our shared dreams. The weight of my unspoken feelings felt heavy, a secret burden that I was yet to fully understand. Little did I know, my heart was about to embark on a journey it had never ventured before.

As the week progressed, our interactions evolved, subtle hues of intimacy coloring our daily routines. Dylan's morning greetings were warmer, Logan's playful teases became more

flirtatious, and Ryder's quiet companionship grew more comforting.

One evening, after an especially exhausting day, we huddled around the hearth, the crackling fire bringing warmth to the cool night. Dylan stretched out his legs, leaning against the well-worn couch. A playful twinkle danced in his blue eyes as he looked at me.

"Rosie, remember when we used to play hide and seek in this inn?" His voice held a touch of nostalgia.

A smile danced on my lips as I recalled those simpler times. "Yes, I remember. You always had the best hiding spots."

Logan joined in, a smirk on his face. "Yeah, because he was always tucked away in the kitchen, near the food."

We chuckled at the memory, our shared history fortifying our camaraderie. Dylan shot a playful glare at Logan before turning back to me, his gaze softening.

"I guess some things never change," he whispered, a tender note in his voice that stirred something within me.

The night rolled on, filled with laughter and recollections. However, I couldn't ignore the blossoming warmth in my chest each time Dylan smiled, Logan teased, or Ryder offered his comforting presence.

Despite my feelings, I knew I had to proceed with caution. The boundaries between friendship and something deeper were fading, and I was uncertain how to traverse this unfamiliar terrain.

“Rosie?” Logan’s voice snapped me out of my thoughts. “You seem distant. Is everything alright?”

I met his gaze, seeing the worry etched in his green eyes. I mustered a smile, aiming to ease his concern. “I’m fine, Logan. Just tired.”

Ryder, who had been silent all evening, finally spoke. “It’s been a long day. Maybe we should call it a night.”

I nodded, grateful for his understanding. As they left, a strange sense of longing washed over me. My heart was veering into treacherous territory, and I knew I had to keep my emotions in check, for the sake of our friendship and the project.

Despite the inner chaos, the inn was starting to mirror our hard work, each room resonating with our laughter and resolve. It was transforming into a home, brimming with warmth and affection, something I hadn’t realized I yearned for.

As I turned in for the night, my mind replayed the day’s events. The inn was slowly being revived, much like my dormant feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. As sleep claimed me, I pondered how I’d navigate these intricate emotions without disturbing our tight-knit bond.

“Dylan... Logan... Ryder...” I whispered their names, each one sending a jolt through my heart. I found myself caught in a whirlpool of emotions, unsure of how to navigate the rough waters. I loved them all, in different yet profound ways. But I

knew I had to tread carefully, the potential risk to our friendship and the project too great.

With a heavy sigh, I secured the inn, the sound resonating in the empty hallway. The quiet was a stark contrast to the day's bustling activity, making me yearn for their company. As I trudged back to my room, the inn seemed to hold its breath, as if it too sensed the tension that hung in the air.

Once in my room, I stared out at the vast ocean, the rhythmic crash of the waves a soothing balm to my restless mind. My heart ached with a longing I couldn't articulate, my feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder complicating the once clear lines of our friendship.

## Chapter 7

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Rosie

**W**ith my emotions tangled in knots, I headed to Cupid's Confections. I needed to talk, and Viv's patient ear was a familiar comfort. The bell chimed merrily as I stepped into the warmth of the bakery, and I inhaled the inviting aroma of cinnamon and sugar.

"Rosie!" Viv's voice sang from the back, before she appeared from behind a tray of macarons, wiping floury hands on her apron. "The usual?"

"Yes, please," I said, sliding onto a barstool by the counter. She moved around the quaint little kitchen with practiced ease, filling my order - a frothy cappuccino and her famous chocolate croissant.

"Alright, spill," Viv demanded once my order was set before me. She propped her elbows on the counter, giving me her full attention.

I chuckled, wrapping my hands around my cup for warmth. "Is it that obvious?"

Her warm brown eyes were filled with understanding. “Sweetie, I’ve known you since kindergarten. I can see when something’s weighing on you. Now out with it.”

Taking a deep breath, I began, choosing my words with care. “Do you remember Dylan, Logan, and Ryder?”

Her eyebrows raised, a grin spreading across her face. “The handsome trio working on the inn with you? How could I forget?”

“I... well, I think I might have feelings for them.”

Viv remained silent, encouraging me to continue.

“Individually,” I clarified. “It’s like they all stir something different in me. With Dylan, it’s this warmth, this comfort... With Logan, it’s excitement, a bit of a thrill... And with Ryder... it’s passion, intensity... It’s just... It’s just so confusing.”

Viv looked at me thoughtfully, taking a moment to digest my confession. Then she leaned forward, her voice filled with gentle assurance. “Love isn’t supposed to be a tidy little package, Rosie. It can be messy and chaotic. It’s not wrong to feel for more than one person, as long as you’re honest with yourself and with them.”

Her words echoed around my confused heart, calming the chaos inside me. The maelstrom of emotions I’d been fighting began to quiet, the weight in my chest lifting.

“But how do I handle this, Viv?” I asked, feeling more hopeful. “I don’t want to lose them, and I certainly don’t want

to jeopardize the project.”

Viv took a deep breath, pondering my dilemma. “I think... I think you should talk to them, Rosie. Individually. Let them know what you’re feeling. It might be difficult, but it’s the right thing to do. After all, you can’t control how you feel, but you can control how you act on it.”

I sat in silence for a moment, thinking on her advice.

“Rosie, I have one more thing to say,” she began, her tone careful, measured. I braced myself, sensing the gravity in her voice. “You must tread carefully. These are your brother’s friends, your friends, people you’ve known for years. Don’t forget the potential implications this could have on your relationships.”

Her words hung heavy in the air between us, a poignant reminder of the stakes involved. My heart twisted uncomfortably at the thought. I loved my brother, Danny, and I cherished the friendships I had with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. The thought of jeopardizing those relationships, of causing a rift between us, was a chilling prospect.

“But, Viv,” I countered, “I can’t control my feelings. It’s not like I planned this. They just... happened.”

Viv nodded, her eyes softening. “I know, sweetie. Emotions are tricky, unpredictable things. And I’m not saying you’re wrong to feel this way. I just want you to consider the consequences before you act.”

“I understand,” I said, feeling a sense of dread creeping into the pit of my stomach. This was far more complicated than I had imagined.

“You’re strong, Rosie. And you’re not alone,” Viv added, her hand reaching out to cover mine. Her warm touch was comforting, her steady gaze filled with reassurance. “Just remember to keep your heart open, but your eyes wide too.”

The reality of my situation began to settle in, like a fog creeping over a quiet lake. This wasn’t just about me anymore. This was about Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. About Danny. About the inn. It was about the future we were all trying to build together. My feelings, as profound and confusing as they were, had the potential to either bring us closer or tear us apart.

“I will, Viv,” I said, swallowing the lump in my throat. “I’ll try my best.”

With that, I rose from the stool, wrapping my scarf around my neck. As I moved to the door, Viv called out to me, her voice tinged with a motherly affection that warmed me despite the winter chill outside. “Remember, Rosie,” she said, “the heart has its reasons, of which reason knows nothing. Trust in that. But remember, trust in your head too.”

I nodded, offering her a small smile. “Thank you, Viv.”

Feeling emboldened by Viv’s words, I slipped out of Cupid’s Confections, the bell tinkling merrily behind me. A rush of chilly wind whipped past me, but it did little to dampen the warmth kindling inside.



Viv had provided me a much-needed dose of comfort and wisdom, sprinkled with her typical hearty laughs. The quaint bakery had been a haven of serenity amidst my turbulent thoughts. It was, as always, my place of refuge when things became overwhelming. The smell of fresh pastries that lingered on my clothes felt oddly reassuring.

As I ambled along the cobblestone streets of Azure Cove, my mind busied itself with the echoes of Viv's advice. The town seemed serene in the evening light, its tranquillity acting as a gentle balm to my nerves. I realized how deeply ingrained this little town, these people were in my heart. And that included Dylan, Logan, and Ryder.

Tugging my coat tighter, I decided to follow Viv's advice. I would speak to them individually, peel back the layers of my feelings, try to understand the roots of these unfamiliar emotions stirring inside me. Yes, it would be a delicate path to tread, but Viv was right. Honesty was paramount.

Tomorrow, I resolved, would be a day of brave confrontations and difficult conversations. However, as the gentle glow from the lampposts lit my path home, I felt a spark of hope.

Returning to the inn, I acknowledged a new emotion sneaking up on me - apprehension. Conversations awaited me, fraught with potential consequences and heartache.

"I can do this," I murmured, almost hoping the walls of the inn could lend me some of their steadfast strength.

Climbing the stairs to my room, my steps echoed through the silent corridors, each creak of the old wooden floors a reminder of the fine line I was walking. I reached my room and gently closed the door behind me, leaning against it. The quiet solitude was a stark contrast to the storm brewing inside me. My feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were real, as tangible as the old wooden door at my back. And they deserved to know.

I walked over to the window, looking out at the sprawling property that was quickly becoming a dream come true. I could see the outlines of the garden we had worked on, the memory of shared laughter and light-hearted banter bringing a soft smile to my lips. It was our project, our shared dream, and I couldn't let my feelings jeopardize it.

A soft sigh escaped my lips as I pulled the curtains close, shutting out the outside world. I turned away from the window, my mind slowly shifting gears. I had to prepare for the days ahead. My feelings had to be untangled, my words chosen with care. And most importantly, I had to ensure that no matter what, our dream, the Driftwood Dreams Inn, remained untouched by my personal turmoil.

As I slipped into bed, I realized how weary I was. The emotional turmoil had taken a toll, and I needed rest. Sleep, however, remained elusive as my mind kept going back to Viv's words. Her advice had been invaluable, offering me a direction amidst the chaos.

My feelings were mine to navigate, but my actions, my decisions would impact Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They were not just my partners in the project but friends who I had grown to care for, deeply. Their friendship was not something I could afford to lose.

I turned onto my side, hugging my pillow close. The path ahead was narrow and winding, with no room for missteps. It was a tightrope walk, balancing my feelings and professional commitments. And as I finally drifted off to sleep, one thing remained clear. Tomorrow would be a new day, a day of confrontations, confessions, and hopefully, clarity.

## Chapter 8

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Rosie

Rick Dalton, an older gentleman and a local handyman, strolled up the drive towards Driftwood Dreams Inn, his old baseball cap sitting slightly askew on his silver-haired head. A bright grin stretched across his weathered face as he gave a wave.

“Morning, Rosie,” he called out, eyes twinkling in a friendly manner. His southern drawl was soothing, familiar like an old country song. “Heard you could use an extra pair of hands ‘round here.”

“Good morning, Rick,” I greeted him warmly. “Yes, the help would be very appreciated.”

As Rick ambled towards me, his gait easy and comfortable, I couldn’t help but feel an unusual sense of relief. There was something comforting about Rick’s presence; his gentle humor and inherent kindness helped to dissolve some of the tension knotted within me.

We spent the day working on minor repairs around the inn, Rick guiding me through the process with infinite patience. We replaced worn-out floorboards, fixed creaking hinges, and even managed to get the stubborn old chandelier in the main hall working again. The manual work was soothing in its routine, giving me something concrete to focus on other than my whirling thoughts.

“All right, Rosie,” Rick said as he straightened from examining a misaligned doorframe, his lined face creased with thought. “Let’s fix this. We can’t have guests trippin’ over their own feet.”

Together, we spent hours on that frame, laughing at our blunders, trading stories, and slowly teasing the warped wood back into its rightful shape. There was something innately therapeutic about the process, and with each moment, I felt a fraction lighter.

As we sanded down the frame, Rick glanced over at me, his eyes gentle. “You’re doing good work here, Rosie. Your aunt would be mighty proud.”

His words touched me deeply. I knew that this inn held the soul of Aunt Caroline. This was her dream, her vision, and to have Rick acknowledge that I was making good on her legacy was all the affirmation I needed. His reassuring presence was like a lighthouse, guiding me through the emotional storm I found myself caught in.

With the setting sun casting a golden hue over Driftwood Dreams Inn, we finished up for the day, our shared

accomplishment providing a balm for my heart. Despite the apprehension gnawing at the edge of my thoughts, for the first time in days, I felt genuinely at ease. With Rick's help, I was beginning to realize that I wasn't alone. My journey, my tangled emotions, they weren't solely mine to bear. This community, my friends, they were with me. This realization brought with it a sense of belonging, a small sense of hope.

Standing on the threshold of the newly fixed doorway, I took a moment to soak in the serenity of it all. A shared laughter echoed through the silence, an exchange of knowing smiles, and the hum of quiet camaraderie against the distant lull of the ocean - it all wove together into a tapestry of warmth and reassurance, assuring me that, despite the storm within, I could brave the impending revelations with a heart steadied by the support of those around me. The next few days would undoubtedly be a whirlwind of confessions and potential heartache, but with every stroke of the sandpaper and shared laugh with Rick, I found a little more courage, a little more resilience.

As the sunlight faded, painting the horizon in hues of burnt orange and dusky pink, Rick and I took a well-deserved break, settling on the inn's expansive porch. With our backs leaning against the weathered columns, the familiar rhythm of the sea played in the background.

Rick was the first to break the silence. "Y'know Rosie," he started, a mischievous twinkle in his eye, "this old place used to be quite the party hub. Your aunt, bless her soul, knew how

to throw a shindig. There were some wild nights, let me tell you.”

I turned to him, intrigued, “Oh, do tell!”

Chuckling, Rick recounted a story of a legendary New Year’s Eve party, where a surprise snowstorm had everyone snowed in. What was meant to be a one-night affair turned into a three-day marathon of music, dance, and merriment. As he narrated the tale, I could almost hear the laughter, see the flicker of the fireplace, and feel the infectious energy.

There was something in the way Rick painted those memories - so vivid, so full of life - that made the inn seem more alive. I could feel its heart beating in sync with my own, as if the stories of the past were merging with our dreams of the future. It was humbling, to say the least.

As Rick continued to regale me with tales of the past, he interspersed his stories with pieces of advice. “When life throws you a snowstorm, Rosie,” he said with a wink, “you best be ready to dance in the snow.”

His wisdom, hidden within layers of humor, made me smile. It was an echo of the tight-knit community spirit that Azure Cove was known for. A spirit that welcomed you, comforted you, and uplifted you, just when you needed it the most.

“Here’s another one for you, Rosie,” Rick chuckled, his eyes alight with nostalgia. “Your aunt always used to say, ‘Life is too short for what-ifs and maybes. It’s the leaps of faith that make the journey worthwhile.’”

His words struck a chord within me. Aunt Caroline's sentiment resonated with my own dilemma. The 'what-ifs' and 'maybes' had been weighing heavy on my heart, casting a shadow on the path ahead.

Rick, in his warm-hearted manner, reassured me without even knowing it. He was a living testament to the magic of Azure Cove, its community spirit embodied in his wisdom, his humor, his kindness. His anecdotes reminded me that the heart of this place was not just the inn or the breathtaking vistas. It was the people - people like Rick, like Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and myself - who breathed life into the Cove, weaving our stories into its very fabric. His tales of the past, filled with laughter and love, were more than just reminiscences; they were threads binding me closer to the inn, to its past, and its future.

Rick turned to me, his eyes reflecting the last of the day's light. "You know, Rosie," he began, his voice carrying a gentle, wise tone, "sometimes life gets a bit tangled, like a ball of yarn. It's messy, confusing, and it can feel like you're just chasing your tail."

I looked at him, a soft smile playing on my lips as I leaned into his comforting presence. "And what do you do when that happens, Rick?"

He chuckled, a low, hearty sound that warmed me from the inside. "Well, Rosie," he replied, his gaze fixed on the fading sun, "you find the end of that yarn, and you start untangling."



You may not know what you'll find in the middle, but that's part of the adventure.”

I found myself drawn to his words, their simple wisdom resonating with my current predicament. “And what if you're scared of what you might find?” I asked, my voice barely above a whisper.

Rick turned to me, his eyes soft but steady. “That's when you gotta have a little faith, Rosie. Fear can be a powerful thing, but it's also a compass. It points towards the things that matter the most.”

His words echoed in the quiet space between us, their profound truth seeping into my consciousness. I had been so caught up in my fears, my insecurities, that I had forgotten to trust my own heart.

“But what if...” I began, only to be interrupted by Rick's knowing smile.

“Ah, the ‘what ifs’. They're like quicksand, Rosie. The more you struggle with them, the deeper you sink. You gotta step out of them, take a leap of faith.”

His advice, simple yet profound, brought a sense of clarity. My heart fluttered with a newfound understanding. The feelings I had for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were complicated, but they were real. They were a part of me, a part of my journey.

“Love is a tricky thing, Rosie,” Rick continued, his gaze thoughtful. “It can be as calm as a summer breeze, or as wild

as a winter storm. But it's worth the risk, always worth the risk."

His words, imbued with wisdom and experience, resonated within me. It was as if a fog had lifted, allowing me to see the path ahead with newfound clarity. It wasn't going to be easy, but I was ready to take that leap of faith, ready to untangle the threads of my heart.

As the day's light retreated, giving way to a canvas of twinkling stars, Rick and I continued to bask in the tranquil aura of the inn. The lull of the waves in the distance was the perfect backdrop to our shared silence. The hours of labor, the stories, and the camaraderie had turned the day into a balm for my restless heart.

Rick's chuckle broke the silence, his eyes twinkling in the moonlight. "Y'know Rosie, this inn... it's got a soul of its own. Just needs a little love, a little care."

I nodded, looking at the inn with newfound affection. "I think we're doing alright, Rick. One step at a time."

"That's the spirit," he affirmed, patting my hand gently. "One day at a time, one board at a time. Before you know it, this place will be singing again."

I smiled, touched by his optimism. "I hope so, Rick. I really do."

"You're doing good, Rosie," he reassured, his voice filled with a warmth that spread through me like a soothing balm.

“Don’t you worry none. We’re all here for you, every step of the way.”

Those simple words, spoken with such heartfelt sincerity, resonated within me. I wasn’t alone in this journey. I had an entire community by my side, a community that included not just Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, but also Rick, and so many others who loved Driftwood Dreams as much as I did. It was a comforting realization, a beacon of hope amidst the turmoil of my emotions.

I turned to Rick, my heart brimming with gratitude. “Thank you, Rick. I...I can’t express how much this means to me.”

Rick gave my hand a reassuring squeeze, his smile as comforting as a soft blanket on a cold night. “No need for thanks, Rosie. This is what we do. We look out for each other.”

And with that, under the canopy of a star-studded sky, amidst the quiet whispers of the sea, I found solace. Rick’s presence, his wisdom, and kindness, served as a reminder of why I loved this town, why I was so determined to restore the inn. This was more than just a renovation project; it was a journey of love, of community, and of belonging. With renewed determination, I looked towards the days ahead, ready to face the challenges, ready to untangle the threads of my heart, and ready to breathe new life into Driftwood Dreams Inn.

## Chapter 9

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Rosie

It was early morning when a light rap at the front door pulled me from my musings. Standing on the porch, framed by the rising sun, was Marilyn Fisher, Azure Cove's historian. She had a warm smile on her face, her green eyes twinkling with familiarity and affection.

"Morning, Rosie dear," she greeted, stepping into the entryway.

"Good morning, Marilyn," I responded, leading her to the heart of the inn. We strolled through the spacious rooms and grand archways, her stories about the inn's glorious past flowing like a river.

Marilyn described the once grandeur of the inn, "It was always bustling with guests, every room filled with laughter and chatter. Caroline always had a knack for making everyone feel welcome."

Her tales were vivid, bringing the faded wallpaper and chipped wooden floorboards back to life. "And the grand

staircase,” she continued, “always took everyone’s breath away. The polished mahogany bannister, the beautiful ornate ironwork. Caroline used to say it was like climbing a stairway to heaven.”

We paused by the large bay windows, looking out onto the crashing waves of the ocean. “Caroline used to host the most delightful tea parties right here,” Marilyn said, gesturing to the once ornate living room, “She had an unmatched talent for making the simplest of gatherings feel like a grand soiree.”

A silence fell between us as we both absorbed the enormity of the task ahead. But it wasn’t a discouraging silence, it was filled with promise and hope.

“I remember Caroline’s determination,” Marilyn added, her voice filled with nostalgia, “She put her heart and soul into this place. I see that same fire in you, Rosie. And I believe, you can bring back the magic of this place, just like she did.”

Marilyn’s faith in me was heartening. As we continued our tour, each story she told painted a vivid picture of the past, fueling my determination to restore the inn to its former glory.

“I see the Driftwood Dreams Inn, not as it is, but as it was,” Marilyn confessed, as we wrapped up our walk, “And I know you see it too, Rosie.”

“I do,” I affirmed, her words resonating with my vision for the inn, “And I won’t rest until the inn is as grand as the stories you’ve told me.”

As the afternoon arrived, the walls seemed to whisper echoes of the past, eager to relive the days of glory. And I was just as eager to help them.

Her stories had filled the inn with a palpable sense of history, making the renovation feel less like a project and more like a journey into the past. I could see the inn not just as it was, but as it could be again. Marilyn's words had inspired me, adding fuel to my resolve to bring Driftwood Dreams back to its former glory.

I walked through the rooms of the inn again, this time with Marilyn's stories ringing in my ears. Each detail she shared, each memory she recollected, breathed life into the inn's past. The old wallpaper seemed less faded, the floorboards less worn. The inn wasn't just a building anymore, it was a character, a silent witness to decades of stories, laughter, and tears.

"Marilyn," I called out, my voice echoing through the empty hallways, "I can't thank you enough for sharing these stories. It feels like I've been given a precious gift."

From the doorway, Marilyn's smile shone through the darkened hall. "These stories belong to the inn, dear. And now, they belong to you."

As I walked her to her car, I asked, "Do you think Aunt Caroline would have approved of what I'm doing?"

She paused, her gaze softening. "Caroline would be over the moon, Rosie. She loved this place with all her heart, just as

you do. And she'd be so proud to see you taking up her mantle."

I hugged her tightly, her words wrapping around me like a warm blanket. As her car pulled away, I turned back to the inn. It was more than just a building to me now. It was a piece of history, a testament to my aunt's legacy, and now, my own.

That night, I couldn't sleep. Marilyn's stories had ignited a fire within me. I found myself wandering through the inn, running my hands over the worn banisters, tracing the faded patterns on the wallpaper. I could see the inn as it was, filled with life and laughter, and as it would be again.

As I stood in the empty ballroom, I could almost hear the soft hum of conversation, the clinking of glasses, the rustle of silk gowns. I could see the grand staircase, once again gleaming under the soft glow of the chandeliers. The inn wasn't just a renovation project anymore, it was a living, breathing entity, whispering its secrets to me, guiding me.

"I see you," I whispered into the quiet, "And I promise you, we'll make you shine again."

I pulled out a notepad, ready to pen down my plans for the next day. But as I looked around, I realized I was seeing the inn with a new perspective. The inn wasn't just a place; it was a collection of stories, each corner whispering tales of the past. I wanted to preserve that, to weave the past into the future.

I traced the ornate moldings of the ballroom with my fingers, the cold touch of the chipped plaster sending a shiver down

my spine. I quickly jotted down, 'Preserve original moldings, touch up paint, revive the past.'

I ventured into the old study next, the scent of aged books still lingering in the air. The mahogany desk sat proudly in the center, its surface etched with years of use. It felt like a silent sentinel, a keeper of secrets. My fingers traced over the carved initials 'C.S.', Aunt Caroline's mark. I wrote down, 'Retain original desk, refurbish with love, respect the mark.'

My journey took me to the grand staircase next. Marilyn's words echoed in my mind, the memory of Aunt Caroline calling it a stairway to heaven still fresh. The Bannister, once polished mahogany, was now dulled by time. Yet, its grandeur was undeniable. 'Restore staircase, keep original design, recapture the elegance,' I scribbled.

The moon hung low in the sky as I reached the inn's dining room. Its large windows framed the perfect view of the glowing half moon, painting the room in shades of blue. 'Maximize natural light, retain window frames, let the sun dance in,' I noted, picturing the room filled with cheerful breakfast chatter and intimate candlelit dinners.

My last stop was the conservatory. The room was overgrown, but the sight of wild roses blooming amidst the ruins stirred something within me. 'Bring back the conservatory, nurture the wild roses, let life bloom,' I penned, feeling a sense of serenity wash over me.

As I walked back to my room, my notepad filled with scribbles and sketches, I felt a renewed sense of purpose. I



wasn't just renovating an inn; I was preserving history, reviving memories, and weaving a story. The inn wasn't just bricks and mortar; it was a living entity, breathing with the past, yearning for the future.

As the moon rose high in the sky, I sat down at the old mahogany desk, my plans for the inn spread out before me. Each scribble, each sketch, each note was a promise to the inn, a vow to honor its past while embracing its future.

The night was deep, but sleep was far from my mind. The inn had shared its stories with me, and now it was my turn to add a chapter to its rich tapestry. The journey was far from over, and the path ahead was challenging. But I was ready. Ready to breathe life back into Driftwood Dreams Inn, ready to bring it back to its former glory, and ready to make Aunt Caroline proud.

## Chapter 10

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Rosie

As the morning sun filtered through the windows of the Driftwood Dreams Inn, it illuminated a hive of activity. Dylan, with his dark hair and blue eyes, worked with an intense focus, hammering and sanding down pieces of wood with his muscular arms. Logan, his blond hair glistening in the sunlight, was engrossed in bills, receipts, and bank statement, his striking green eyes moving swiftly over the pages. Ryder was outside in the garden, his smoky gray eyes scanning the wild terrain, a pencil tucked behind his ear. Their presence, their commitment, was undeniably alluring.

I watched them, my heart fluttering in my chest. It wasn't just their physical attractiveness that stirred something within me, it was their dedication, their resolve to help me restore the inn, that made my pulse quicken.

The first time I had felt it, I was handing Dylan a mug of coffee. Our fingers brushed and a jolt of electricity ran through me. His blue eyes met mine and I felt my breath hitch. Dylan, the patient, calm carpenter who'd always been there for me.

I'd quickly pulled my hand back, but the memory of that brief touch lingered, warming me from the inside.

With Logan, it was the laughter. He had a knack for lightening the mood, making everyone around him smile. We'd been discussing budget estimates, a potentially stressful conversation, but he'd made it bearable with his wit. When he'd laughed, throwing his head back, his green eyes twinkling, I'd found myself laughing along, my heart pounding in my chest. Logan, the charismatic, flirtatious financial advisor who'd been my friend since childhood.

And then there was Ryder. He was quiet, introspective, with a dry wit that often took me by surprise. I'd found myself seeking him out in the garden, watching as he transformed the overgrown, untamed land into a potential haven. One day, as we'd been discussing the garden layout, he'd caught me staring. His smoky gray eyes had held mine, a knowing smile playing on his lips. Ryder, the landscape architect who was so protective of me.

Each stolen glance, each lingering touch, was like fuel to a fire within me. The intensity of these moments left me breathless, my mind spinning. I'd tried to keep my feelings in check, to focus on the task at hand. But as the days turned into weeks, I found it increasingly hard to ignore the potent mix of desire and longing that stirred within me.

As I stood in the doorway of the inn, watching Dylan, Logan, and Ryder work, I knew that the line between my professional obligations and my growing attraction for them

was blurred. This wasn't just about the renovation anymore. I was falling for them, and it terrified me. It wasn't just one, but all three of them. I knew it was complicated, that it could jeopardize everything. But there was no denying it, no escaping it. My heart had made its choice, and now I had to deal with the consequences. I was wrestling with my emotions, unsure of what the future held. But one thing was clear - my relationships with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were about to change, and there was no turning back.

The words from Viv played over and over in my head as I watched them. "Love isn't supposed to be a tidy little package, Rosie. It can be messy and chaotic. It's not wrong to feel for more than one person, as long as you're honest with yourself and with them." I had decided to follow her advice, but where was I supposed to start?

My eyes flickered from Dylan's skilled hands molding wood, to Logan's focused gaze scanning financial documents, to Ryder's contemplative stare mapping out the land. All three were a testament to their unwavering dedication, a display of tenacity and resolve that tugged at my heartstrings in ways I had never expected.

As I stood at the precipice of admitting my tangled feelings, the realness of it all crashed over me like a wave, threatening to pull me under.

"Gotten tired of us yet?" Dylan's deep voice rumbled, breaking me from my thoughts.

I blinked at him, feigning confusion, "Excuse me?"

He tilted his head towards Logan and Ryder, his mouth lifting into a soft grin, “We’re here practically every waking moment, Rosie. Haven’t scared you off?”

Laughing nervously, I quickly looked down, “Hardly, it’s been a huge help.”

Unfazed, Logan chimed in from his spot at the table, “It’s the ‘hardly’ that has me concerned.”

“Dylan’s right, Rosie,” Ryder’s gravelly voice carried from the garden. He took off his gloves and started towards us, “You’ve been patient with our intrusion.”

Heat rose to my cheeks at their words. Unbeknownst to them, they weren’t intruding on just my space anymore. They were inhabiting my thoughts, my heart - an uncharted territory I hadn’t planned on opening.

I managed to give them a weak smile, keeping my voice steady, “I appreciate your help more than you can imagine.”

Dylan brushed his fingers against mine, sending shivers down my spine, “Just doing our part, Rosie.”

Logan gave me a lopsided grin, the corners of his eyes crinkling, “Anything for you.”

Ryder simply nodded from a distance, his gaze soft, but somehow piercing.

I was caught in a vortex of emotion, torn between what was happening, what could happen, and the fear of crossing a line that couldn’t be uncrossed. I knew I was dancing on the edge, that soon, one wrong step could tip everything over.

“I...” I trailed off, choking on the confession that was clawing at my throat.

Their gazes turned expectant, Dylan’s questioning, Logan’s concerned, and Ryder’s observant. They waited, a trifecta of anticipation that gnawed at my courage. Yet, as much as I longed to pour out my heart, to lay bare the feelings that stirred within me, I couldn’t.

So, I pushed the feelings down, forcing a smile, “I’m glad you’re here, all of you.”

Their smiles returned, easing the tension, yet my heart remained a whirlpool of emotions, threatening to capsize the peace. It was clear that I was on borrowed time, juggling between the heavy mantle of my growing feelings and my professional obligations.

The growing uncertainty was like a ticking bomb, the ticking growing louder with each passing day, hinting at an explosion I wasn’t sure I was prepared for. As much as I tried to maintain a semblance of professionalism, the mounting tension was a palpable entity, adding an undercurrent of anticipation to our conversations and shared glances. It was becoming a question of when, not if, the tension would finally spill over. But until then, I could only hope that the situation wouldn’t unravel too fast for me to handle.

My heart continued to flutter as we transitioned from our moment of shared understanding back to the renovation project at hand. We dove into our respective tasks with

renewed focus, the tension between us kept at bay by our shared commitment to the inn.

“Rosie, could you hand me that level?” Dylan called out, not looking up from the door frame he was working on.

I nodded, quickly passing him the tool. Our fingers brushed briefly, and a familiar jolt of electricity ran through me. I withdrew my hand quickly, hoping he hadn’t noticed my reaction.

From across the room, Logan was immersed in paperwork, his eyebrows furrowed in concentration. “Hey Rosie, could you check these figures for me?” He asked, handing me a sheet filled with numbers.

I took the paper from him, our hands barely touching. His touch was different from Dylan’s, lighter, yet it stirred a similar response within me.

Outside, Ryder was meticulously measuring the garden space, his pencil flying over his sketchpad. “Rosie, what do you think about placing the benches here?” He asked, pointing at a spot on his drawing.

I nodded, trying to focus on the task at hand, “That would provide a great view of the ocean.”

Throughout the day, we maintained a delicate balance between our professional roles and the underlying emotions simmering beneath the surface. We were careful with our words, our touches, ensuring we didn’t cross any boundaries.

But it was there, the undeniable tension, like a thin thread stretched to its limit, threatening to snap.

Every conversation, every shared glance, was a dance around the elephant in the room. We were each aware of the growing attraction, yet we chose to bury it under layers of professionalism and dedication to the project.

As the day drew to a close, we were all visibly tired but satisfied with the progress we had made. Despite the mounting tension, we had managed to stay on track, our shared dedication to the inn acting as a powerful anchor. I knew I needed to talk to each of them, to tell them how I felt. I just couldn't summon the courage to do so.

"I think we did good today," Dylan announced, breaking the silence. His blue eyes met mine briefly before he turned to clean up his tools.

"We did more than good, we were fantastic," Logan chimed in, his eyes sparkling with satisfaction.

Ryder simply nodded, a small smile playing on his lips, "We made progress."

I looked at each of them, my heart swelling with gratitude and something more, something deeper. "Thank you, all of you," I said, my voice barely above a whisper.

Their responses were different, yet equally comforting. Dylan gave me a small nod, his eyes warm. Logan winked at me, his smile reassuring. Ryder simply squeezed my shoulder, his touch grounding.



As I retired to my room for the night, the events of the day played in my mind. The undercurrent of tension had been palpable, yet we had managed to keep it at bay. But how long could we continue like this? How was I supposed to navigate this labyrinth of emotions without jeopardizing the renovation project and our friendships?

Alone in the solitude of my room, the cacophony of emotions within me surged like a tidal wave. There was no denying the tumultuous sea of emotions I was battling, an unexpected whirlpool that threatened to pull me under. Yet, there was also a curious sense of exhilaration, an odd exhilaration that sprang from acknowledging my complex feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder.

Lying on my bed, staring at the ceiling, I allowed the reality of my feelings to wash over me. There was no use pretending any longer. I was in the throes of attraction, a compelling magnetism that was impossible to resist. Each man had found a way into my heart, carving a unique place for himself. But how was I to navigate these treacherous waters without capsizing the ship we were all aboard? I needed to handle my feelings, these men, and the renovation project with utmost care, threading the needle without rupturing the fabric of our relationships.

“Dylan,” I murmured into the silence of my room, testing how my heart fluttered at the mention of his name.

“Logan,” I continued, a small smile playing on my lips as I recalled his laughter.

“Ryder,” I ended, feeling a warmth spread through me, remembering his understanding gaze.

## Chapter 11

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Rosie

The familiar grind of a diesel engine jolted me from my early morning sketching. Glancing up from my designs, I watched as Trevor Clarke, our gruff contractor, pulled his dusty pickup truck into the drive of Driftwood Dreams Inn. An unexpected inspection, just what we needed.

“Coffee?” Dylan’s voice rumbled behind me, carrying two steaming mugs. I gave him a thankful smile and gratefully accepted one.

“No time, Clarke’s here.” I responded, abandoning my designs and striding towards the front door. Dylan followed close behind, his presence a comfort.

As we greeted Trevor, his eyes scanned over the work done so far, his brow furrowed in thought. He wasn’t an easy man to read, but the frown creasing his rugged features didn’t seem to bode well.

“Rosie, Dylan,” he greeted us in his low grumble of a voice, “Let’s walk.”

We spent the next hour following Trevor around the inn, the air thick with tension as he examined every inch of our progress. Occasionally, he would ask a pointed question, make a sharp comment, or simply grumble something under his breath.

At one point, he ran a thick finger over a piece of woodwork, squinting at the grain. “Moore,” he addressed Dylan, “You’ve done better.”

Dylan’s face hardened, but he nodded, taking the critique in stride. “I’ll correct it, Trevor.”

Logan and Ryder joined us later, their cheerful morning chatter stalling when they saw Trevor. A nod from Dylan filled them in on the situation, their faces taking on the same seriousness that hung around the rest of us.

Despite his gruff exterior and hard-to-please attitude, Trevor Clarke knew his stuff. He had an eagle eye for detail, and nothing slipped past him. Every imperfection was caught, every oversight brought to light. His presence amplified the enormity of the task at hand and heightened the stress that came with it.

After what felt like an eternity, we all congregated in the once-grand lobby of the inn. The tension hung in the air, thick and heavy. Trevor scanned over us, his ice-cold eyes unreadable.

“I expect the best, nothing less,” he stated gruffly, then turned to leave, leaving us standing in an echoing silence.

As the door slammed shut, I exhaled a breath I hadn't realized I was holding. Glancing at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I found mirrored expressions of tension and worry.

"I think we need a meeting," I announced, determined to keep this project on track, to not let Trevor's disapproval deter us. The men nodded, ready to face this challenge head-on.

Just another day in the life of renovating the Driftwood Dreams Inn, and dealing with the inevitable conflicts and hurdles. But we were a team, and together, we could handle anything that came our way. Even Trevor Clarke.

The silence that followed Trevor's departure was deafening. We all stood there, staring at the spot where he'd been standing moments before. His words echoed in the grand lobby, a stark reminder of the high stakes.

"Alright," I broke the silence, gathering my thoughts. "Let's regroup in the dining room. We need a game plan."

Without a word, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder followed me. We pulled chairs around the heavy oak table that had seen countless family dinners, planning sessions, and now, this critical meeting.

Dylan, ever the stoic one, broke the silence. "Trevor's right," he admitted, his tone gruff. "The workmanship could be better. I'll take responsibility for that."

"Dylan," I interjected, reaching across the table to give his hand a reassuring squeeze. "We're all in this together. No one is blaming you."

He gave me a grateful nod, his blue eyes softening. I turned to the others, meeting their gaze one by one.

“Logan, how are we on the financial front?” I asked, looking at our resident financial wizard.

Logan ran a hand through his blond hair, a thoughtful look in his green eyes. “I’ve been crunching numbers. We’re on budget, but speeding things up might require more funds. I’ll look into it.”

“Thank you, Logan,” I acknowledged, appreciating his honesty.

“And Ryder, how’s the landscape coming along?” I turned to the quiet architect.

“Good. It’s progressing well,” Ryder responded, his smoky gray eyes thoughtful. “I can double down on it, try to get ahead of schedule.”

“That would be great, Ryder,” I responded, appreciating his dedication.

We spent the next hour brainstorming, discussing strategies to improve our efficiency, dividing responsibilities, and creating a timeline that would satisfy Trevor. Despite the high-pressure situation, there was a sense of camaraderie, a unity that felt comforting.

The meeting ended on a hopeful note, each of us determined to rise to the challenge. We had a mission to accomplish, an inn to restore, and we wouldn’t let anything deter us. As we left the dining room, there was a renewed sense of purpose in

our steps, a shared resolve that we could, and would, bring Driftwood Dreams Inn back to its former glory.

And as for my complicated feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, well, those would have to wait. The inn came first. But as I looked back at them, their faces serious and focused, I couldn't help but feel a pull, a silent whisper of what could be.

As we parted ways, each to their tasks, I felt a renewed sense of urgency. The tension was palpable; Trevor's unexpected visit had effectively lit a fire under us. Yet, there was a determination present as well. It thrummed like a pulse, quick and resilient.

Dylan headed for his workshop with a sense of resolve, his normally playful blue eyes hardened into slabs of icy determination. I could see him tracing the imperfections in the wood with a focused gaze, his strong hands maneuvering the tools with a renewed purpose. The sound of his tools against the timber echoed through the inn, reminding us all of our renewed vigor.

"How are you holding up?" His voice floated towards me, rough from the strain, yet unmistakably concerned.

"I'll be fine," I reassured him. His brow smoothed out marginally. "What about you, Dylan? I saw how hard Clarke's words hit you."

He was silent for a moment. Then he let out a deep sigh, brushing his hair back in frustration. "I can't lie and say it didn't sting. But I'm not going to let his criticism get to me. If anything, it's made me want to prove him wrong."

The determined glint in his eyes had me holding back a smile. That was Dylan; tough, resilient, never backing down from a challenge.

Meanwhile, Ryder spent his time pouring over landscaping designs, each draft more detailed and exquisite than the last. The pencils tucked behind his ear never stayed still, constantly shifting as his ideas grew and expanded.

“I think I’ve found the solution,” Ryder told me one afternoon, looking over a sprawling landscape sketch, “We just need to alter the designs slightly. It would actually add more depth to the view.”

His suggestions were innovative, pushing the boundaries of what we had originally planned. And they worked.

And Logan? He remained ensconced in his sleek office at Anchor Capital, dealing with numbers and figures with his trademark suave efficiency. He was balancing the thin line between prudence and aggression with the budget, ensuring we got the best deal at every turn.

In the chaos of renovations, days melted into evenings and evenings into nights. But we pressed on, each one of us invested in our shared dream.

Underneath it all, though, was an undercurrent of something more. An unspoken understanding, a connection that was undeniably becoming stronger. It manifested in stolen glances and supportive words, in understanding smiles and comforting touches.



For now, the restoration of the Driftwood Dreams Inn remained the primary focus. My burgeoning feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, would need to be kept under wraps.

Every evening, we would gather in the dining room, our makeshift war room, to discuss the day's progress. The conversations were filled with technical jargon, budget concerns, and renovation strategies, but there was also laughter, shared memories, and an unspoken camaraderie that had blossomed in the face of adversity.

"I think we made some good progress today," Dylan stated one evening, his gaze scanning the room, "We're moving forward."

"I agree," Logan chimed in, "The numbers are looking good. We're on track."

Ryder simply nodded, his eyes on his sketchpad, his pencil sketching away even as we spoke.

And as I looked at them, their faces lit with determination and a shared sense of purpose, I couldn't help but feel a wave of gratitude wash over me. These men, my friends, had thrown themselves into this project, dedicating their time and skills to help me realize my dream. It was more than I could've asked for.

Our bond was undeniable, a tether that connected us all. It was more than just friendship, more than shared history. It was a kinship born out of shared dreams and collective effort. And as each day passed, I found myself drawn to them, not just as friends, but as something more.

The days were long, the work was hard, but we had each other. We were a team, a family, bound by a shared goal. And as the sun set each day, painting the sky with hues of orange and purple, I knew we were one step closer to realizing our dream.

We were reviving Driftwood Dreams Inn, together. And amidst the chaos of renovations, the dust and the noise, the stress and the pressure, there was an undeniable sense of belonging. This was our project, our journey, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

As the night drew in, and the inn was once again shrouded in silence, I found myself reflecting on our progress. We were making headway, despite the challenges. The inn was slowly coming back to life, each new beam, each fresh coat of paint, a testament to our hard work.

I fell asleep that night with a sense of contentment, knowing that despite the challenges, we were making progress. And as I drifted off, the sound of the ocean waves lapping against the shore, I couldn't help but feel a sense of anticipation for what the new day would bring.

With Dylan, Logan, and Ryder by my side, I was ready to face whatever came our way. And as I closed my eyes, their names whispered in the wind, a silent promise of the journey that lay ahead.

## Chapter 12

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Rosie

After a long day of intense renovation work, I found myself wandering down the quiet, lamplit streets of our little town. My feet, seemingly of their own accord, led me to the familiar, warmly lit house of my longtime friend, Vanessa Moore - who happened to also be Dylan's sister.

Knocking on her door, I took a deep breath, preparing myself to unburden the day's worries and stress. Vanessa opened the door, her bright blue eyes filled with surprise.

"Rosie?" she asked, her eyebrows knitting together in concern. "What brings you here so late?"

"Can I come in?" I asked, my voice barely above a whisper. She quickly stepped aside, ushering me into her cozy living room.

We settled onto her plush sofa, a comforting silence settling between us. Vanessa, always patient, waited for me to speak first. I took a deep breath, collecting my thoughts.

“The renovation,” I began, my fingers nervously playing with the hem of my floral dress. “It’s... it’s more than I bargained for.”

Vanessa’s gaze softened. “You’ve taken on a huge task, Rosie,” she said gently. “But you’re doing a fantastic job.”

I shook my head, a knot forming in my throat. “You didn’t see Trevor’s face today,” I confessed, my voice trembling slightly. “The way he looked at our work... I felt like a complete failure.”

“Oh, Rosie,” Vanessa murmured, her hand reaching out to cover mine. “Trevor Clarke is known for his harsh critiques. You can’t let his words discourage you.”

“But what if he’s right?” I asked, my hazel eyes meeting hers. “What if I’m not cut out for this?”

“Rosie Sutton,” Vanessa said, her voice firm but gentle. “You are one of the most determined, hardworking women I know. You have a vision, and you’re passionate about it. That’s more than most people can say.”

I smiled weakly, her words offering a small comfort. “You always know how to lift my spirits, Van,” I said, a soft chuckle escaping my lips.

“That’s what friends are for,” she replied, her eyes twinkling with warmth.

For a moment, I considered telling her about my tangled feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. But something held me back. It was too complicated, too messy. I didn’t want to

burden her with my romantic troubles on top of everything else.

“I should get going,” I said, rising from the sofa. “I have a long day ahead of me tomorrow.”

Vanessa stood up with me, pulling me into a comforting hug. “You’re stronger than you think, Rosie,” she whispered into my ear. “You can handle this.”

“Rosie,” Vanessa said after a moment of silence, her voice softer now. “You’re under a lot of pressure. You need to find a way to relieve some of that stress.”

I frowned at her, biting my lower lip. “How am I supposed to do that, Van? I’ve got a mountain of work ahead of me.”

She chuckled softly, the sound wrapping around me like a comforting blanket. “You’ve always been a workaholic, Rosie. But remember, all work and no play can be bad for the soul.”

“Play?” I echoed, my brows furrowing in confusion. “I don’t have time for—”

“You do,” Vanessa interrupted, holding my gaze steadily. “You just need to make it. You need to find a balance.”

“But the renovation...”

“Will still be there in the morning,” she finished for me. “Take some time for yourself, Rosie. Go for a walk, have a glass of wine, watch the sunset... Do something that relaxes you.”

I paused, her words sinking in. “And you think that will help?”

She smiled, nodding. “I know it will. And Rosie, remember to delegate. You’ve got Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They’re not just here for their pretty faces, you know.”

A laugh escaped me at that, the first genuine laugh of the day. “You’re right,” I admitted. “I need to remember that I’m not alone in this.”

“Exactly,” she said, her hand giving mine a reassuring squeeze. “Now, promise me you’ll try?”

“I promise,” I conceded, grateful for her advice.

“Good,” she replied, her gaze filled with nothing but concern and kindness. “And Rosie, if you ever need to talk... about anything, I’m here.”

Her emphasis on the last word didn’t go unnoticed, but I merely nodded, choosing not to delve into the unspoken offer to discuss the complicated web of emotions that were my feelings for Dylan, Logan, and Ryder.

“Thanks, Vanessa,” I said sincerely. “You always know what to say.”

She smiled, a touch of sadness in her eyes. “That’s because I’ve been where you are, Rosie. And trust me, you’re stronger than you think.”

With that, I left her house, her words ringing in my ears. The night was calm, a stark contrast to the turmoil within me. But Vanessa’s advice gave me a semblance of control over the

chaos. It was a start, at least. I just hoped I could hold onto that feeling when faced with the reality of the renovation - and the three men who were becoming so much more than just coworkers.

Returning to the inn, I let the weight of the silence envelop me. I stared at the facade, a pale giant beneath the moon's silvery glow, a beacon in the dark. It felt comforting, yet strangely isolating. My emotions whirled around like leaves in the wind, conflicting, fighting for dominance.

Shaking off my tumultuous thoughts, I forced my legs to carry me up the grand steps, the wood creaking under my weight. Pushing open the front door, the scent of fresh pine, mixed with the distinct smell of sawdust and varnish, filled my nostrils.

A familiar soft hum resonated through the hallways, growing louder as I approached the heart of the inn. The soft golden glow emanating from the lounge caught my attention, drawing me towards it like a moth to a flame.

Inside, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were huddled over a set of blueprints, their focused gazes trained on the intricate lines and notes spread across the large table. My heart swelled at the sight. This was more than just a renovation. It was a symbol of unity, friendship, and... potential romance. The very thought of it sent a delicious thrill through me.

Dylan looked up as I entered, a soft smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. His intense blue eyes seemed to glow in

the warm light, a mesmerizing ocean I wanted to drown myself in.

Logan turned to face me, his typically stern features softening as he offered a small, sincere smile. His green eyes, as verdant as fresh spring leaves, seemed to twinkle, drawing me in.

Ryder's infectious grin met my gaze as I made my way towards them. His charming amber eyes twinkled under his sandy hair, a beacon of joy amidst my turbulent emotions.

The shared warmth, the unity, the strength I drew from them made me feel safe and loved. It was intoxicating. But it was also terrifying. How could I navigate these emotions without risking everything we'd built?

My heart throbbed at the possibilities and dangers. Vanessa's words came to my mind: "All work and no play can be bad for the soul." It was almost laughable, the thought of playing amidst the simmering tension and overwhelming workload. But Vanessa was right. There had to be balance.

"How's are things coming along with the terrace?" I asked, clearing my throat.

"The foundation seems solid," Dylan said, his fingers tracing the blueprint's edges. "But we'll have to double-check the measurements for the terrace."

"We'll need more sand for the landscaping," Ryder chimed in, pushing his glasses up on his nose.

"And the budget?" I glanced at Logan.



“It’s tight, but manageable,” Logan said, flipping through a notepad. “We’ve got this, Rosie.”

A sense of reassurance filled me. This wasn’t just my fight. We were in it together. The emotions brewing within me for each of them felt less like a burden, more like a shared secret.

“Let’s call it a day,” I finally suggested. “We all need some rest.”

Agreeing, they all started packing up, Dylan and Ryder helping to clean up the scattered blueprints while Logan finalized the last bits of his notes.

As I turned to leave, my gaze flickered between the three men. Each so different, yet bound together by the same project, the same goal. My feelings for them weren’t just fleeting attraction; they were deep, meaningful connections.

Feeling the weight of the unspoken secrets and the tantalizing promise of more, I bid them goodnight, promising myself to handle this delicate situation with the care it deserved. They were not just coworkers. They were my friends, and potentially so much more.

And as I climbed the staircase to my room, Vanessa’s parting words echoed once more, reminding me that while my path was lined with uncertainties, I didn’t have to navigate it alone. It was a soothing thought to end the day with, bringing a sense of calm amidst the emotional chaos, setting the stage for a promising dawn.

Retreating into the quiet of my room, I felt a warmth spread within me, the events of the day gradually melting away into a quiet contemplation. As I sat on the edge of my bed, the worn pages of my sketchpad opened to a sketch of the Driftwood Dreams Inn, the images whispered tales of shared efforts and mutual dreams. My heart thrummed in response, my emotions playing a sweet, symphony as I pondered over my intertwined fate with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder.

Looking down at the sketch, my fingertips lightly traced over the lines, remembering how their hands had held the same tools, carving and shaping the dream into reality. Each stroke on the paper felt like a memory, a silent witness to our growing bond. As my gaze flitted over their carefully drawn figures, I could almost feel the energy that they brought into the project, their dedication echoing in every pencil stroke. It was as though the ink itself was infused with our shared passion, every line a testament to our camaraderie and unspoken emotions.

Drawing a deep breath, I released it slowly, my mind drifting back to the soothing words of Vanessa. I remembered her soft gaze, the gentle touch of her hand, and the assurance in her voice when she said, “Rosie, you’re stronger than you think.” That affirmation felt like an anchor, grounding me amidst the tempest of my thoughts. It wasn’t just the renovation that was bringing us together; it was a shared purpose, a shared dream. Vanessa had reminded me of the importance of maintaining a balance, and in her words, I found the courage to confront my fears, my doubts, and my deepest desires.

## Chapter 13

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Rosie

In the stillness of dawn, before anyone else was up and stirring, I'd already risen and was admiring my beloved inn. It stood in weathered grace against the vibrant canvas of sunrise, just as determined and unwavering as I was to reclaim its glory.

Footsteps broke my silent commune. Looking over my shoulder, I saw Dylan's broad figure making its way towards me. I watched him quietly, taking in his tousled hair, those smattering of freckles, and those piercing blue eyes that mirrored the ocean.

"Early bird," Dylan greeted with a soft chuckle, his eyes warm as they met mine.

Returning his smile, I answered, "Never been one to waste daylight."

Soon, the bustle around the inn heightened. Logan and Ryder joined our quiet conclave, bringing an array of their unique personalities. Logan's quick wit kept our spirits high, while

Ryder's thoughtful gaze as he surveyed the area filled the air with calm.

Later that morning, in the dusty heat of our makeshift workshop, I stood sandwiched between Logan and Ryder, our heads bent over the detailed blueprint of the inn. Their focused expressions ignited a sense of camaraderie in me, and my heart pounded at the sudden realization that these were more than platonic feelings.

“Rose?” Logan's rich voice brought me out of my daze.

Blushing, I met his eyes and mumbled, “Yes, Logan?”

“Your opinion on this blueprint, it needs your artistic touch.”

As I marked down my suggestions, I felt their eyes on me, the unspoken affection making me fumble with the pencil. The tension was building, a magnetic pull that we'd been avoiding for so long.

The first time Dylan's hand brushed against mine during lunch, an unexplainable flutter surged in my belly. When Logan would look my way, I'd be caught in his flirtatious, yet sincere gaze, causing my cheeks to redden. And whenever Ryder placed a gentle hand on my back, it sparked an unexpected warmth.

It wasn't long before the sparks turned into full-blown fireworks. Every accidental brush, each extended glance, they became pieces of a dangerous puzzle that, when put together, had my heart thumping and skin tingling. Between the steady work of the renovation and the air buzzing with electricity, the

day quickly slipped away. Tired and sweaty, the four of us sat together in the dining room. The atmosphere was thick with the buzz of accomplishment, so we decided to celebrate. A hodgepodge of pizza, beer, and laughter bounced through the cavernous halls of the inn, its hollow corners echoing our camaraderie and revelry.

I couldn't help but glance over at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, my heart swelling with gratitude for their relentless support and... was that desire I felt? My body tingled at the thought, my core tightening at their broad smiles and roguish laughs.

It was Dylan who made the first move, breaking away from the revelry to join me. He leaned in close, his warm breath fanning my ear. "You look beautiful tonight, Rosie," he murmured, his words causing a jolt of electricity to surge through my body. I found myself lost in his piercing blue eyes, the flicker of desire burning within them setting my pulse racing.

Just then, Logan sauntered over, a playful smirk gracing his lips. "Don't hog her, Dylan," he chided, throwing a possessive arm around my waist. He turned to me, his green eyes filled with a wicked gleam. "He's right, you know. You are breathtaking, Rosie."

Ryder, not wanting to be left out, came up behind me, the heat from his sturdy body searing into my back. "We all think so," he confirmed, his deep voice a low rumble that vibrated through my being. His smoky eyes held a promise that sent shivers down my spine.

Before I could respond, Dylan cupped my face, pulling me in for a kiss that stole my breath away. Logan and Ryder didn't waste a second, each claiming a kiss for themselves, their hands wandering and exploring every inch of my body. I was lost in a whirl of sensation, my body aflame with desire and anticipation.

“You sure about this, Rosie?” Dylan asked, pulling away, concern etching his handsome face.

I responded by grabbing his face and pulling him back in for another searing kiss. “I've never been more sure of anything,” I whispered, pulling away to breathe.

That was all the confirmation they needed. Clothes were quickly discarded, and the heat of their bodies pressed against mine was enough to send me spiraling. Their hands roamed every inch of my body, touching, teasing, sending wave after wave of pleasure coursing through me.

Every touch, every whisper, every heated glance exchanged was electric, intoxicating, and soon I found myself swept up in a storm of passion. My body moved in rhythm with theirs, our bodies intertwining as they lavished me with their attention.

“Dylan,” I whispered back, tracing a hand down his broad, muscular chest, my fingers trembling with anticipation. He responded by capturing my lips again, his tongue seeking entrance. The taste of him was intoxicating, making my head spin.

Logan's hands had moved to my breasts, his thumb teasing my nipple into a hard peak. The sensation sent a jolt of

pleasure coursing through my body, making me arch into his touch. “Logan,” I gasped out, my voice a mere whisper.

He grinned, leaning down to replace his thumb with his mouth. His teeth grazed my nipple, eliciting a soft moan from my lips. My fingers curled into his hair, holding him close. His free hand snaked down my body, finding its way to my core.

He pushed a finger inside me, and I couldn’t help the cry that escaped my lips. His name became a chant, filling the room as he added a second finger, stretching me, preparing me.

I was on the edge, the coil of pleasure in my belly tightening with each thrust of his fingers. And then, he stopped. “No,” I whimpered, trying to push myself onto his hand, but he held me down, his grip firm.

“Not yet, Rosie,” he said, his voice husky. “We want to enjoy you, take our time with you.”

I looked over at Dylan, his blue eyes dark with desire. He had been watching, his hand slowly stroking his cock, matching the rhythm of Logan’s fingers. The sight was enough to send me spiraling, my body quaking as the coil snapped. My orgasm ripped through me, wave after wave of pleasure coursing through my veins.

And then, I felt him. Dylan was pressing against my entrance, his cock hard and ready. He looked at me, his eyes searching for permission. I nodded, my body thrumming with anticipation. He pushed inside, slowly, giving me time to adjust to his size.

Meanwhile, Ryder had moved behind me, his hands gripping my hips as he positioned himself at my entrance. I could feel his dick against my ass, making me whimper.

“Relax, Rosie,” he murmured, his voice soothing. He pushed inside, the sensation of being filled completely making me gasp.

They started moving, their rhythm in sync. I was lost in a whirl of sensation, my body responding to each thrust, each touch. Dylan’s hand found my clit, his thumb circling it in time with their thrusts.

My second orgasm hit me like a freight train, making me scream out their names. My cunt tightened around Dylan’s cock, my ass clenching around Ryder’s dick. I could feel them tense, their thrusts becoming erratic.

Dylan was the first to cum, his cock twitching inside me. I could feel his warm release, making me shudder. Ryder was next, his release filling me. The sensation was overwhelming, sending me over the edge for the third time.

I was spent, my body trembling with exhaustion. They slowly pulled out, their bodies collapsing beside me. Logan moved to my other side, pulling me into his arms. I closed my eyes, the exhaustion taking over. But before I drifted off to sleep, I felt a soft kiss being placed on my forehead. “We’ve got you, Rosie,” I heard them whisper.

The fervor of their passionate encounter ebbed away as silence filled the room, leaving only the quiet rhythm of our breathing to fill the air. It felt surreal. I found myself



sandwiched between Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They lay splayed around me, their bare bodies intertwined with mine under the thin cotton sheets of my bed. The faint musky scent of them - the tang of sawdust from Dylan, the cologne of Logan, and the earthy aroma of Ryder - lingered, weaving a tapestry of an unforgettable night.

Despite the warmth they offered, a shiver crawled up my spine as the gravity of the situation began to dawn upon me. Their steady breaths reverberated against my bare skin, serving as a constant reminder of the uncharted territory we'd ventured into. The line we had crossed from friendship to something more.

Breaking the silence, Dylan's voice was soft and hoarse, "Rosie..."

"Dylan..." I cut him off, my heart thumping erratically against my ribcage, "I..."

Logan, always one to feel the tension, interjected with a forced joviality, "If you guys start a confession now, I'm going to jump out of the window."

Laughter echoed, masking the disquiet that had set in. Ryder chimed in, his voice holding a rare, humorous lilt, "Can't argue with that. It's too late for soul-searching. And frankly, I am too comfortable to move."

Their lighthearted banter broke the building tension momentarily, yet it lingered like an elephant in the room. As their laughter ebbed away, it was replaced by a silence more profound than before.

I found myself studying them. Dylan's face, normally stoic, was now soft and open, the blue of his eyes radiating an unusual tenderness. Logan's playful demeanor was absent, his face a reflection of contemplation, while Ryder was unusually silent, his smoky gray eyes seeming lost.

"What happens now?" Dylan broke the silence again, the question hanging heavy in the air.

"I...I don't know." My voice was a mere whisper, but the words seemed to echo loudly in the quiet room. A tidal wave of anxiety washed over me as the full implications of our actions began to register. Would our friendship survive this?

"Rosie..." Ryder's voice was deep and soft, almost a purr, "We can figure this out. One step at a time."

There was a finality to his statement, and a shared understanding seemed to pass between us. It was as if we'd collectively decided to postpone any form of soul-searching or confession till the harsh light of day.

A silent agreement of the complexities that lay ahead and the bridge we'd cross when we'd get there. The inn and its renovation still lay at the heart of our shared vision. However, tonight, the threads of friendship had intertwined into something more complex. And as I lay there surrounded by them, I couldn't help but wonder about the dawn that was fast approaching and the uncertainty it would bring with it.

With their breathing growing more steady and rhythmic, I knew they had succumbed to sleep, leaving me alone with my thoughts. Their gentle snores, however, did little to calm the

storm brewing within me. As I lay there, my mind began to replay the events of the night, each moment a vivid imprint in my memory.

“Dylan,” I murmured to myself, remembering his whispered compliments and the intensity of his blue eyes. I thought about how his rough, calloused hands had ignited my skin with every touch. He had always been patient and reliable, a steady rock in my life, but tonight, he had shown me a different side, one that was passionate and bold.

I sighed, running my fingers through my tangled hair. My feelings for them were complicated and tangled, like a knot that was impossible to unravel. Each man held a special place in my heart, their qualities complementing each other in ways that made it impossible for me to choose.

A sense of guilt gnawed at me. Was I being unfair to them? They had put their hearts on the line, shown me their vulnerability, and I was unsure of how to respond. The weight of my emotions was heavy, pressing down on me, making it difficult to breathe.

“We can figure this out. One step at a time.” Ryder’s words echoed in my mind, offering a glimmer of hope amidst the chaos. But the question was, how?

As I lay there, lost in my thoughts, the faint glow of the dawn started to creep in through the windows. A new day was beginning, bringing with it the uncertainty of our future. But for now, all I could do was hope, hope that our friendship was strong enough to weather the storm.

As the sun began to rise, casting long shadows in the room, I knew one thing for certain. My life, as I knew it, had changed irrevocably. And whether this change was for the better or worse, only time would tell. With that thought, I finally closed my eyes, surrendering to the beckoning call of sleep, hoping it would bring some respite from the whirlwind of emotions.

## Chapter 14

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Rosie

The sun was sinking into the horizon, casting a warm golden glow over the Driftwood Dreams Inn. The grand archways and spacious rooms, now filled with the scent of fresh paint and the echo of diligent work, held a new promise. As I stood there, sketchpad in hand, a sense of pride washed over me. I couldn't help but admire how far we'd come - the progress was palpable, the transformation breathtaking.

It was then that a sleek, black car rolled into view. Its tires crunched on the gravel drive as it pulled up. The driver's door swung open and out stepped a man in a crisp designer suit. His peppered hair was neatly combed back, and his sharp blue eyes surveyed his surroundings with a sense of entitlement. Landon Carter. His reputation as a formidable name in financials and a ruthless real estate investor was well-known in Azure Cove. The only other big player in the field was Logan.

An uncomfortable knot of unease twisted in my stomach as Landon's gaze scanned over the inn. His eyes were sharp, his

gaze assessing, calculating, as if mentally affixing a price tag to our hard-earned labor.

“Sutton,” he began, his voice as smooth as silk, dripping with insincere charm. “I heard through the grapevine about your little project. I must say, I was intrigued. Thought I’d swing by and see it for myself.”

“Mr. Carter,” I replied, fighting to keep my voice steady, to keep the rising anxiety from coloring my tone. “This isn’t some business opportunity. It’s a labor of love.”

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the approaching figures of Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They had caught the tail end of our exchange and were now closing in, forming a united front against Landon’s unwelcome interest. Their protective presence was comforting, an embodiment of the silent vow we had all made to defend our dream against any threat.

“You’ve assembled a good team here, Sutton,” Landon observed, his gaze sweeping over the guys. “I’m merely suggesting a way to make this venture more... lucrative. An opportunity to turn a bigger profit.”

“We’re not selling,” Logan cut in abruptly, his voice firm, his green eyes flashing a defiant challenge at Landon.

Landon stepped closer, ignoring Logan. The gravel beneath his polished shoes crunching in a slow, deliberate rhythm, echoing the palpable tension in the air. “You know, Sutton,” he continued, the smile never leaving his face but his eyes colder than ever, “I have a knack for turning things around, for making the... impractical profitable.”

Logan's jaw tightened. "The inn isn't a chess piece in one of your twisted games, Carter."

"Everything has its price," Landon countered, circling us like a predator assessing his prey. His piercing gaze landed on Dylan. "Especially in Azure Cove."

Dylan's face darkened, his fists clenching at his side. "Stay out of our affairs, Landon."

Landon chuckled, the sound grating on our nerves. "Oh, Dylan. You always were so naive. This isn't just about business. It's about control, power." His eyes flicked back to me. "And I always get what I want."

Ryder, usually the calmest among us, stepped forward, his eyes burning with anger. "This inn represents hope for this community. Your greed won't destroy that."

Landon laughed, a sinister edge to his amusement. "Hope? Hope won't pay the bills or fend off the banks. And when that reality comes knocking, I'll be there, waiting to pick up the pieces."

Logan, trying to diffuse the escalating tension, interjected, "We're doing just fine, Carter. Your services aren't needed here."

Landon took a step back, the predatory gleam in his eyes never wavering. "Remember my offer. Every dream, no matter how small, has its breaking point." With that, he turned on his heel, sauntering back to his sleek, black car, leaving behind an air thick with tension and unease.

As his car pulled away, a heavy silence fell over us. We knew we had a new challenge on our hands, but it wasn't something we couldn't handle.

“Guys,” I began, turning to face them. “We need to talk.”

Back inside, we sat down to devise a plan. We knew what we had to do - protect our project, our dreams. There was no room for fear, only determination.

My three men stood before me, their faces mirroring the determination that pounded in my heart. We were gathered in the heart of the inn, surrounded by the remnants of a forgotten era, ready to breathe life back into its decaying structure. The atmosphere was thick with anticipation, and my heart fluttered nervously.

“I think we need to discuss Landon,” Dylan broke the silence, his voice was steady, but his piercing blue eyes gave away his concern. He shifted his tool belt, the metal pieces clinking together softly.

I nodded, the mention of Landon sent an involuntary shiver down my spine. His relentless pursuit of the inn as a business opportunity had been a constant thorn in our sides.

“You're right,” Logan agreed, his smart-casual attire contrasting against the rustic charm of the inn. He ran a hand through his blond hair, his striking green eyes glinting with determination. “He's not going to stop until he gets what he wants. And we can't let that happen.”



“I agree,” Ryder added quietly. He had always been the quietest of the trio, but when he spoke, his words carried weight. His gray eyes held a sense of calm, a tranquility that contrasted against the storm that raged outside. “We need to make sure the inn stays within this family. It’s not just about business, it’s about preserving what matters.”

There was a pause as we all considered his words. I could feel my heart swelling with gratitude for these three men, who had shown me nothing but unwavering support and dedication. They understood what the inn meant to me, they understood the dreams that were interwoven with every brick and beam.

“We won’t let Landon take this away,” Dylan promised, his voice full of conviction. “This inn is not just a property. It’s a piece of this town’s heart, and Rosie’s dream. We won’t let him destroy that.”

Logan and Ryder nodded in agreement, their expressions solemn. I felt my heart flutter again, this time with a wave of emotion that brought tears to my eyes.

“Thank you,” I managed to whisper, my voice choked with emotion. “Thank you for standing by me, for believing in this dream.”

Dylan stepped forward, his strong hand enveloping mine. His touch brought a familiar surge of warmth, his presence a comforting balm. “We’re in this together, Rosie.”

Logan and Ryder echoed his sentiment, their words wrapping around me like a protective cocoon. I looked at each

of them, their determination mirroring my own. This was our battle, our journey.

That night, as I retreated to my room, their words echoed in my mind. We were not just a team, we were a family. A family that was ready to fight, ready to stand against any obstacle that came our way. For the inn, for our dreams, and for each other.

I found solace in that promise, a promise that we would face every challenge. As I drifted to sleep, I clung to the comforting rhythm of the rain against the windows, a lullaby that echoed the promises and convictions that filled the room earlier.

In the heart of the storm, we were united, our resolve unbroken. And in that unity, I found strength. I found courage. And above all, I found hope. Because no matter what, we would face it together. As a team, as a family. As a force that was ready to take on anything. Anything at all.

As the morning sun poured its golden light through the large, stained-glass windows of the Driftwood Dreams Inn, I allowed my gaze to linger on the trio before me. Dylan, his muscular arms coated in a fine layer of sawdust, was carefully working on an intricate piece of molding. Logan, his green eyes bright with concentration, was hunched over a stack of paperwork, calculating budgets and adjusting timelines. And Ryder, his curly hair falling into his eyes, was engrossed in his tablet, sketching the net phase of our garden design. Their dedication was as palpable as the tension that had been brewing since that unforgettable night.

“Another early start, Rosie?” Dylan’s voice pulled me back to reality, his blue eyes softening in a comforting manner.

“Can’t let you guys have all the fun,” I retorted, feigning a nonchalant air. In reality, the sight of them, committed to our shared dream, was both comforting and disconcerting. Their presence invoked feelings that were no longer confined to friendship.

“You look tired. You should get more rest,” Logan chimed in, his voice laced with concern. His gaze held mine, and I could see the spark of longing that mirrored my own.

“I’m fine,” I assured him, ignoring the flutter in my heart.

The palpable silence was broken by Ryder’s low chuckle.

A blush crept up my cheeks. Even in his quiet demeanor, Ryder had a knack for making his feelings apparent.

We immersed ourselves in our tasks, the inn echoing with the sound of tools, calculators, and papers rustling. Yet amidst the noise, a silent understanding brewed. We were a team, each carrying an emotional torch that could potentially burn the foundation we were trying to build. But together, we were determined to douse any flames.

As the day drew to a close, the inn began to take shape. There were still rough patches, areas where Trevor’s critique stung the most, but there was also a visible transformation. The inn was no longer just a dilapidated building; it was a symbol of our shared aspirations and growing connections.

“Dinner?” Logan suggested as he stretched, the lines on his forehead easing away. Dylan and Ryder nodded, and we found ourselves in the inn’s old dining room, sharing a simple meal of sandwiches and laughter. Despite the complexities of our relationship, these shared moments were a balm, soothing the edges of our hidden desires.

Later, as the moon hung low, casting long shadows on the woodwork, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder stood at my door, their faces illuminated in the soft glow.

“We got this, Rosie,” Dylan said, his words echoing in the silent hallway. Logan nodded in agreement, his hand brushing mine in a fleeting moment of connection. Even Ryder, in his silent way, managed to convey his unwavering support.

As they left, their assurances hung in the air, a promise to stand by me, whatever the cost. Their words wove a blanket of comfort around my apprehensions, tucking them away for the night. In the quiet of my room, the inn stood still, holding its breath as if aware of the secrets it sheltered.

Tomorrow, we would face another day, another challenge.

## Chapter 15

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Rosie

As the sun rose over the Driftwood Dreams Inn, it was hard to ignore the transformation taking place. The once-dilapidated retreat was starting to show signs of its former glory. I stood at the threshold, sketchpad in hand, taking in the scene. Dylan, with his sleeves rolled up, was diligently sanding down the old woodwork. Logan was knee-deep in financial spreadsheets, ensuring we were on track with our budget. And Ryder, was digging up a patch of ground, preparing it for planting.

“Hey, Rosie, come take a look at this,” Dylan called, wiping the sweat off his brow. I moved closer, watching as his strong hands expertly maneuvered the sander over the intricate carvings of the grand archway.

“It’s beautiful, Dylan,” I said, tracing my fingers over the smooth surface. He gave me a soft smile, his blue eyes twinkling with pride.

Over by the large bay window, Logan looked up from his laptop. “Guys, we’re doing well on the budget. I think we can

afford that vintage wallpaper you wanted for the main hall, Rosie.”

My heart fluttered at his words. The wallpaper was a small detail, but it was a part of my dream for the inn. “Really, Logan? That’s fantastic!”

His green eyes sparkled as he gave me a wink. “Anything for the inn, Rosie.”

Just then, Ryder walked in, a smudge of dirt on his cheek. “We’re nearly ready to start planting on the far side of the garden. Here are my plans, take a look at let me know what you think.”

As I walked over to view his sketches, I felt a surge of warmth. Despite the complexities of our secret affair, we were making this work. Our shared passion for the inn was pulling us together, strengthening our bond. Each stroke of the paintbrush, each hammered nail, and each planted seed was a testament to our shared dreams and desires.

That evening marked the completion of the inn’s grand foyer. The vintage wallpaper, now adhered to the walls, brought the space to life in a way I had only ever dreamed of. We stood, the four of us, in the middle of the room, our eyes tracing the intricate pattern, the soft glow of the chandelier above casting a warm light over us.

“It’s stunning, Rosie,” Dylan murmured, his arm brushing against mine. The contact sent a spark of electricity through me, my heart pounding in response.

Logan chuckled, his gaze on me. “She’s got an eye for detail, that’s for sure.”

Ryder nodded, his eyes never leaving the room. “She’s breathed life back into this place.”

Their praise washed over me, filling me with a sense of pride and accomplishment. But it wasn’t just the renovation that was thriving; our secret romance was intensifying, fueled by shared successes and stolen moments.

“We should celebrate,” Logan suggested, pulling me from my thoughts. He uncorked a bottle of champagne, the pop echoing around the room.

“We’ve come a long way,” I said, raising my glass. “To the inn, and to us.”

“To us,” they echoed, their voices intertwining with the crackling of the fire.

As the night wore on, the air between us crackled with an unspoken tension. Our conversations were laced with innuendo, our touches lingering a moment too long. We were playing with fire, but none of us seemed willing to put it out.

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The following day, we were invited to a gathering at the local diner, an event that usually had the whole town buzzing with chatter and shared stories. It was a challenge, a test of our ability to keep our secret under wraps. We knew we had to

tread carefully, to not give anything away with a stray look or a lingering touch.

Walking into the diner, we drew a few curious looks. We had become a constant sight at the inn, the townsfolk eager for updates about its renovation. It was no surprise when we were instantly pulled into separate conversations about the progress of our shared endeavor.

“I hear the foyer’s done. Must be a sight to behold, Rosie,” Old Mrs. Harper, the town’s long-time gossip, approached me with a gleam in her eyes.

“It is,” I replied with a smile, feeling Dylan’s gaze on me from across the room. “We’re all working hard to make it a reality.”

Over at the bar, Logan was discussing the inn’s finances with a group of locals, his charismatic persona effortlessly diverting their attention away from anything personal. And Ryder, surrounded by a group of garden enthusiasts, was explaining his plans for the outdoor space, keeping any other details about us safely hidden behind professional talk.

It was a dance we were becoming adept at - a careful balance between revealing just enough about our project while keeping the intricacies of our relationships concealed. The day passed in a blur of shared smiles and unspoken promises, our desire adding an electrifying undercurrent to the evening.

When we finally escaped the prying eyes of the town, a collective sigh of relief swept over us. Back at the inn, we



congregated in the grand foyer, the soft glow of the chandelier illuminating the satisfaction on our faces.

“We did well tonight,” Dylan remarked, a hint of amusement in his voice.

Logan let out a chuckle, pulling me into his side. “We’re getting good at this.”

Ryder nodded, his gaze flicking between us. “Let’s keep it that way.”

I glanced at them, my heart filled with an overwhelming affection. Their commitment to protecting our shared dream and our secret relationship was deeply reassuring. It solidified the fact that, despite the complexities, we were in this together.

The rest of the night was a mix of playful banter and comfortable silences, the shared understanding between us evident. As I moved around, tidying up, I could feel their eyes on me, the desire and longing almost palpable in the air.

Stealing a glance at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I realized how intertwined our lives had become - not just in the renovation of the inn, but in the secret we were guarding so fiercely. The thrill of our hidden romance combined with the fear of being discovered created a potent mix of excitement and apprehension.

We had managed to keep our secret from the town, but for how long? The question lingered in the back of my mind, creating a thrilling dimension to our shared endeavor. But as I lay in bed that night, the fear of being discovered couldn’t

overshadow the warmth that spread through me when I thought of my guys. They had become so much more than co-workers or friends - they were now irrevocably entwined in my heart.

Lost in my thoughts, I barely noticed the footsteps until Dylan's voice broke the silence. "Putting in a late night, Rosie?"

I turned to see him standing in the doorway, his blue eyes soft in the dim light. I patted the seat next to me, and he moved to sit beside me, his hand brushing against mine, sending a jolt of electricity through me.

"Was just thinking about how far we've come," I confessed, my voice barely above a whisper.

Dylan squeezed my hand, his touch comforting. "We have, haven't we? This inn, it's not just a building anymore. It's... it's us."

As I looked into his eyes, I saw the truth in his words. The inn had become a reflection of our shared passion, our dreams, and our love. We had poured our hearts into this place, and it had become a part of us, a symbol of the bond we shared.

With a shared understanding, we sat in comfortable silence, the grandeur of the inn enveloping us in its warmth. Despite the complexities of our situation, we had found solace in this place, in each other.

So, as I lay back in Dylan's arms, my heart pounding with a mix of excitement and apprehension, I knew one thing for

certain - this inn was not just a testament to our hard work and determination, it was a testament to us. Our love, our bond, our shared dreams, and the secret relationship that had intertwined our lives in the most beautiful way possible. And as I drifted off to sleep, lulled by the rhythmic sound of Dylan's heartbeat, I couldn't help but look forward to what the future held for us.

## Chapter 16

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Rosie

I lay awake in the dimly lit room, the worn wooden beams of the ceiling barely visible in the moonlight. My mind was a whirlwind of thoughts, a kaleidoscope of emotions, each more overwhelming than the last. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. Three men who were so much more than just friends or coworkers to me now. We were all bound together by the inn, by our shared dream, and now, by a secret that could shatter everything we'd built.

My heart pounded in my chest as I remembered the way Dylan's lips had felt against mine. The way his hands had explored my body, the way his eyes had burned with desire. It was a memory that sent shivers down my spine, a memory that was as intoxicating as it was terrifying.

"I can't believe we're doing this," I murmured to myself, my voice barely a whisper in the quiet room.

"What can't you believe?" A voice startled me, and I turned to see Ryder standing in the doorway, his smoky gray eyes soft in the moonlight.

“I... I was just thinking out loud,” I stammered, my heart racing.

He moved closer, his sturdy frame silhouetted against the moonlit window. “About what?”

“About... us,” I admitted, my voice barely audible. “About everything that’s happening.”

Ryder’s gaze was intense, his eyes searching mine. “Are you regretting it?” he asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

“No,” I replied quickly, shaking my head. “Not regretting. Just... overwhelmed, I guess.”

He nodded, understanding flashing in his eyes. “It’s a lot to take in,” he agreed. “But we’re in this together, Rosie. All of us.”

I swallowed hard, his words echoing in my mind. We were in this together. All of us. It was a thrilling thought, but also a terrifying one. We were playing with fire, and I couldn’t help but fear the consequences.

“I know,” I replied, forcing a smile. “And I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Ryder nodded and a smile appeared on his lips. “Goodnight, Rosie,” he said. “See you in the morning.”

“Goodnight,” I replied.

As Ryder left the room, I lay back down, my mind filled with thoughts of my men. I was drawn to them, unable to resist the allure of their illicit desires. I knew the risks, the

potential consequences, but I also knew that I couldn't walk away. Not now. Not when my heart was so deeply entwined with theirs.

As I drifted off to sleep, I couldn't help but wonder what the future held for us.

The following day found us at the local diner for breakfast. I ate alone at a booth, enjoying the salt-kissed air and the distant call of seagulls. Dylan, Logan, Ryder navigated the bustling room, maintaining a careful distance from each other.

Logan, with his charming smile and charismatic aura, held court at one end of the room, his laughter echoing over the hum of conversation. Dylan, calm and reliable as always, was engaged in a deep discussion with some of the town's older residents, his woodworking expertise a subject of fascination. Ryder was leaned against the wall, his smoky eyes taking in the room with a thoughtful gaze.

Once I finished my breakfast, I was left to flutter between them, a butterfly drawn to the warmth of three different flames. Our eyes would meet across the room, a silent conversation passing between us. Each glance was a secret, each smile a shared memory. We were careful, so very careful, but the thrill of our secret affair added a layer of excitement to the mundane.

"Rosie, dear," Mrs. Henderson, one of the town's sweet old ladies, beckoned me over. "You've been doing such a wonderful job with the inn. And those young men helping you, such good boys."

I smiled, a blush creeping up my cheeks. “They’ve been a great help, Mrs. Henderson.”

She patted my hand, her eyes twinkling. “And handsome too, aren’t they? It must be nice having them around.”

I laughed, trying to keep my tone light. “It certainly keeps things interesting.”

As breakfast hours drew to a close, I found myself alone with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. The four of us stood in a loose circle, our conversation casual and friendly. To anyone watching, we were just friends, nothing more. But beneath the surface, a current of electricity pulsed between us. Each glance, each touch, was a promise of more.

Later that afternoon, back at the inn, the memory of our stolen moments at the diner filled my thoughts. The way Dylan’s hand had brushed against mine as he passed me a cup of coffee, the way Logan’s eyes had sparkled when he laughed at one of my jokes, the way Ryder’s gaze had lingered on me a moment too long.

In the soft glow of the afternoon sun filtering through the aged windows, Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and I gathered in the renovated grand foyer. The atmosphere was charged, a current of electricity that was both exhilarating and terrifying coursing through us. The grandeur of the room mirrored the complexity of our feelings, our shared dream taking on a life of its own.

Dylan was the first to break the silence, his voice low and steady. “We’re doing good work here,” he said, his piercing

blue eyes scanning the room. “Not just with the inn... but with us.”

Logan’s laugh echoed through the room, his charismatic aura diffusing the tension. “Never thought I’d be in a love quadrangle, but here we are.”

Ryder leaned against a pillar, his smoky eyes reflecting a depth of emotion. “It’s unconventional,” he admitted, “But it feels... right.”

The room was filled with a comfortable silence, the weight of our shared feelings settling around us like a comforting blanket. Our eyes met, the silent conversation between us speaking volumes more than words ever could. We were all in this together, our fates intertwined as tightly as the threads of a tapestry.

Later that night, as I lay in bed, the day’s events replayed in my mind. The shared glances, the subtle touches, the unspoken words. It was a dance, a dangerous dance that we were all a part of. But as much as I feared the potential consequences, I couldn’t deny the allure.

My heart ached with a longing that was as overwhelming as it was terrifying. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. They were my strength, my weakness, my everything. As I closed my eyes, their faces swam before me, their smiles as familiar as the lines on my palms.

Yet, as I lay in the stillness of the night, the quiet was disrupted by the unsettling thoughts that prowled the corridors



of my mind. If our secret were to be revealed, what would it mean for us? What would it mean for our project? For the inn?

My chest tightened at the thought. Our small town thrived on gossip, and news of our unconventional relationship would surely ignite a scandal. And then there was Landon. The unsettling, potential investor who had shown more than just a business interest in our project. The stakes were dangerously high, and I couldn't shake off the unease that crept upon me like a fog rolling in from the sea.

"I'm playing with fire," I whispered into the void, the weight of our secret heavy on my heart.

My mind danced with visions of them, of us, our shared smiles, our shared dreams. I was theirs, as much as they were mine. A part of me knew the dangers that lay ahead, the potential heartbreak, the scandal, the whispered judgments. But another part, the part that beat in time with three other hearts, wouldn't, couldn't let them go.

As sleep beckoned, I clung to the comforting thought that, no matter what, we were in this together. Despite the uncertainty of our situation, we were a team, a family brought together by a shared dream. And we would face whatever the future held for us, together. I closed my eyes, my last conscious thought a whispered promise to the night, "We will face whatever comes, together."

And with that, I let the soft whispers of the ocean lull me into a restless slumber, my dreams filled with images of

Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, the men who had stolen my heart  
amidst the rubble of the Driftwood Dreams Inn.

## Chapter 17

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Rosie

The morning was graced with the smell of sawdust and fresh timber as I walked into Dylan's workshop. He was engrossed in carving an intricate design on a wooden panel, the sharp tool in his hand moving effortlessly, like a painter's brush on canvas. My heart fluttered at the sight. He was an artist in his own right. I watched silently, admiring his work, before announcing my presence.

"Hey Dylan, the door's frame needs a bit of a touch-up." I leaned against the door, my arms folded across my chest. He looked up, his piercing blue eyes filled with an unspoken affection. The corners of his mouth turned upwards in a warm smile as he placed his tools down.

"Sure thing, Rosie," he replied, wiping his hands on his dusty pants. As he approached, I could feel my heart racing in anticipation. There was something incredibly attractive about the way he worked - his focus, the strength in his movements, and his dedication to perfection.

We started working on the door together, the shared labor oddly therapeutic. Between the shavings of wood, shared smiles, and exchanged glances, I felt a powerful connection brewing between us.

After a while, Dylan put his tools down, taking a step back to assess our work. He seemed satisfied, and that satisfaction radiated off him, making him even more irresistible.

“That should do it,” he said, turning to me. Our eyes met, and a soft silence enveloped us. It felt like the world was fading away, leaving only the two of us in that intimate bubble.

In an impulsive move, Dylan leaned in, capturing my lips in a passionate kiss. His lips were soft and tasted slightly of the coffee he had earlier. His hands roamed down my body, tracing the curve of my waist, sending shivers of pleasure down my spine. My fingers curled in his hair, pulling him closer. I was on fire, my body reacting to every touch, every breath he took. We were lost in each other, oblivious to everything else.

Reluctantly, we pulled away, our chests heaving, the tension in the room palpable. Dylan gently tucked a stray lock of hair behind my ear, his touch sending my heart into a frenzy.

“That... we... should focus on the work,” he stammered, his eyes still holding mine captive.

“I know... I know,” I murmured, nodding in agreement. But a part of me craved for more, craved for his touch, his warmth, his love.

As I walked away, I couldn't help but replay the electrifying kiss, my body still buzzing from the intimate contact. I found myself wondering, craving the same closeness with Ryder. I had been avoiding these thoughts, burying them deep within me, but I knew I had to face them sooner or later. That day, the seed of desire for Ryder took root in my heart, little did I know how soon it would bloom.

I made my way to the gardens, my heart pounding in my chest. I had to speak with Ryder, discuss the landscaping design, but the lingering memory of my encounter with Dylan had my mind spinning.

I found Ryder engrossed in his work, kneeling on the ground, his hands covered in dirt. His muscular back was tense, his dark, curly hair gleaming under the sun. A soft sigh escaped my lips as I watched him. He was a sight to behold, the very embodiment of raw, masculine energy.

"Ryder," I called out, my voice barely above a whisper. He turned around, his smoky gray eyes meeting mine. There was a softness in his gaze, a quiet understanding that made my heart flutter.

"Rosie," he greeted, standing up to dust off his hands. His gaze lingered on me, his eyes roaming over my body, causing a shiver of anticipation to run down my spine.

"We need to talk about the design," I said, trying to steady my voice. His eyes flickered with understanding as he gestured towards a nearby bench.

We sat side by side, our knees barely touching. I could feel the heat radiating from his body, the close proximity making me aware of my own desires. I tried to focus on the design, explaining my ideas, my vision for the inn's outdoor space. But his presence was intoxicating, his closeness overwhelming.

Suddenly, Ryder's hand was on my thigh, his touch sending a jolt of electricity through me. His fingers traced a slow, teasing path up my leg, causing my breath to hitch. His gaze was intense, his eyes locked onto mine, daring me to stop him.

But I didn't. I couldn't. I wanted him.

His fingers found their way under my floral dress, tracing the edge of my panties. My heart pounded in my chest as his fingers slipped beneath the fabric, finding my wetness.

"Ryder," I gasped, my body arching into his touch. He silenced me with a deep, passionate kiss, his other hand pulling me closer.

His fingers worked magic on me, their skilled touch driving me to the edge. His thumb found my clit, circling it in a way that had me gasping for breath. His other fingers delved deeper, exploring my depths, driving me to a level of pleasure I hadn't known before.

I could feel my climax building, my body trembling under his touch. He quickened his pace, his fingers curling inside me, hitting just the right spot. I clung to him, my fingers digging into his shoulder as the pleasure consumed me.

“Ryder,” I moaned, my body convulsing as I came. My vision blurred, my senses overwhelmed by the sheer intensity of my orgasm.

As I came down from my high, Ryder pulled his hand away, bringing his fingers to his lips. The sight of him tasting me sent another wave of desire coursing through me.

“Rosie,” he murmured, his voice husky with desire. His smoky gray eyes held a promise, a promise of more passion, more intimacy, more love.

In that moment, I knew. I knew I was irrevocably in love with Ryder, just as I was with Dylan. And as I leaned into Ryder’s embrace, the reality of my feelings for these men washed over me. It was complex, it was overwhelming, but it was real. And I wouldn’t have it any other way.

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“Alright, team. We’ve made some amazing progress, but we still have a long way to go,” I said, spreading out my sketches across the large, rough-hewn table that occupied the dining area of the inn. The inn, my sanctuary, our sanctuary.

Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were with me, looking just as weary as I felt. Our clothes were stained with sweat and dust from a long day of work. Dylan’s arms were splattered with paint, and Ryder’s curly hair was flecked with leaves and soil from his work in the garden.

“The reception area still needs a bit of a touch-up, and we have to decide on the design for the front outdoor space,” I

pointed out, tracing my finger over the detailed floor plans.

“It’s more than just a bit, Rosie,” Dylan chuckled, ruffling his disheveled hair. “But I think I can build a better reception desk, one that goes with the overall aesthetic we’re going for.”

“That’s perfect, Dylan,” I smiled. I always loved his solutions; he was precise, artistic, and his eyes always sparkled when he talked about his designs. I loved that about him.

Ryder then interjected, his voice calm but deep, “We should keep the front landscaping simple. Maybe some flowering plants near the entrance and a few trees lining the drive? What do you think, Rosie?”

“Sounds wonderful, Ryder. The guests would love the green touch,” I agreed, and we spent the next couple of hours finalizing the plans, bouncing off ideas. Our mutual respect and shared dreams somehow transformed the tedious task into an enjoyable evening.

“Alright, team, it’s getting late. Let’s wrap this up,” Logan eventually declared, standing and stretching. He caught my gaze, his striking green eyes glimmering under the soft light, “How about I cook dinner for us?”

Despite the tiredness pulling at my bones, my heart swelled at his considerate offer. “That would be fantastic, Logan.”

With Logan headed to the kitchen, Dylan and Ryder began to tidy up. I saw them share a small grin before Dylan approached me. He moved closer, the scent of sawdust and paint mixing with his cologne filled the space around us. My



heart thudded against my ribcage; a silent confession of the turmoil inside me.

“Rosie,” he said softly, holding my gaze, “You need to rest too.”

I nodded, gently smiling up at him. I appreciated his concern. “I will, Dylan, just need to check one last thing...”

He looked as if he wanted to argue but simply nodded, giving my shoulder a comforting squeeze before joining Ryder. That was Dylan, caring yet respecting my boundaries. The memory of his strong arms holding me during our midnight rendezvous warmed my heart.

Dinner was a joyous affair. Logan cooked a fantastic meal, we laughed at silly jokes and Ryder’s dry humor was the icing on the cake. After a draining day of work, sharing this bond over a dinner table, amidst all our dreams and aspirations etched in the renovated corners of the inn, filled my heart with a unique sense of satisfaction. This was my family, in all its unconventional form, and I was unapologetically in love with these three men.

## Chapter 18

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Rosie

The complexity of our secret affair was becoming increasingly clear, the risk of discovery a burden I found myself carrying even in my sleep. As I woke to another beautiful morning at the Driftwood Dreams Inn, I could sense the same tension resonating from Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. We had to confront this reality sooner or later.

We had all gathered in the inn's library, the warmth of the early morning sun casting a soft glow around the room. Dylan was engrossed in a blueprint, Logan was pouring over some financial papers, and Ryder was deep in thought, a pencil tucked behind his ear.

Breaking the silence, I took a deep breath. "We need to talk," I said, my heart pounding.

Dylan looked up, his blue eyes searching mine. "I know," he admitted, his voice carrying a tinge of worry.

"We can't ignore this anymore," I added, looking over at Logan and Ryder who had also turned their attention towards

me.

“Rosie’s right,” Logan said, running his hand through his blonde hair. “As much as I’ve enjoyed... whatever this is, we need to address the elephant in the room.”

“Who says we’re ignoring it?” Ryder questioned, his smoky gray eyes never leaving mine.

“We’re not exactly confronting it either, Ryder,” Dylan argued, standing up and shoving his hands into his pockets. “We’re tiptoeing around the issue. Dancing around each other during the day, stealing moments in the dark.”

“We have to be careful,” Ryder countered. “We’ve got the town’s eyes on us, and one misstep can jeopardize everything.”

“But at what cost, Ryder?” I questioned, feeling the weight of my words. “At the cost of our sanity? Our peace? We’re living on a razor’s edge.”

Ryder fell silent, his gaze falling on the sketchpad in front of him. Logan sighed, leaning back on his chair, “We need to make a decision. Continue with this, with the risk of being discovered or... deny what’s between us.”

“But what if denying it is not an option anymore?” Dylan voiced the fear lurking in the depths of my heart. “What then?”

His words hung heavy in the air. We all knew the implications of his question, knew the potential consequences.

Each of us, in our own way, had fallen too far down this rabbit hole, and turning back didn't seem like an option anymore.

“I don't know about you guys,” I admitted, “But I'm not sure if I can just switch off my feelings.”

Silence fell again, each of us lost in our thoughts. Our secret affair was more complex than any renovation project, any blueprint or design. But despite the heaviness of the situation, one thing was clear - we were in this together.

Finally, Logan broke the silence. “Let's meet tonight. After dinner, in private. We need to openly discuss this... sort out our feelings.”

There was a general murmur of agreement. The day's work called, and we dispersed, each grappling with our thoughts. As the sun moved across the sky, I couldn't help but feel the shift in our lives. We were standing on the edge, and it was time to decide - to jump or step back.

The evening arrived with a sense of anticipation, a shared tension that had us all on edge. We gathered in the privacy of the inn's grand dining room, now shrouded in the comforting blanket of darkness, illuminated only by the soft glow of a few strategically placed candles.

“Rosie,” Dylan started, his voice low and heavy, “We know this isn't easy for you. Hell, it isn't easy for any of us. But we need to talk about it.”

“I agree,” I replied, my voice barely above a whisper. “I can't deny my feelings for any of you. I won't.”

Logan's striking green eyes met mine, his expression unreadable. "Are you sure, Rosie?" he asked. "Are you sure you want to continue with this? With us?"

"I've never been more sure of anything in my life," I said, looking at each of them in turn.

"But Rosie," Ryder interjected, his smoky gray eyes filled with concern, "What about the town? What about the inn?"

I paused, considering his words. "The inn is important to me," I said, "But not more than you guys. And as for the town, they'll just have to deal with it."

"Rosie," Dylan said, reaching out to take my hand, "This is bigger than just the four of us. This could affect our families, our friends..."

"I know," I replied, squeezing his hand, "But isn't it worth the risk? Isn't love always worth the risk?"

There was a pause, a silence filled with the unspoken thoughts and fears that each of us harbored. The candlelight flickered, casting shadows that danced across our faces, mirroring the turmoil within us.

Logan finally broke the silence, "You're right. Love is always worth the risk. But we need to be careful. We need to be smart about this."

"Agreed," Ryder chimed in, his gaze intense. "We can't let our guard down, not even for a moment."

"Then it's settled," Dylan said, looking at each of us in turn. "We continue with this, with us. But we do it carefully. We do

it smartly.”

As the echoes of our agreement filled the room, a sense of relief washed over me. Despite the risks, despite the potential consequences, we had chosen love. We had chosen each other. But as the candlelight dimmed, and the night deepened, I couldn't help but wonder - what would the morning bring?

Every second of our shared silence was fraught with our private anxieties, our innermost fears echoing in the dimly lit room. Our combined emotions cast long shadows, pooling around our intertwined lives like uncharted, dangerous waters. Yet, the steady flickering of the candles became our beacon in this quiet storm - the strength of our bond that shimmered with undying warmth and promise, however hushed and concealed it remained.

“Alright,” Logan broke the silence, his tone imbued with resolution. “We'll continue, with discretion.” He cast his striking green eyes in my direction, his gaze reassuring, powerful.

“Remember,” Dylan echoed, his deep blue eyes penetrating mine, “We do this not out of recklessness, but love.” His words resonated around the room, his vow of enduring love as comforting as his firm grip around my hand.

“We will fight, we will love,” Ryder declared softly, his gray eyes ablaze in the dim light. “In whispers, in secrets, but always together.”

A smile tugged at my lips as their words encased my heart like a shield - sturdy, promising, brimming with strength and

love. “That’s all I need,” I whispered, squeezing Dylan’s hand. The look that passed between us, an agreement more profound than mere words could capture. Our shared determination becoming a pledge in itself.

As our resolve crystallized, I couldn’t help but feel a thrill, a wave of anticipation laced with fear that consumed me, an exhilarating dichotomy that sparked my pulse. The love we were crafting was different, yes. Unconventional, even. But it was ours. Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and I - in a beautiful web of complexities, driven by passion, commitment, and profound love. We chose each other despite the potential threats and relentless odds.

Later that night, we parted ways, each carrying the burden of a beautiful secret, the gravity of our decisions, and a promise to tread this uncharted path with utmost caution. The stillness of the night blanketed Driftwood Dreams Inn, and as I closed my eyes, their words and warmth reverberated in my mind. The soft sound of the ocean played the lullaby of our love, harmonizing our breaths that danced in the night, offering comfort and reassurance that even in darkness, love would find its way.

I spent the night tossing and turning, my dreams filled with their faces, their smiles, their touch. Each dream was a tantalizing mix of fear and desire, a testament to the complicated relationship we had woven.

## Chapter 19

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Rosie

**M**y day began as any other since the renovation of Driftwood Dreams Inn began. Breakfast was served amidst a haze of construction dust, my heart fluttering as I looked over the men I had found myself falling for.

“What’s on the schedule for today, Rosie?” Dylan asked, a soft smile on his face, eyes gleaming with curiosity. His steadfast reliability was a rock amidst the chaos of our renovation.

“Ryder and I are focusing on the gardens, remember?” I replied, rolling my eyes at his selective memory.

Dylan chuckled, ruffling his dark hair and throwing me an apologetic look. His laughter filled the air, spreading warmth in the room and my heart. I felt myself being pulled in by his infectious humor and calm demeanor.

Logan, ever the peacekeeper, steered the conversation back to business. “We need to finalize the colors for the upstairs bedrooms. Rosie, you’re the design expert here.”



His voice, full of charm and grace, pulled me out of my reverie. I nodded, agreeing with his statement and appreciating his subtle effort to maintain harmony amongst us. It was Logan's effortless charm that always seemed to put a smile on my face.

"Absolutely, Logan," I said, feeling the tension ease as I moved towards the pile of paint swatches on the table.

As the day went on, Ryder and I were neck-deep in soil, pruning and planting. His dedication and passion for his work was evident in every precise cut he made, every plant he nurtured. Despite his quiet demeanor, he was a whirlwind of activity, and I couldn't help but feel drawn to his intensity.

"Rosie, pass me the pruning shears, please," Ryder called, his smoky gray eyes focused on the overgrown rose bush.

"Here you go," I said, handing him the tool, my hand brushing against his. The electric charge that zipped through my veins was undeniable, and I knew my feelings for him were growing stronger.

By early evening, we all gathered in the common room, exhausted yet fulfilled. The sight of the inn slowly coming back to life, mirroring the blossoming relationships amongst us, filled me with hope.

I couldn't shake off the day's interactions - the way Dylan's laughter echoed in my ears, Logan's charming smile playing in my mind, and the touch of Ryder's hand still burning on my skin. I knew that my heart wasn't just torn between them. I was deeply in love with all three, each for his unique allure.

Just as I was about to retire for the night, Dylan caught my attention. “Rosie, can we talk about the library design?” he asked, a curious glint in his blue eyes.

My heart pounded at the thought of another intimate encounter. But I took a deep breath and nodded, “Sure, Dylan.”

With that, we walked towards the inn’s library, unknowingly setting the stage for the next turning point in our shared lives.

The library was a cavernous room, filled with dusty books and cobwebs. The musty scent of old paper and the faint hint of sea salt hung in the air. It was a room that held potential, just like the rest of the inn, and just like the complex relationship I shared with the boys.

Dylan was looking around, his blue eyes taking in the dilapidated state of the room. He ran his fingers along the spines of the books, his face a mask of concentration. The sight of him, so engrossed, sent a flutter through my heart.

“We should keep the old-world charm,” Dylan suggested, his voice echoing in the room. “The rustic bookshelves, the wooden ladder. It gives the library character.”

I agreed with him, but I had a different vision. “Yes, but we can blend it with modern comforts. A cozy reading nook, perhaps. Plush chairs and warm lighting.”

Dylan turned to look at me, his gaze steady. “You’re thinking about the guests.”

“And you’re thinking about the craft,” I countered, meeting his gaze.

He chuckled, the sound rich and deep. “Guilty as charged.”

Our banter was interrupted by a gust of wind that blew in from the broken window, sending dust particles dancing in the air. The room was silent for a moment, the tension between us palpable.

“Dylan,” I began, my voice barely a whisper. I stepped closer to him, my heart pounding in my chest. His eyes met mine, a question lurking in their depths.

“Yes, Rosie?” he prompted, his voice low and steady.

Before I could second guess myself, I leaned in and kissed him. It was a desperate kiss, full of unspoken emotions and pent-up desires. Dylan responded instantly, his arms wrapping around me, pulling me closer.

When we finally broke apart, we were both breathless. I could see the surprise in Dylan’s eyes, but it was quickly replaced by a soft warmth. “Rosie,” he murmured, his thumb gently caressing my cheek.

“Dylan,” I whispered back, my heart still racing from our passionate exchange. I wanted to say more, to express the whirlwind of emotions I was feeling, but words seemed inadequate.

He nodded, understanding my unspoken words. “We should get back to work,” he suggested, a small smile playing on his lips.

I nodded, feeling a strange sense of relief. Our relationship had taken another unexpected turn, but it felt right. As I left the library, I couldn't help but replay the passionate kiss in my mind, the memory igniting a spark of anticipation for what was to come.

Ryder was hunched over his sketches, his brow furrowed in concentration, the tip of his pencil creating magic on paper. I found myself drawn to his quiet intensity, his complete absorption in his work.

“Ryder,” I called out, interrupting his reverie. He glanced up, his smoky gray eyes meeting mine.

“Yes, Rosie?” he asked, setting his pencil down and leaning back in his chair.

“I wanted to discuss the trees for the drive,” I replied, my heart pounding in my chest as I approached him.

He nodded, gesturing towards the chair opposite him. “Of course, Rosie. What do you have in mind?”

As I began to explain my ideas, I couldn't help but notice the way his eyes lit up with interest, his hands sketching out the designs even as we spoke. The way he brought my visions to life was breathtaking.

“You're really good at this, Ryder,” I said, admiring the sketches.

His eyes flicked up to meet mine, a hint of a smile playing on his lips. “Thanks, Rosie. It's not just a job for me. It's a passion.”

His words echoed my own sentiments, creating an invisible thread of understanding between us.

In that moment, our eyes locked, and a wave of electricity swept over me. His gaze was so intense, so full of desire, that I couldn't help but be drawn in.

Before I knew it, I was leaning across the table, my heart pounding in my chest. Ryder seemed to understand my unspoken intention. His hand reached up, gently tucking a stray lock of hair behind my ear, his touch sending a jolt of anticipation through me.

Our lips met in a passionate kiss, our bodies instinctively leaning into each other. It was a stolen moment, full of desire and longing, a reflection of our shared passion for our work and each other.

As we broke apart, I was left breathless, my heart racing in my chest. His eyes bore into mine, the unspoken promise of more lingering between us.

“We should get back to work,” Ryder finally said, his voice a low whisper. But his hand lingered on mine, the touch electrifying.

“Yes,” I managed to reply, my voice shaky. “We should.”

With that, I rose from the chair, my mind buzzing with thoughts of Ryder. His touch, his kiss, the intense look in his eyes - everything about him left me yearning for more.

## Chapter 20

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Rosie

Shopping at the local market had always been a chore to me, until Logan came along. The early morning sun blazed as we navigated through the labyrinth of stalls, armed with a lengthy list of renovation supplies.

Logan's laugh, deep and infectious, echoed in the air as he helped me lift a stack of vintage wallpaper rolls. "Careful, Rosie," he chided, a hint of mirth in his striking green eyes. "Wouldn't want to squash you under the weight of all this."

Rolling my hazel eyes, I shot back, "And here I thought you were the financial advisor, not the comedian."

He responded with another round of laughter, its melody weaving into the bustling sounds of the market. I couldn't help but join in, his cheeriness contagious. Amidst our laughter and friendly banter, I realized something. I was thoroughly enjoying his company. The playful sparkle in his eyes and the way his smile radiated warmth were not lost on me.

Our shared moments over vintage wallpapers and rusted tools became memories, their bond deepening with every tick of the clock. The man I had known for most of my life was revealing himself in a new light, his charisma too strong to ignore.

When it came to picking out paint colors for the inn's grand bedrooms, our opinions diverged dramatically. "Not the dull grey, Logan," I protested, pointing towards a palette of brighter shades.

"But it'll complement the bricks," he argued, brandishing a swatch of grey at me.

The corners of my lips twitched, a laughter threatening to spill. I mock-glared at him and said, "No one dreams of a grey inn, Logan. Trust me, the teal would work wonders."

I wasn't sure if it was the warmth of his smile or the unexpected softness in his eyes that had me forgetting our minor squabble. Instead, I was hit by a surge of affection for this man. He was stubborn and amusing, a mix that was undeniably alluring. It dawned on me then that I wasn't just shopping with Logan; I was creating cherished memories.

Logan sighed dramatically, grinning as he relented, "Alright, Rosie. You're the interior designer. We'll go with your choice."

In the hustle and bustle of the local market, amidst the shared laughter and playful banter, I felt my relationship with Logan evolving. Our connection was undeniable, and it was during those shared moments that I truly began to understand

Logan's charisma and the undeniable chemistry that existed between us.

“Good,” I replied, a sense of accomplishment filling me. “Now, help me with these paints.”

After the paint selection, we moved on to the next stall which had an array of fresh produce. Logan's eyes sparkled with mischief as he held up a ripe tomato. “What do you think about this color for the kitchen, Rosie?”

I laughed, playfully swatting his hand away. “That's not how this works, Logan. Besides, it would stain the walls.”

With a swift movement, he flicked the tomato at me, the juice splattering on my floral dress. “Oops,” he smirked, the green of his eyes gleaming with mischief.

“Logan Hunter!” I gasped, my heart racing from the unexpected attack. I reached for a nearby cluster of grapes, pelting them at him in retaliation. The stall erupted in laughter, our playful banter drawing attention from passersby. The air was thick with joy and flirtation, and the glint in Logan's eyes made it impossible for me to stay mad at him.

In the middle of our food fight, he suddenly stopped, his eyes softening as they locked onto mine. The world seemed to stand still, our laughter fading into a shared silence. Logan reached out, gently brushing a grape stem from my hair. His touch was electric, sending shivers down my spine.

His gaze flickered to my lips, and though I wanted to lean in, there were too many people. We couldn't risk the exposure,



the gossip.

Though we had a close call, the day at the market was far from ordinary. It was a day that made me realize how strongly I was drawn to Logan, his charisma and charm weaving a magic that was impossible to resist. As we left the market, his arm casually draped over my shoulders, I couldn't help but replay the kiss in my mind, my heart pounding at the memory. Little did I know, this was just the beginning of my emotional turmoil.

Back at the inn, the market's jovial chaos faded into a distant hum. Logan and I started unloading our haul in the lobby, our earlier laughter echoing off the dilapidated walls. His casual strength as he hoisted a roll of wallpaper onto his shoulder sent a jolt of awareness through me.

His smile turned lopsided as he caught me watching him. "Caught in the act, Rosie. Admiring the goods?" he teased, flexing his arm with a playful wink.

Flustered, I brushed off his comment with a light laugh, "Oh please, Logan. I was merely wondering if you'd drop the wallpaper and ruin our newly acquired treasures."

He chuckled, setting the rolls down gently before mockingly bowing to me. "As you command, my lady," he drawled, his voice laced with humor.

Despite the jesting, a flicker of heat ignited in my belly. It was the small things, his easy charm, his radiant smile, the way he could turn an ordinary moment into a cherished memory, that made me yearn for more.

“Alright, your majesty, let’s move these to the storage room,” I playfully commanded, gesturing to the remaining supplies.

We fell into a comfortable rhythm, unloading the materials and sharing lighthearted banter. Every now and then, our hands would brush, and each touch sent sparks through my veins. I could still taste him on my lips, the memory of our kiss lingering like an intoxicating melody.

In the quiet solitude of the inn, his charisma was more potent, and I found myself being drawn towards him, like a moth to a flame. Each shared glance, each fleeting touch, intensified my feelings for him.

As the day drew to a close, we stood amidst the piles of renovation supplies, our hands lightly touching. I found myself gazing into his green eyes, their depth holding me captive. His voice was a gentle murmur as he broke the silence, “It was a good day, wasn’t it, Rosie?”

I nodded, swallowing hard as his thumb gently caressed my knuckles. His gaze was intense, making my heart flutter. “Yes, Logan, it was a good day.”

His eyes softened as he released my hand, a silent understanding passing between us. I watched him leave, a sense of longing pooling within me. As I stood alone in the vast inn, my heart thudded heavily in my chest, my thoughts a whirlwind of emotions. I was falling for Logan Hunter, and it was a fall I hadn’t seen coming.

As I stood in the fading sunlight, my fingers still tingling from Logan's touch, my mind was a maelstrom. The walls of the inn seemed to close in on me, as if echoing my internal turmoil. My heart was heavy with an emotion I hadn't anticipated – a longing, a yearning for something more. And at the core of it all was Logan Hunter.

His infectious laughter, his warm eyes, his touch that ignited sparks under my skin - they all consumed my thoughts. I felt my cheeks heat up as I replayed our kiss in the bustling market. The taste of him, the feel of his lips on mine - it was all too vivid. It was not just a fleeting attraction, but something more profound. A deeper connection I couldn't ignore.

I had known Logan for years, had seen him grow from a carefree boy into a charming man. And yet, I felt like I was seeing him for the first time. His charisma, his gentleness, his unending patience - all of it was now painted in a different light. I saw him not just as a childhood friend, but as a man I was falling for.

## Chapter 21

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Rosie

**E**arly morning, the world still hushed under a quilt of fog, I found Ryder standing in the slowly forming garden of Driftwood Dreams Inn. The early sunlight made his curly hair glint like dark embers as he surveyed the wilderness with a thoughtful look in his smoky gray eyes. I strolled up to him, sketchpad tucked under my arm, trying to quell the sudden fluttering in my chest.

“Ready to tame this wild beast?” I asked, sweeping a hand towards an overgrown corner of the landscape.

He glanced my way, a soft chuckle slipping past his lips. “I was thinking something similar, but the word ‘transform’ is a bit kinder,” he said, his gaze soft yet intense, causing an unexpected twist in my stomach.

Together, we wandered through the garden, taking note of the potential beneath the disarray of some areas and the progress made in others. We started sharing our thoughts on its transformation - trimmed hedges here, a seating area there, flowers adding a splash of color to the verdant landscape. Our

visions merged seamlessly as we sketched together on my pad, laughter bubbling up as we debated on plant species and design styles.

He seemed to fit naturally into the grand design, much like the beautifully winding paths we were imagining. With each stroke of our pencils, the garden of the inn was being reshaped not only on paper but in our shared dreams as well.

Our heads huddled close together, I noticed how the morning sunlight bathed Ryder's features, creating a halo around his dark curls. The soft smoky hue of his eyes seemed to darken a shade when they met mine, making my breath hitch. We continued to discuss the layout, the excitement of our ideas spilling over each other. Yet, beneath the casual conversation and brainstorming, I could feel the tension - a thin electric wire, charged and potent.

Later that evening, after hours of cutting, pruning and pulling, we found ourselves sitting among the piles of plants we had pulled from the ground. The golden sunset cast long shadows over the grounds, giving it a mysterious allure. We were looking over our day's work, feeling accomplished and thrilled about the potential transformations the garden held.

But beneath the professional camaraderie, a spark of something more continued to simmer. A longing I'd kept at bay during the daylight hours threatened to resurface under the cloak of the night. I stole a glance at Ryder. His dark curls were tousled by the cool ocean breeze, and the fading sunlight brought out the softness in his eyes.

The air was heavy with unspoken words, charged emotions, and a rising need that was impossible to ignore. I wanted him, not just in a friendly, companionable way. I craved the heat of his touch, the intensity of his gaze, the taste of his lips.

“Dinner?” I offered, trying to lighten the moment, my voice a bit shaky.

“Or maybe...” Ryder began, trailing off. He looked at me with an intensity that made my heart pound. There was a silent invitation in his gaze, daring me to acknowledge the undeniable tension between us.

“Dinner can wait,” I heard myself say, my voice barely above a whisper. It was a reckless move, one that was bound to shatter the balance we had so delicately maintained. But at that moment, all I cared about was Ryder, and the need to feel his touch, taste his lips, explore the depth of the desire that flamed within me.

And just like that, our work in the garden took a backseat, making way for a new kind of exploration. A journey of bodies and desires, of heated whispers and feverish touches, beneath the slowly darkening sky.

The next moment felt like an eternity - our eyes locked, bodies taut with anticipation. Then, he reached out and traced a finger down my cheek, the casual touch igniting a wild spark that jolted through my entire body.

“I’ve been waiting for this,” he confessed, his voice gravelly with the same intense need that was coursing through my veins.

Our bodies drew closer, and the first touch of his lips against mine was like a brand - searing, intense, all-consuming. It was nothing like our previous brushes of affection. This was raw and filled with the untamed longing we had been wrestling with.

His hands began a tantalizing journey down my curves, his fingers igniting my skin wherever they touched. A low moan escaped my lips as he teasingly trailed down my neck, nipping and sucking at the tender skin.

“Ryder,” I gasped, my hands fisting in his hair. His groan was my undoing. Emboldened, my hands began to explore his sturdy build, tracing every hard muscle beneath his shirt.

One of his hands sneaked beneath my dress, stroking the apex of my thighs. A hot, damp surge of anticipation pooled between my legs. My cunt ached for him, for the feel of him inside me.

“You’re wet,” he murmured against my lips, the coarse pad of his fingers dancing over my clit.

With every stroke of his fingers, my body spiraled into a world of pleasure I had never experienced. The caress of his thumb on my swollen clit had me teetering on the edge. My hips bucked against his hand, craving more.

He slid a finger into my wet heat, thumb still flicking my clit. A wave of pleasure rippled through me, and I tightened around his fingers. I whimpered as he curled his fingers, hitting that sweet spot that had my eyes rolling back.

“I want you, Rosie,” Ryder’s voice rumbled in my ear. I reached down and grasped his hard cock through his jeans. A moan slipped from his lips, and his hips bucked against my hand. His erection strained against the denim, hard and ready.

“Here,” I panted, tugging at his belt buckle. Our lips met again, more fiercely this time. He quickly stripped me of my dress, his hungry gaze taking in my naked form.

He pushed me against the ancient oak tree, lifting one of my legs to wrap around his waist. His mouth devoured mine as he slipped inside me, filling me completely.

The slow roll of his hips had me whimpering with need. My cunt tightened around his thick cock, throbbing with each delicious thrust. I matched his rhythm, rolling my hips, encouraging him deeper.

“Fuck, Rosie,” Ryder moaned, burying his face into my neck as his thrusts picked up speed. The lewd sound of our bodies meeting, the slick heat of our intertwined bodies in the semi-darkness of the garden was intoxicating.

The feeling of his dick, so hard and pulsating, sliding in and out of me was more than I could handle. An overwhelming wave of pleasure took hold of me, my cunt pulsing around his dick as my orgasm tore through me.

Feeling me come around him, Ryder’s movements became erratic. He thrust a few more times before his body tensed. With a guttural groan, he spilled his cum inside me.

“God, Rosie,” he panted, resting his forehead against mine.



I could feel the aftershocks of our climax radiating through us, our heavy breaths echoing in the quiet night. It was just the beginning of our exploration. With Ryder, each moment held a promise of undiscovered passion and unexpected turns.

As Ryder pulled out of me, I whimpered at the sudden emptiness. He rolled over next to me, and we both laid splayed in the dirt. Our breathing was ragged, our bodies slick with sweat and glowing under the silver light of the moon.

“Ryder,” I gasped, still struggling to catch my breath. “That was...incredible.”

He chuckled, a low, throaty sound that sent a shiver down my spine. “Only incredible, Rosie?” He asked, his voice laced with amusement.

I swatted his chest playfully, the corners of my mouth curving into a smile. “Alright, Mr. Confident. It was earth-shattering, okay?”

He grinned, pulling me into his arms. His heart pounded against mine, a rhythm that matched the pulse throbbing between my legs. I rested my head on his chest, my fingers tracing the firm muscles of his abdomen.

“I’ve wanted you for so long, Rosie,” he confessed, his voice barely above a whisper. “Every time I saw you, every time I touched you, all I could think about was this.”

I lifted my head, meeting his smoky gaze. His confession hung in the air between us, a raw admission that left me

breathless. I could see the truth of his words in his eyes, the desire, the longing.

“I’ve wanted you too, Ryder,” I admitted.

His eyes darkened, a low growl rumbling in his chest. He pulled me closer, his hands sliding down to cup my ass. “I’m not done with you yet, Rosie,” he warned, his voice husky with need.

My heart pounded in my chest, anticipation coursing through my veins. His fingers kneaded my ass, sending a jolt of pleasure through me. “Then show me, Ryder,” I challenged, my voice breathy with desire.

With a growl, he turned me over, forcing my ass into the air. My dress was pulled up, exposing me to him. His fingers traced the curve of my ass, a teasing touch that made me squirm. He slid his fingers between my thighs, his touch igniting a spark of desire within me.

“Fuck, Rosie,” he growled, his fingers slipping inside me. I moaned, pushing back against his hand, craving more. His other hand reached around, finding my clit. The double assault of his fingers had me writhing, my cunt pulsing around his fingers.

He removed his fingers, only to replace them with his thick cock. He slid inside me, his hips meeting mine in a rhythm that had me gasping for breath. His fingers found my clit again, the dual sensation pushing me towards the edge.

With a few more thrusts, I came undone. My orgasm ripped through me, my body convulsing against his. He continued to thrust into me, prolonging my pleasure until I was panting and whimpering his name.

Feeling my pussy pulsate around his cock, Ryder groaned, his movements becoming erratic. With a final, powerful thrust, he came, his hot cum filling me. He collapsed against me, his chest heaving against my back.

We stayed like that for a few moments, lost in the aftermath of our shared pleasure. His arms wrapped around me, pulling me closer against his chest. His lips found the nape of my neck, placing soft kisses against my heated skin.

“Rosie,” he murmured, his voice filled with a tenderness that made my heart flutter. “This...us...it’s more than just a little fun.”

I turned in his arms, meeting his gaze. His smoky eyes were soft, filled with an emotion that mirrored my own. “I know, Ryder,” I whispered, my fingers tracing the curve of his cheek. “And I’m ready to explore this...whatever it is...with you. You, and Dylan and Logan”

His lips found mine again, a soft, tender kiss that sealed our shared promise.

## Chapter 22

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Rosie

“I’ve missed you, Viv,” I said as we slipped into our usual booth at Cupid’s Confections. The smell of fresh pastries and brewing coffee always filled the bakery, reminding me of the comforting routine Viv and I had carved out over the years.

“And I’ve missed you too, Rosie,” she said with a soft smile, removing her vintage glasses and placing them on the table. “But we both know you’ve been too busy with the inn to spare any time for your best friend.”

There was a gentle teasing tone in her voice, but I could see the concern in her eyes. “I know, and I’m sorry. This renovation project has just been a whirlwind,” I replied, stirring my coffee absentmindedly.

She studied me for a moment, her bright blue eyes narrowing. “This is about more than just the inn, isn’t it? What’s really going on, Rosie?”

The question hung in the air, making me suddenly conscious of the growing weight on my chest. How could I explain the whirlpool of emotions inside me, the undeniable pull I felt towards Dylan, Logan, and Ryder?

“I...,” I stammered, grasping for the right words. But before I could muster a response, Viv reached across the table, taking my hand in hers.

“Talk to me, Rosie. You’ve always been there for me, and I want to be there for you,” she said earnestly. “Are you sure you’re okay?”

The worry in her voice was touching. It was a testament to the deep friendship we shared, one that allowed us to weather any storm. But this was a tempest I was unsure of how to navigate. I had fallen for not one but three men - each different and equally irresistible in their own way.

I smiled at her, deciding to stick to safer ground. “I’m okay, Viv,” I reassured her, squeezing her hand. “I’ve just got a lot on my plate right now.”

Viv nodded, understanding as always. We spent the rest of the afternoon immersed in our pastries and laughter, leaving my complicated love life unspoken. I welcomed the distraction, enjoying the comforting normality of our time together.

In the middle of our banter, a shadow fell over our booth. Viv’s laughter petered out as she turned to see who was behind us. Her sudden change in demeanor had me turning around

too, and my eyes widened in surprise. There stood Landon Carter, the suave and ambitious financial advisor.

“Rosie,” he greeted, a smirk tugging at his lips. He casually adjusted the cuffs of his expensive designer suit. “Vivienne.”

“Landon,” I replied, trying to keep my tone steady. His unexpected presence set my nerves on edge.

“To what do we owe the pleasure?” Viv jumped in, the note of sarcasm not lost on me. I sent her a quick glance of appreciation. She simply winked back, her protectiveness shining through.

“I’m back in town for a few days, thought I’d pay you ladies a visit,” Landon replied, his piercing gaze lingering on me. His eyes traveled over to the inn’s blueprints and sketches I’d carelessly left sprawled on the table. “I see you’re making progress with the Inn. Interesting.”

His curiosity about the renovation project had me squirming in my seat. “We’re getting there,” I replied, hastily gathering my papers and tucking them into my bag. Viv kicked me subtly under the table, her concern evident in her pinched brows.

“How’s Logan?” Landon’s voice broke into my thoughts.

“He’s well,” I responded, deliberately vague. Viv was watching Landon like a hawk, and I was grateful for her protectiveness.

Landon nodded, his eyes calculating. He lingered for a moment more before turning on his heel. “Well, I should let

you ladies get back to your day. Rosie, I'll catch up with you soon," he said, his gaze steady on me.

His promise echoed ominously as he walked away. I turned to Viv, her face mirroring my concern.

"That wasn't just a casual visit, was it?" she asked, her blue eyes wide behind her vintage glasses.

"I don't know, Viv," I confessed, a knot of unease forming in my stomach.

After Landon left, I was stuck in a whirlwind of thoughts. The more I mulled over his interest in the inn, the more it worried me. What if he found out about my complicated love life? It was one thing to risk the town's gossip, but quite another to have Landon Carter, a man known for his ruthlessness, digging into my personal affairs. I needed to talk to the guys about this.

As soon as I was back at the inn, I sought out Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. I found them in the midst of a lively discussion about the inn's renovation. Their faces lit up as I approached, but their smiles faded when they saw my troubled expression.

"Rosie, what's wrong?" Dylan asked, his brows furrowing in concern.

"I ran into Landon Carter today at the bakery," I began, my voice trembling slightly.

"Landon again?" Logan questioned, his green eyes narrowing.

I nodded, my heart pounding. “He asked about the inn again,” I confessed, biting my lip.

A tense silence followed my words. I could see the gears turning in their heads as they processed the information.

“We need to be careful,” Ryder finally said, his gray eyes filled with worry. “We can’t let him have the inn, and we can’t let him find out about... us.”

“I agree,” Dylan chimed in, his hand finding mine. “We’ll be more cautious around him.”

Logan nodded, his gaze serious. “He’s not going to jeopardize what we have, Rosie. We won’t let him.”

I sighed, feeling a bit relieved. I was glad they understood the gravity of the situation. Their support and determination to protect our secret gave me hope.

“Thank you, guys,” I said, my voice filled with gratitude. “I know this is all so complicated, and I appreciate your understanding.”

They each gave me a reassuring smile, their expressions softening. Dylan’s hand squeezed mine, Logan gave me a supportive nod, and Ryder’s gray eyes held a silent promise. In that moment, despite the chaos, I knew I could count on them.

“We’re in this together, Rosie,” Logan said, his voice steady and comforting. “Always.”

His words echoed around us, a solemn vow hanging in the air. As I looked at each of them, their faces a mix of determination and concern, I felt a surge of affection. I was in



love with these men, and they were ready to face any storm for me.

## Chapter 23

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Dylan

It was one of those warm, sunny days where everything just felt a little more intense. The inn stood majestically under the azure sky, its grandeur now heightened with each passing day. I watched as Rosie busied herself, scribbling designs on her sketchpad, her forehead creased in deep concentration. She looked so at ease in her floral dress, blending seamlessly into the backdrop of the half-repaired inn. She was the very picture of elegance and grace, and I couldn't help but feel a tug in my heart as I watched her.

It was not just me. I noticed the stolen glances Logan and Ryder shared with Rosie, and it irked me more than I'd like to admit. There was an undeniable undercurrent of jealousy that sparked tension among us, but none of us spoke of it.

The first signs of it came when Rosie stumbled while carrying a heavy box of supplies. Without missing a beat, I darted forward, steadying her before she fell. A soft gasp escaped her lips, and she looked up at me, her hazel eyes wide

with surprise. Her closeness stirred feelings in me I had tried hard to suppress.

Logan was the first to break the silence. He tried to lighten the mood, saying, “You always did have a knack for catching things, Dylan. I remember how you never missed a catch during our high school football games.”

His tone was light, but his words felt heavy. I shot him a curt nod, ignoring the veiled accusation in his tone.

The rest of the day was a cacophony of hammering and drilling, interspersed with awkward silence. I caught Logan throwing hard glances my way a couple of times. Ryder wasn’t any better. He kept to himself, his usual jovial nature replaced by a tense silence. His gaze kept flickering to Rosie, mirroring the same desire I saw in my own reflection each morning.

Later, when the sun started its descent, we all sat together for dinner. The silence was palpable, cut only by the clattering of cutlery and the occasional forced laugh. Rosie looked at each of us, her gaze puzzled. It seemed she could sense the tension, but couldn’t quite put a finger on it.

Ryder was the first to speak. His voice was low, almost inaudible, “I think we need to talk.” His words hung in the air like a heavy cloud.

Logan shot him a glance, his face hardened, “There’s nothing to talk about, Ryder.”

Ignoring Logan, I looked at Ryder, acknowledging his suggestion. A serious conversation was overdue. We had been

skirting around our feelings for too long. Rosie looked from me to Ryder and then to Logan, confusion evident on her face. The undercurrents had finally started to surface. It was high time we addressed the elephant in the room, but we all agreed on one thing - Danny was better off in the dark, for the sake of Rosie, our friendship, and the future of Driftwood Dreams Inn.

I ran a hand through my disheveled hair, catching Rosie's worried gaze. She was a part of this, whether she realized it or not. We had to come clean. I cleared my throat, breaking the silence, "We all love Rosie." I paused, feeling a weight lift off my chest.

Logan snorted, rolling his eyes, "No shit, Sherlock." He smirked, though there was a hint of sadness in his eyes. He glanced at Rosie, who sat frozen, her eyes wide with surprise.

Ryder nodded, running a hand through his dark curls. "But we can't let Danny know about... this." He gestured vaguely between the three of us, his grey eyes serious.

Rosie finally found her voice, "Why not? Danny is my brother, he deserves to know the truth." She looked at each of us, her gaze pleading.

Logan sighed, his shoulders slumping. "Rosie, you know Danny. He's protective of you. This... complicated mess we've gotten ourselves into, it could ruin our friendship. And it could ruin your relationship with him."

Ryder chimed in, his voice gentle, "He's right, Rosie. We don't want to hurt you or Danny."

I found myself nodding along. “We can figure this out, Rosie. But for now, we need to keep this between us.”

Rosie seemed to contemplate our words. She was silent for a moment, then nodded slowly. “Okay. But only for now.” She looked at each of us, her gaze hard. “This isn’t a solution, it’s a band-aid. We can’t keep this a secret from him forever.”

We all agreed, silently promising to find a solution to our complicated love square. For the sake of Rosie, our friendship, and the future of Driftwood Dreams Inn, we had to figure this out. We had to protect what we had, even if it meant hiding our true feelings.

We returned to work the next day, the air still thick with unspoken words and concealed emotions. The tension had transformed into a silent competition, each of us trying to outdo the other, all in the name of impressing Rosie.

Ryder was out in the garden, sketching out a new design for the wildflower meadow Rosie had mentioned wanting. He had this focused look on his face, his eyes intense, and his hand moving deftly over the paper. Rosie was watching him from the porch, her hazel eyes sparkling with interest. A pang of jealousy shot through me, but I pushed it down, focusing on my own task.

I was working on a vintage oak door that Rosie had found in the attic. It was a beautiful piece, but it needed a lot of work. I stripped the old paint, revealing the rich, warm wood underneath. As I worked, I felt Rosie’s gaze on me. I looked up to find her watching me, a soft smile playing on her lips.

My heart skipped a beat, and I found myself working even harder, eager to show her the finished product.

Logan was busy with the financial side of things. He was on the phone most of the time, negotiating deals and managing funds. Every once in a while, he would catch Rosie's eye and wink at her, his eyes twinkling with mischief. Rosie would blush and look away, but not before a small smile escaped her lips.

Despite the underlying tension, the renovation was progressing well. We were all determined to make Rosie's dream a reality, and it was this shared goal that kept us going. The days were long and tiring, but seeing Rosie's face light up with every little progress made it all worth it.

One evening, as the sun was setting, painting the sky with hues of orange and pink, I finished restoring the oak door. Rosie was standing by my side, her eyes wide with admiration. "It's beautiful, Dylan," she said, her voice filled with awe. A sense of pride swelled in my chest. "I did it for you, Rosie," I replied, my voice barely above a whisper.

She turned to look at me, her hazel eyes meeting mine. For a moment, time seemed to stand still. The world around us faded into the background, and all I could see was her. I wanted to reach out, to pull her into my arms, to tell her how I felt. But I held back.

The tension was palpable, and I could see it reflected in Rosie's eyes. She was aware of the unspoken rivalry, the silent competition, the concealed emotions. She was caught in the

middle of it all, and I could see it was taking a toll on her. But she put on a brave face, always ready with a smile, always optimistic.

We were all in love with the same woman. We were friends, partners, but we were also kind of rivals. It was a complicated situation, one that had no easy solution. But we had made a promise, a promise to protect Rosie, to protect our friendship, and to protect the future of Driftwood Dreams Inn. And it was a promise we intended to keep, no matter the cost.

After a long day of work, we gathered around the rustic dining table, the setting sun casting long shadows across the room. Rosie sat at the head of the table, her hands folded in her lap, her hazel eyes darting between the three of us.

There was a palpable tension in the air, an aura of rivalry that we'd tried so hard to hide. It hung over us like a dark cloud, making the room feel heavy and charged. Rosie seemed to notice it, her brow furrowed as she looked at each of us.

"Is everything okay?" she asked, her voice laced with concern. She looked from me to Logan, then to Ryder, her eyes searching for answers.

"Everything's fine, Rosie," I reassured her, forcing a smile. I caught Logan's eye, silently urging him to play along.

"Absolutely," Logan echoed, nodding his head. His green eyes met mine, a silent understanding passing between us.

"Yeah, we're good," Ryder chimed in, his grey eyes meeting Rosie's. His voice was calm, but I could see the worry in his

eyes.

Rosie seemed to accept our reassurances, but I could tell she wasn't entirely convinced. Her gaze lingered on each of us for a moment longer before she turned her attention back to her dinner.

Later that night, as I lay in bed, I found myself replaying the day's events in my head. I couldn't shake the image of Rosie's concerned gaze, the confusion in her eyes. It made me realize how much our rivalry was affecting her, how much it was unsettling her.

I knew something had to change. We couldn't keep this up, not at the expense of Rosie's peace of mind. I promised myself that I would find a way to resolve this, to ease the tension, to protect Rosie.



## Chapter 24

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Rosie

There was a sudden, piercing pain in my palm, and I gasped, dropping the paintbrush I'd been gripping. A smear of deep burgundy paint streaked across the white wooden floor of the inn, matching the color that was now welling up from a gash on my hand.

"Dylan!" I called out, clutching my hand to my chest.

The thud of heavy boots on the stairs followed my shout. Within moments, Dylan appeared in the doorway, his eyes wide with concern. He quickly closed the distance between us, taking my injured hand gently in his. His fingers were warm and calloused from his carpentry work, a stark contrast to the coolness of my injury.

"Rosie, what happened?" he asked, his blue eyes searching mine. His voice was laced with worry.

"I... I was painting the ceiling and the brush slipped... I guess I caught it wrong," I stammered, feeling a bit foolish. His gaze softened as he carefully inspected the small cut.

“Wait here,” he instructed, releasing my hand to dart back out of the room. I watched him go, his dark hair a disheveled mess atop his head. He returned a moment later, a small first aid kit in hand.

He gently cleaned the wound, his fingers steady. The antiseptic stung, and I hissed, trying to pull my hand away. But Dylan’s grip was firm.

“Sorry, Rosie. Just hold still,” he murmured, his focus on my hand. His touch was gentle, soothing, as he finished cleaning the wound and applied a bandage. When he was done, he looked up, meeting my gaze.

“You okay?” he asked, a hint of a smile playing on his lips.

“I’m fine,” I replied, offering him a shaky smile in return. “Just a small cut. Thanks, Dylan.”

He held my gaze, his hand still cradling mine. There was an intensity in his eyes that made my heart flutter. The way he was looking at me... it was like I was the only person in the world.

Just as I was about to break the silence, the sound of a car pulling up outside the inn reached our ears. I quickly pulled my hand away, looking towards the window.

“Must be Rick,” I said, a note of disappointment in my voice. “He said he’d be by to help with the repairs.”

Dylan nodded, releasing my hand. “We should get back to work then.”

I watched him leave the room, my mind a whirl of emotions. Dylan's actions had revealed a side of him I hadn't seen before. A side that was caring, gentle, and perhaps even... affectionate. My feelings for him were already complex, but now, they were growing even more complicated. And I knew, with Rick's arrival, things were about to get even more complicated.

"Dylan, can you hand me that roller?" I asked, gesturing towards the painting tools scattered across the floor. He handed it to me, his fingers brushing against mine. The touch sent a jolt of electricity through me, causing my heart to race.

"Rosie," he murmured, his gaze intense. "Can we talk about what happened earlier?"

My breath hitched in my throat. "Dylan, I..."

Before I could finish my sentence, he pulled me closer, his hands resting on my waist. His lips found mine in a passionate kiss, causing me to gasp in surprise. I melted into his arms, the paint roller dropping from my hand. The kiss was fiery, filled with a desire that mirrored my own. I could feel his heart pounding against my chest, matching the rhythm of my own.

Suddenly, the sound of a car door slamming shut outside startled us apart. My heart pounded in my chest as I looked at Dylan, his blue eyes wide with surprise. "Rick," I whispered, panic seeping into my voice.

Dylan quickly stepped away from me, his face flushed. "We should... uh... get back to work," he stammered, picking up a paintbrush and busying himself with the wall.

As I heard Rick's familiar footsteps approaching, I took a deep breath, trying to calm my racing heart. I forced a smile onto my face as Rick walked into the room, completely oblivious to the passionate moment he had just interrupted.

"Hey Rosie, Dylan," Rick greeted us cheerfully. "I see you two have been busy."

"Yeah, we've been trying to get this room finished," I replied, gesturing towards the freshly painted walls. "Thanks for coming to help, Rick."

"No problem at all, Rosie," Rick said, his warm smile easing some of my nerves. "Anything to help out."

As I turned back to the wall, I caught Dylan's eye. His gaze held a promise, a promise of more stolen moments and secret kisses. Despite the fear of being discovered, I found myself yearning for more. The tension between us was undeniable, a silent agreement that this was just the beginning.

As I handed Rick the paint roller, I felt Dylan's eyes on me. I turned to look at him, my heart pounding. His gaze was intense, filled with the same mix of fear and desire that was coursing through me. It was as if our near-miss with Rick had heightened our awareness of each other.

These thoughts weighed heavily on my mind as I continued to paint, my strokes a little more uneven than before. As I glanced over at Dylan, his smile reassuring, I knew we were heading into uncharted territory. But whatever lay ahead, I was certain of one thing. This was a journey we were embarking

on together. And I was more than ready to face whatever challenges came our way.

Exhaustion began to set in as the last of the sunlight faded from the room. We'd been painting for hours, and though the room was finally beginning to look like part of a functioning inn again, the ache in my heart was only growing. Dylan, Rick and I shared small, tired smiles as we began cleaning up our painting supplies, our conversation fading into a comfortable silence.

In the quiet, my thoughts grew louder. The events of the day replayed in my mind - the cut on my hand, Dylan's gentle care, and that fiery kiss we'd shared.

I was brought out of my thoughts when Rick clapped Dylan on the shoulder, and pulled him into a quick conversation. Seizing the opportunity, I made my way outside, to the inn's rear garden. It was still overgrown and untamed, yet I found its wildness calming.

Underneath the twinkling stars, I sat down on the dew-kissed grass, my heart heavy. A shiver ran down my spine as I thought about what might happen if our secret came out. Our friendship could shatter, the inn's renovation might come to a standstill, and my brother Danny... I couldn't even begin to imagine how hurt he'd be.

As fear started to creep in, I closed my eyes, took a deep breath, and decided to confront it. I'd lived through heartbreak, the loss of my aunt, and the huge responsibility of the inn. I'd become a beacon of hope and strength for this

small town. And I was determined not to let my fear destroy that.

“Rosalind Sutton,” I murmured to myself, drawing strength from my own name. “You’ve got this. One day at a time.”

## Chapter 25

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Rosie

Logan had taken my hand, pulling me away from the cluttered chaos of the inn's ongoing renovation. He was adamant about providing me with a much-needed break, a chance to breathe, to get away from the paint cans and dusty blueprints. He'd suggested we attend a local charity event at Azure Cove, and although I'd protested at first, his charismatic charm had worn me down.

We arrived at the event, the town hall decorated beautifully with twinkling fairy lights and pastel-colored streamers. The lively chatter of the townsfolk filled the air, mingling with the soft notes of a slow song.

"Shall we?" Logan asked, extending his hand toward me with a roguish grin. His green eyes sparkled under the lights, and I found myself grinning back, placing my hand in his.

The music enveloped us as we moved onto the dance floor. His hand was warm on my waist, and his grip was firm yet gentle, leading me with a grace I hadn't expected. His gaze

was intense, never leaving mine as we swayed to the rhythm of the song.

“You’re full of surprises, Logan Hunter,” I admitted, my voice barely above a whisper. His grin widened, and he spun me around, pulling me back into his arms.

“Only for you, Rosie,” he said, his voice warm like honey. The way he said my name sent a shiver down my spine. His fingers brushed against my back, sending waves of warmth through me.

As the night progressed, we shared more dances, each one bringing us closer. We laughed, teased each other, and with every shared moment, I felt our connection growing. The inn, the renovations, the stress - everything seemed to fade into the background. It was just Logan and me, lost in our little world.

“I’ve always admired your determination, Rosie,” Logan confessed as we swayed to another slow song. “Your passion for the inn, your resilience. It’s... captivating.”

His words stirred something within me, and I looked up at him, meeting his gaze. “I could say the same about you, Logan,” I replied. “Your charisma, your humor. You always know how to lighten the mood, even in the most stressful situations.”

He chuckled, his eyes crinkling at the corners. “Well, I do try,” he said, his tone playful. Yet, beneath his humor, I could see a hint of sincerity. It was a side of Logan I hadn’t seen before, and it made my heart flutter.



The night was turning out to be more than just a break from the renovation stress. It was an exploration of feelings, an unraveling of emotions. Logan was more than just a friend, more than a business partner. He was one of my lovers.

As the last song of the night played, I found myself lost in Logan's gaze, my heart pounding in my chest. The inn, the renovation, my complicated love life - everything seemed distant, blurred. All that mattered was the man holding me in his arms, his green eyes reflecting the fairy lights, his smile warm and genuine.

"Let's go for a walk," he suggested, his voice soft, his gaze never leaving mine. I nodded, allowing him to lead me away from the dance floor, away from the crowd, and into the quiet serenity of the moonlit night.

The charity event had ended, but our night was far from over. Our playful banter had turned into deep conversations, revealing more about our feelings for each other. I was anxious, yet excited about what the night held for us, about what our relationship was evolving into.

We walked along the edge of Azure Cove, our footsteps echoing softly in the still night. The moon cast a silvery glow on the water, creating a shimmering path that stretched into the horizon. A cool breeze blew, causing the trees to sway gently and the floral hem of my dress to flutter against my legs. The world seemed to hold its breath, leaving us in an ethereal cocoon of tranquility.

“What are you thinking about?” Logan asked, breaking the comfortable silence that had settled between us.

“I’m just...” I began, trying to find the right words, “taking it all in, I suppose. The moon, the ocean, the calmness of it all.”

Logan nodded, looking out towards the water. “I understand,” he said. “Sometimes, it’s necessary to take a step back, breathe and appreciate the beauty around us.”

I smiled at his words, appreciating the simplicity of his wisdom. There was more to Logan than met the eye, and it intrigued me.

“Logan, what about you? What’s your take on life?” I asked, genuinely curious to know more about him.

He chuckled softly, “Oh, Rosie, life is a funny thing. It’s like the ocean. Sometimes calm and soothing, other times stormy and chaotic. But either way, it’s beautiful and mysterious.”

His answer left me in a state of quiet contemplation. Logan was more profound than I’d given him credit for. We walked in comfortable silence for a few more minutes, the rhythmic sound of the waves lapping against the shore creating a serene soundtrack to our thoughts.

He looked at me, his green eyes gleaming in the soft moonlight. His gaze was intense, his expression filled with raw emotions. He took a step closer, his hands gently cupping my face.

“Rosie,” he murmured, his voice barely above a whisper, his thumbs gently stroking my cheeks. “Can I...?”

His question hung in the air, his eyes seeking permission. I knew what he was asking. And I knew what my answer would be. Nodding, I leaned into his touch, my heart pounding in my chest.

Slowly, he leaned in, his eyes fluttering shut as he closed the distance between us. I closed my eyes too, my breath hitching as his lips brushed against mine.

It was a gentle kiss, a soft exploration of emotions and desires. His lips moved against mine with a slow intensity, coaxing a sigh from me. His fingers tangled in my hair, pulling me closer. I wrapped my arms around his neck, my fingers grazing the nape of his neck.

We kissed under the moonlit sky, lost in our little world. The kiss deepened, our connection strengthening with each passing second. His hands left my face, trailing down my arms before settling on my waist, pulling me closer.

His kiss was intoxicating, leaving me breathless and wanting more. My heart pounded in my chest, my body responding to his in ways I had never imagined. It was an exhilarating feeling, one that left me reeling.

When we finally pulled apart, our breaths were ragged, our faces flushed. He rested his forehead against mine, his eyes still closed, a soft smile on his lips.

“Wow,” he breathed out, his voice shaky. I laughed, my heart still racing from our passionate kiss.

“Wow indeed,” I agreed, my voice barely above a whisper. I opened my eyes, meeting his gaze. His green eyes were softer now, filled with warmth and something more. Something deeper.

We stood there for a while, enjoying the silence, the calmness of the night. The moon cast a soft glow on us, the ocean lapping gently against the shore. The world seemed to hold its breath, allowing us this moment of tranquility, of peace.

“I should probably head back,” I said, my voice barely above a whisper. “It’s getting late.”

Logan nodded, his hand brushing against mine. “Of course, Rosie,” he replied, his voice soft. “I’ll walk you back.”

As we made our way back to the inn, the town was bathed in the soft glow of the moonlight. Azure Cove was peaceful at night, the stillness broken only by the occasional hoot of an owl or the rustling of leaves. The beauty of it all seemed to reflect the warmth in my heart.

## Chapter 26

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Ryder

We had gathered in the worn-down kitchen of the inn. Dylan, with his tool belt slung over his broad shoulders, was leaning against the peeling countertop. Logan, ever the picture of suave elegance, was sprawled in one of the rickety chairs, and I was perched on the window sill, pencil tucked behind my ear. The air was tense, laden with unspoken words, and the ocean outside mirrored our turmoil with its choppy waves.

Finally, Dylan broke the silence. “We need to talk about Rosie,” he said, his voice rougher than the sandpaper he used on his woodworking projects.

I shot him a knowing look. “About how we’re all in love with her, you mean?” The words were out before I could stop them.

Logan choked on his coffee, his striking green eyes wide with surprise. He recovered quickly, however, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. “You’ve got quite a way with

words, Ryder,” he commented, though the lightness in his voice didn’t reach his eyes.

“Let’s not pretend it’s not true,” Dylan replied, his piercing blue gaze serious. “We’re all feeling it. Rosie’s...she’s special.”

“Agreed,” I nodded. “She’s kind, passionate, fiercely independent...” My voice trailed off as my mind conjured images of Rosie. Her bright smile, her sparkling eyes, the way she got so excited about the inn’s potential. It was impossible not to fall for her.

“So, what do we do?” Logan asked, his usually confident demeanor replaced with vulnerability.

Dylan ran a hand through his dark hair. “I...I don’t know,” he admitted, and for once, our ever-reliable Dylan looked lost.

We all did. This wasn’t just about a girl we liked. This was about our friendship, our camaraderie, and the girl we all had fallen for. We were standing on the precipice of change, and the plunge seemed both frightening and inevitable.

“Look,” I began, gathering my thoughts. “I’ve been thinking... Maybe there’s a way we can all be with Rosie.”

Both Dylan and Logan stared at me, disbelief clear on their faces. “And what would that be, Ryder?” Logan asked, his voice laced with sarcasm.

I took a deep breath, ready to spill out the idea that had been turning in my mind. This was our only shot at keeping Rosie

in our lives without losing each other, and I was ready to take that risk. After all, what's love without a little bit of courage?

“I'm suggesting...a polyamorous relationship,” I finally blurted out, my heart pounding in my chest. “We all care about Rosie, and it's clear she has feelings for each of us. So why not try this? Instead of tearing each other apart and forcing Rosie to choose, we can be there for her...together.”

There was silence as my words hung in the air. I watched Dylan and Logan's faces for any sign of reaction, my hands clenched tight in anticipation. I felt vulnerable, putting forth such a radical suggestion. The possibility of rejection was high.

Dylan was the first to break the silence. He stared at me, his freckles stark against his pale face. “Are you out of your mind, Ryder?” he exclaimed, his eyes wide. “Polyamory? Really?”

“I know it's... unconventional,” I admitted, holding his gaze. “But we all love Rosie. We want to be with her. And I don't think any of us is willing to step back and watch someone else have her. So, isn't this the best solution?”

“But what about Rosie?” Logan questioned, his green eyes filled with uncertainty. “It's one thing for us to agree on this. But she has a say in this too. It's her life we're talking about.”

“Of course,” I agreed. “We wouldn't force this on her. If Rosie is comfortable with this idea, only then can we move forward.”

Logan leaned back in his chair, his face contemplative. Dylan remained silent, his mind clearly at war. The room was heavy with uncertainty, fear, and a strange kind of hope.

After what felt like an eternity, Dylan spoke up. "It's crazy," he admitted, running a hand through his disheveled hair. "But I don't want to lose Rosie. Not to either of you, not to anyone. If this is what it takes to keep her in my life, then I'm in."

Logan let out a long sigh, looking at both of us. "I won't deny that I love her," he confessed. "And I don't want to see her with anyone else, even if it's you guys. So, if this is what we have to do, then...I'm in too."

My heart pounded in relief as I heard their words. I didn't want to lose Rosie. I didn't want to lose my friends either. This crazy, unconventional solution might be the only way we could have it all. It wouldn't be easy, and it could potentially blow up in our faces. But for Rosie, for us, it was worth a shot. We were all in. We were all committed. The question was - would Rosie be too?

In the days that followed, our newfound agreement did little to alleviate the tension between us. If anything, it seemed to amplify it. The inn, once a symbol of camaraderie and shared dreams, was now a constant reminder of the intricate web of emotions we had entangled ourselves in.

One morning, as I was drafting a design for the garden, Dylan walked in, his tool belt hanging loosely around his waist. He cast a glance at my sketches and nodded



approvingly. “You’ve got a good eye, Ryder,” he commented, his tone nonchalant.

“Thanks, Dylan,” I replied, my gaze still on the paper. “Just trying to give Rosie the gardens she deserves.”

He sighed, running a hand through his dark hair. “We all are, aren’t we? Trying to give her what she deserves.”

The words hung heavy in the air, an unspoken acknowledgement of our shared feelings. I looked up at him, my pencil frozen mid-sketch. He was staring out the window, his blue eyes clouded with an emotion I couldn’t quite decipher.

Just then, Logan sauntered in, his hands filled with financial papers. “Guys,” he said, spreading the papers on the table. “We need to discuss the budget for the renovation.”

As we gathered around the table, our shoulders brushing against each other, I could feel the tension creeping in. Our discussions, usually filled with light-hearted banter and constructive criticism, were now overshadowed by a strange unease.

Logan was going over the financial details, but his words were a mere buzz in my ears. I couldn’t help but notice the way his eyes darted towards the door every now and then, as if hoping for Rosie to walk in. Dylan, too, seemed distracted, his gaze fixed on the wood grain of the table.

The air was thick with unsaid words and unexpressed feelings. We were three men, bound by friendship and love for

the same woman, navigating through uncharted waters. It was new, it was uncomfortable, and it was terrifying.

In the midst of this silent turmoil, Rosie walked in. Her bright smile instantly lit up the room, and we all turned to look at her. Her gaze flickered between us, a hint of confusion clouding her eyes.

“Is everything okay?” she asked, her voice filled with concern.

“We’re just discussing the budget, Rosie,” Logan replied, quickly masking his unease with a charming smile.

But Rosie wasn’t easily fooled. She glanced at each of us, her gaze probing. “Are you sure? You all seem... tense.”

I forced a smile, my heart pounding in my chest. “Just a bit of disagreement over the budget, Rosie. Nothing to worry about.”

Rosie didn’t look entirely convinced, but she nodded nonetheless. As she left the room, I couldn’t help but feel a pang of guilt. We were supposed to be renovating the inn, giving Rosie the home she dreamed of. But instead, we were letting our personal feelings interfere with our work, causing more tension and confusion.

That night, as I lay in bed, I couldn’t help but wonder if we had made the right decision. Our intentions were noble, yes, but were we truly capable of handling such a complex relationship? As I stared at the ceiling, lost in thought, I

realized that only time would tell. For now, all we could do was hope for the best, for Rosie, for us.

## Chapter 27

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Rosie

I was lost in the maze of my emotions. My heart pulsed with an intoxicating mix of fear, desire, and a tinge of guilt that nipped at my conscience. Yet, in the whirlwind of my feelings, one emotion emerged triumphant - happiness. It wasn't the kind of happiness that danced across your lips in the form of a smile or bubbled in your chest like laughter. No, this happiness was profound, complex, yet surprisingly calming.

My sketchpad lay open on the table, untouched. I glanced at it, my thoughts veering towards the inn and its renovation. The blueprint for the grand hallway, with its intricate designs and detailed features, mirrored the complexity of my current predicament. Yet, like the hallway, I knew I had the strength to navigate my way through.

Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. Three names that danced across my mind like a rhythmic mantra. Three men who I'd come to love in ways I'd never imagined. Each relationship, unique in

its flavor, brought me a sense of fulfillment and, in its own peculiar way, added to my happiness.

I glanced up to see Dylan enter the room. His piercing blue eyes held an unspoken depth, a testament to his silent strength and patience. His voice broke the silence. “Morning, Rosie,” he said, his voice gruff with sleep.

“Morning, Dylan,” I replied, my voice betraying the joy his presence brought. We shared a look, one that held an acknowledgment of our complicated circumstances, yet held an underlying promise of understanding.

A moment later, Logan sauntered in. His charisma seemed to light up the room, his presence causing an immediate shift in the energy. “Good morning, Rosie,” he said, his voice oozing charm, making my heart flutter. I returned his greeting, my heart swelling at his easygoing nature.

The final piece of my complex puzzle, Ryder, walked in, his smoky gray eyes scanning the room before landing on me. His presence was calming, grounding, offering a sense of tranquility amidst the storm of emotions brewing within me.

“Good morning, Rosie,” Ryder greeted, his voice carrying an undertone of serenity that was uniquely his.

The room buzzed with the palpable tension of unspoken emotions and the weight of our unconventional situation. Yet, I felt at home amidst these three men who’d come to mean so much to me. I knew we were navigating through uncharted territory, each of us trying to understand and adapt to our complicated circumstances.

As we settled into a comfortable silence, I looked at each of them, my gaze lingering a little longer on each. The fear and guilt were there, but they were far overshadowed by the happiness these men brought into my life. Despite the unconventional nature of our relationships, I couldn't deny the joy that flooded me each time I was in their presence.

In that moment, I realized that love, in all its forms, was a beautiful mess - complicated, unpredictable, yet utterly enchanting. The fear of the unknown loomed ahead, but for now, I chose to relish in the happiness these relationships brought me.

But as my gaze flickered to the untouched sketchpad, I was reminded of the looming shadow that was Landon Carter. His constant interference was becoming a cause for concern. His intentions remained unknown, and I knew it was a matter I could not ignore for long. I needed to face this predicament head-on, not just for the sake of the inn, but for the peace of my mind and heart.

A knock on the door startled us, pulling us from our reverie. Dylan, closest to the entrance, rose and opened the door. Landon Carter, impeccably dressed as always, strode in with an air of authority that instantly ruffled my feathers.

"Good morning, everyone," Landon greeted, his sharp eyes sweeping over us. His gaze lingered on me, a flicker of something I couldn't quite decipher in his eyes. I felt a chill creep up my spine.

“Landon,” Dylan acknowledged, his tone curt. He didn’t offer a seat, and Landon didn’t take one.

“I just thought I’d drop by to check on the progress,” Landon said, his gaze skimming over the blueprints scattered on the table.

“Well, we’re doing just fine,” Logan interjected, his voice icy. “Thanks for your concern.”

“I’m sure,” Landon responded, his lips curling into a sardonic smile. He glanced at me, his gaze intense. “Rosalind, I was hoping to discuss a business proposition with you. Alone.”

I stiffened at his words. I could feel the protective gaze of the three men on me, their bodies tensed. Landon’s persistence was becoming a nuisance, and his unwelcome advances were making me uncomfortable.

“Landon,” I started, meeting his gaze with a determination I didn’t know I possessed. “Whatever you have to say, you can say in front of them.”

His eyes narrowed slightly, but he didn’t protest. Instead, he nodded, seemingly amused by my defiance. He proceeded to discuss his business proposal, a convoluted plan that involved the inn, a potential investment, and a substantial return on profits. I didn’t trust him, and his words rang hollow.

“Dylan, Logan, Ryder,” I began, turning to them. “I want your thoughts.”

Dylan was the first to speak. “It sounds too good to be true,” he said, skepticism etched on his face. Logan nodded in agreement, adding, “And in my experience, if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is.”

Ryder, ever the silent observer, simply stated, “We need to be cautious.”

Their consensus matched my instincts. I turned to Landon, meeting his expectant gaze. “We appreciate your proposal, Landon. But we’ll need some time to consider it.”

Landon’s face was a mask of professionalism, but I could see the flicker of annoyance in his eyes. “Of course,” he said, his tone cool. “I’ll await your decision.”

As he left, I couldn’t shake off the unease that his visit had brought. His interest in the inn was unnerving, and I knew I needed to confront him about it. But the thought of facing his aggressive nature made me wary. I needed to gather my thoughts, my courage. And most importantly, I needed to trust in the support of the three men who stood by my side.

Drawing a deep breath, I squared my shoulders and turned to Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. “I think it’s time I confronted Landon about his persistent disruptions.”

Dylan immediately shook his head. “Rosie, that’s not a good idea. He’s not the kind of man who takes confrontation well.”

“I agree with Dylan,” Logan chimed in, his brows furrowed in concern. “Landon’s aggressive, Rosie. You don’t need to be dealing with that.”



I looked at them, my gaze steady. “I appreciate your concern, but this is something I need to do. He’s not going to stop unless I make it clear that his advances are unwelcome.”

Ryder, who had been quiet, finally spoke. “If you’re determined to do this, Rosie, we’ll stand by you. But we’ll be there with you, every step of the way.”

A wave of gratitude washed over me. “Thank you,” I murmured, my voice thick with emotion.

With that, I left the inn and headed to Landon’s office, my heart pounding in my chest. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder trailed behind me, their silent support bolstering my courage.

Once inside Landon’s opulent office, I steeled myself and turned to face him. “Landon,” I began, my voice steady despite the fluttering in my stomach, “I’ve come to talk about your continuous interference in the inn’s renovation.”

Landon leaned back in his chair, a predatory smile on his face. “Is that so, Rosalind?” he asked, his voice slick with amusement. “And what exactly is it that you want to discuss?”

“I want you to stop,” I stated, holding his gaze. “Your advances are unwelcome, and your constant interference is disrupting our progress.”

His smile widened, his eyes glinting with a cold amusement. “And what if I don’t stop, Rosalind?” he asked, leaning forward. “What will you do then?”

My heart pounded in my chest, but I refused to let him see my fear. “I will do whatever it takes to protect the inn and the

people I care about,” I said, my voice barely more than a whisper.

Landon laughed, a chilling sound that echoed in the large office. “Is that a threat, Rosalind?” he asked, his gaze sharp. “Because I don’t respond well to threats.”

“No, it’s not a threat,” I replied, swallowing hard. “It’s a promise.”

His eyes narrowed, and for a moment, I saw a flicker of something dangerous in his gaze. “Be careful, Rosalind,” he said, his voice low and threatening. “You’re playing with fire.”

I didn’t reply. Instead, I turned on my heel and left his office, my heart pounding in my chest. As I walked out, I felt a sense of relief wash over me. But as I looked at the concerned faces of Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I couldn’t help but feel a pang of worry. Landon’s words echoed in my mind, his veiled threat sending a shiver down my spine. I had managed to confront him, but at what cost?

The weight of the day’s events settled heavily on my shoulders as we walked back to the inn in silence. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were each lost in their own thoughts, their faces taut with worry. The tension was palpable, a thick fog that hung over us, suffocating and oppressive.

We found ourselves in an upstairs bedroom of the inn, surrounded by the skeletal remains of what would soon be a beautiful, welcoming space. But in that moment, it felt cold, empty, a reflection of the unease that had taken root within me.

“Rosie,” Dylan’s voice broke the silence, pulling me from my thoughts. He moved closer, his eyes filled with concern. “Are you okay?”

I nodded, attempting a reassuring smile. “I’m fine, Dylan. Just...a lot to process.”

Logan stepped forward, his green eyes filled with a warmth that threatened to melt the icy dread creeping into my heart. “Rosie, you don’t have to do this alone. We’re here for you.”

I felt a lump forming in my throat at his words. The raw sincerity in his voice was overwhelming, a balm to my frayed nerves. “I know, Logan,” I replied, my voice shaky. “And I appreciate it. More than you know.”

Ryder, who had been silently observing the exchange, finally spoke. “We’re in this together, Rosie. Whatever happens, we’ll face it as a team.”

I looked at each of them, my heart swelling with gratitude. “Thank you,” I murmured, my voice barely above a whisper. “I...I don’t know what I would do without you.”

Dylan stepped forward, pulling me into a comforting embrace. “You’ll never have to find out, Rosie,” he said, his voice a soothing rumble against my ear.

I felt Logan and Ryder join the embrace, their warmth enveloping me, offering a sense of security amidst the chaos. We stood there, tangled in a knot of shared concern and determination, our bond strengthened by the challenges we were facing.

As we pulled away, I felt a strange mix of emotions. Fear, yes, but also a sense of resolution. I had made my stand against Landon, and whatever his response, I knew I wouldn't be facing it alone.

The looming threat of Landon Carter, however, was a different beast altogether. His predatory smile, his veiled threats, they sent a shiver down my spine. But I had made a promise, to myself and to the men standing beside me. I would protect the inn, and the people I cared about, no matter what.

As night fell over Azure Cove, the inn stood tall against the darkened sky, a beacon of hope amidst the uncertainty. Inside, we huddled together, drawing strength from each other, ready to face whatever challenges the new day would bring.

Despite the fear, the uncertainty, and the looming threat, I felt a sense of peace settle over me. I was not alone. I had my men by my side, their unwavering support a beacon in the storm.

And as I closed my eyes, their whispered words of comfort echoed in my mind, a soothing lullaby that lulled me to sleep. "We're in this together, Rosie," they had said. And I believed them. I believed in us.

## Chapter 28

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Rosie

The salty scent of the ocean and the rich aroma of freshly brewed coffee mingled in the air as we gathered around the worn wooden table in the kitchen of the Driftwood Dreams Inn. Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and I had been meeting every morning to discuss the progress of the inn's renovation, but today, our conversation took an unexpected turn.

"I think we need to talk about us," I said, looking at each of them. My heart pounded in my chest, but I forced myself to maintain eye contact.

Dylan, with his disheveled dark hair and blue eyes, met my gaze with a calm patience that was so characteristic of him. Logan, his green eyes sparkling with amusement, leaned back in his chair, a smirk playing on his lips. Ryder, with his smoky gray eyes and pencil tucked behind his ear, watched me intently, his expression unreadable.

"We've been thinking the same, Rosie," Dylan said, his voice steady.

“We’ve been talking,” Logan chimed in, his charismatic aura adding a lightness to the heavy conversation.

Ryder nodded, his silence speaking volumes.

“I’ve been thinking...about all of us. Together,” I said, my words hanging in the air.

“You mean like a polyamorous relationship?” Ryder asked, his voice calm but his eyes reflecting the surprise I felt at his straightforwardness.

“Yes,” I admitted, my heart fluttering at their expressions. “I mean, we’re all here, working together, and I...I care about each of you. A lot.”

There was a silence that filled the room, heavy and expectant. I could see the wheels turning in their minds, processing my confession.

“We’ve thought about it too,” Dylan admitted, breaking the silence. “We...we’re okay with it. If you are.”

I blinked, taken aback by their acceptance. “You...you are?”

Logan nodded, his smirk replaced by a genuine smile. “We’re in this together, Rosie. All of us.”

My eyes filled with tears, not of sadness, but of relief. Relief that they understood, that they felt the same, that we were, indeed, in this together.

“I...I don’t know what to say,” I admitted, my voice shaky.

“You don’t have to say anything,” Ryder said, reaching out to take my hand. “We just want you to be happy.”

And in that moment, surrounded by the men I loved, in the inn that had become my dream, I knew I was. I was happy.

But then, the image of Landon Carter appeared in my mind, his sharp blue eyes and his ambitious demeanor a stark contrast to the comfort and warmth I felt with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. I knew I had a decision to make. And it wouldn't be easy.

As we sat there, our hands entwined on the worn wooden table, I realized that our journey was just beginning. The Driftwood Dreams Inn was more than just a renovation project. It was the cornerstone of our relationships, our shared dreams, and now, our shared love.

As I looked at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I knew that no matter what, we would face the challenges ahead together. And in that moment, I couldn't have asked for anything more.

"I've been thinking," I began, feeling the warmth of Dylan's chest against my back. Logan's hand was tracing patterns on my thigh, while Ryder lay quietly on his side, observing us.

"And?" Dylan prodded, his lips brushing against my neck, sending shivers down my spine.

"I want to say yes," I said, my voice barely above a whisper. The room fell silent, the tension tangible as they waited for me to finish. "Yes to this... to us. To whatever this could be."

A sigh of relief filled the room. Logan's grip on my thigh tightened, and Ryder's lips curved into a small smile. Dylan

placed a soft kiss on my neck, whispering, “Are you sure, Rosie?”

I turned to face him, looking into his deep blue eyes. I nodded, “I’ve never been more certain.”

Slowly, Dylan lowered his lips to mine, a kiss so sweet and tender it stole my breath away. It was the first time we kissed with the understanding of what we meant to each other.

Slowly, Dylan pulled back and stood up, his hands going to the hem of his shirt. He peeled it off, his toned chest now bare to my gaze. I watched as he discarded the garment, his movements sure and steady.

My gaze shifted to Logan, who was already on his feet. He mirrored Dylan’s movements, revealing his equally impressive physique. His abs contracted with each breath he took, and I couldn’t help but reach out to touch him. He captured my hand in his, pressing a soft kiss to my palm.

Ryder, ever the observer, rose to his feet last. He unbuttoned his shirt slowly, each revealing inch of his skin causing my breath to hitch. He had a swimmer’s build - lean, yet muscular - and I found my eyes drawn to the faint trail of hair leading from his navel to the waistband of his jeans.

Dylan’s hands moved to my own clothing, gently tugging at my shirt. I lifted my arms, allowing him to pull it over my head. His gaze was intense as he took in the sight of me in just my bra. His hands moved to unclasp it, but I stopped him.



“Let me,” I said, reaching behind to unhook the bra. As the garment fell away, I felt a thrill at being so exposed before them.

Logan and Ryder discarded their pants, standing in just their boxers. I felt my cheeks heat as I took them in, the sight of their arousal evident through the thin fabric.

With shaking hands, I unbuttoned my own jeans, sliding them down my legs and stepping out of them. I was left in just my panties, the thin lace hardly offering any coverage. I felt Dylan’s gaze on me, burning like a physical touch.

Ryder approached me, his fingers hooking into the waistband of my panties. He slid them down my legs, discarding them on the floor. Now completely bare, I felt a mix of vulnerability and excitement.

Logan, Dylan, and Ryder followed suit, discarding their own boxers. We stood in a silent tableau, taking each other in. The tension in the room was palpable, an electric current of anticipation that sparked between us.

Slowly, Dylan lowered his lips to mine, a kiss so sweet and tender it stole my breath away. It was the first time we kissed with the understanding of what we meant to each other.

His hand cupped my breast, thumb brushing against my nipple, causing me to gasp into his mouth. I felt Logan shift, his hand sliding up to meet my heated core. His fingers gently parted my folds, circling my clit in a rhythm that had me bucking against his hand. Ryder moved closer, his hand

joining Dylan's on my breast, his mouth descending onto the neglected one.

Their touches were intoxicating, stirring a fire within me that begged for release. I writhed between them, my hands clutching at Dylan and Logan as the pleasure intensified. Ryder's mouth on my nipple, Dylan's tongue in my mouth, and Logan's fingers on my clit were too much.

I broke away from Dylan's kiss, my head falling back against Logan's shoulder, my moans filling the room. "I need you," I whimpered, my eyes meeting Ryder's.

In response to my whimpered plea, Ryder's lips left my nipple to travel lower. He ran his tongue over my heated core, licking a stripe from my entrance to my clit. His teasing ministrations drew a loud moan from me, my back arching in pleasure. He responded by licking harder, sucking my clit into his mouth, his fingers tracing the wetness at my entrance.

Meanwhile, Dylan positioned himself between my legs, his throbbing cock nudging against my folds. His hands gripped my hips, his eyes meeting mine. "I need you, Rosie," he groaned, his voice rough with desire.

The sight of him, so aroused and desperate for me, made my pussy clench with anticipation. I nodded, spreading my legs wider in invitation. He took the hint, pushing forward and sinking his dick deep inside me. I cried out, the sensation of him stretching me causing my eyes to flutter shut.

He started moving, slow thrusts that gradually built in pace and intensity. The sound of his balls slapping against me, the

friction of his cock rubbing against my inner walls, it was all too much. I felt the coil in my belly tighten, my orgasm approaching rapidly.

As Dylan fucked me, Ryder continued his assault on my clit. His tongue moved in rhythm with Dylan's thrusts, his fingers occasionally dipping inside to curl against my G-spot. His actions were driving me wild, my moans and gasps filling the room as my climax neared.

At the same time, Logan reappeared, his dick glistening with lube. He positioned himself behind Dylan, his eyes meeting mine. "Can I...?" He asked, his voice thick with arousal.

"Yes," I gasped out, nodding in confirmation. The thought of Logan joining Dylan inside me, the fullness and stretch it would bring, was exciting and terrifying in equal measure.

With a slow push, Logan entered me alongside Dylan. I cried out at the sensation, my walls stretching to accommodate them both. The pleasure was intense, almost too much, but I couldn't deny the thrill it brought me.

They started moving together, their dicks sliding in and out in a delicious rhythm that had me seeing stars. The pleasure was building, the pressure inside me becoming unbearable. "I'm so close," I gasped, my voice strained with arousal.

Ryder increased his efforts on my clit, his fingers plunging inside me to join the two cocks already filling me up. His added stimulation pushed me over the edge, my orgasm crashing over me in waves. My pussy clenched around them, my body shaking as I rode out the pleasure.

They followed soon after, their dicks twitching inside me as they came. I felt the hot spurts of their cum filling me, their moans of release echoing mine. Exhausted, we collapsed onto the bed, our bodies tangled in a sweaty, satisfied mess.

In the afterglow, I realized that I'd made the right choice. Despite the uncertainty, despite the societal norms we were breaking, I was ready to navigate this unconventional relationship with them. After all, love isn't about choosing the easiest path, but about choosing the one that feels right, no matter how difficult it may seem.

## Chapter 29

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Rosie

**M**y heart pounded in my chest as I watched Landon's car pull up to the inn. He had that slick smile plastered on his face, the one that screamed business. The sight of him made my stomach churn, but I had made up my mind. This was my inn, my dream, and I wasn't about to let anyone take it away from me.

"Rosalind," he greeted, his voice smooth as silk. He offered me a handshake, but I kept my hands firmly at my sides. "I trust you've had time to consider my offer?"

I took a deep breath, my gaze unwavering. "I have, Landon."

His eyes sparkled with anticipation, but I was about to snuff that light out. "And?"

"Like I said before, I'm declining your offer," I said, my voice steady. His face fell, but I pressed on. "This inn...it's not just a business opportunity for me. It's my dream, my passion. I don't want it to become just another investment for someone like you."

Landon's face turned stony, his blue eyes hardening. "I see," he said, his voice cold. "You're making a mistake, Rosalind."

"Maybe," I shrugged, "But it's my mistake to make."

He glared at me for a moment before turning on his heel and stalking back to his car. As he drove away, I let out a breath I hadn't realized I was holding. I felt a hand on my shoulder and turned to see Dylan, his blue eyes filled with concern.

"You okay, Rosie?" he asked, his voice gentle.

I nodded, forcing a smile onto my face. "I'm fine, Dylan. Just...just glad that's over with."

Logan and Ryder appeared from the inn, their faces filled with worry. "What happened?" Logan asked, his green eyes scanning my face.

I shrugged, trying to keep my voice light. "Just turned down a business proposal."

Ryder raised an eyebrow, his gray eyes thoughtful. "From Landon?"

I nodded, biting my lip. "I just...I couldn't let him take over the inn. It wouldn't be right."

Dylan squeezed my shoulder, his gaze understanding. "You made the right choice, Rosie."

I looked at each of them, my heart swelling with gratitude. They were here for me, supporting me, even when things got tough. And even though our relationships were unconventional, I knew I wouldn't have it any other way.

But as I watched Landon's car disappear down the road, a sense of unease settled over me. I had a feeling this wasn't the last I'd see of Landon Carter.

As Landon's car faded into the distance, an eerie silence settled around us. The lingering threat he posed hung in the air, his parting words still echoing in my ears. "He said, you're making a mistake, Rosalind," I said out loud. It was more of a warning than a statement, and it left me with a bitter taste in my mouth.

The three men standing by my side shared concerned glances. Their unease mirrored my own, the silence broken only by the rhythmic pounding of the waves against the shoreline.

"What do you think he meant by that, Rosie?" Ryder asked, breaking the silence. His grey eyes were serious, a furrow in his brow.

"I don't know, Ryder," I admitted. "But I have a feeling Landon won't let this go so easily."

A sudden burst of laughter erupted from Logan, surprising us all. He ran a hand through his blond hair, a mischievous glint in his green eyes. "I bet he's not used to being turned down, our dear Landon. It's about time someone put him in his place."

Dylan snorted, his muscular arms crossed over his chest. "Leave it to Rosie to take on the corporate shark single-handedly."

The mood lightened as they teased me, their banter easing the tension that had gripped us. I rolled my eyes at them, a smile tugging at the corners of my mouth. “You guys are impossible.”

Their smiles were contagious, and despite the lingering threat of Landon, I found myself laughing along with them. But beneath the light-heartedness, I could see the resolve in their eyes, the silent promise to stand by me no matter what.

Still, as the sun began to set, painting the sky with hues of orange and purple, a chill ran down my spine. I couldn't shake off the feeling that we were heading into a storm. One that would test our bond and challenge our resolve. But as I looked at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I knew that together, we were strong. Together, we could weather any storm.

The day was ending, but our fight was just beginning. I just hoped we were ready for what was to come.

“Rosie, we stand by your decision,” Dylan said, his gaze intense, “We know how much this inn means to you.”

“Yeah,” Logan chimed in, “Landon may have the money, but he doesn't have the heart for this place like you do.”

Ryder nodded in agreement, his eyes soft. “We trust you, Rosie. We always have.”

Their words washed over me, bringing warmth to my cold body. I felt my lips curve into a small smile, the heaviness in my chest easing slightly.



“Thank you, guys,” I said, my voice thick with emotion. “Your support... it means the world to me.”

“We’re in this together, Rosie,” Dylan reminded me, his hand gently squeezing my shoulder. “All for one, and one for all, remember?”

A laugh bubbled up from my chest, breaking the serious atmosphere. “When did we become the Three Musketeers?”

“Since we decided to enter into this crazy relationship with you,” Logan said, his green eyes twinkling with mirth.

“Four Musketeers, then,” Ryder corrected, a small smile playing on his lips.

The rest of the day was filled with light-hearted banter and shared laughter. We found solace in each other’s company, our bond growing stronger with each passing moment. We were a team, ready to face whatever came our way. But even amidst the laughter and camaraderie, a sense of foreboding lingered.

As night fell, I found myself gazing out at the vast ocean, its rhythmic ebb and flow a stark contrast to the tumultuous emotions swirling within me. I could still hear Landon’s voice, his veiled threats echoing in my mind. The thought of him trying to take over the inn filled me with dread. But the presence of Dylan, Logan, and Ryder was a comforting balm, their unwavering support my beacon of hope in the brewing storm.

The future was uncertain, and the road ahead was undoubtedly filled with challenges. But as I turned to face the

inn, the soft glow of the lights within illuminating the night, I knew one thing for sure - I was not alone in this fight. And that gave me the strength to face whatever was to come.

In the days that followed, I found myself lost in a haze of worry and stress. Landon's veiled threats echoed in my mind, and the prospect of him interfering with the inn's renovation weighed heavily on my heart. Despite the support from Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed.

One evening, after a long day of work, I found myself in the inn's kitchen, staring blankly at the blueprints spread out on the table. The vibrant sketches of the proposed renovation that once filled me with excitement now seemed like a daunting task.

"Rosie, you've been staring at those blueprints for an hour," Dylan's voice broke through my thoughts. I looked up to find him leaning against the door frame, concern etched on his face.

"I know," I sighed, rubbing my temples. "I just can't shake off this feeling of unease."

Logan, who had been quietly observing from the corner, moved to stand beside me. "You're worried about Landon, aren't you?"

I nodded, my gaze drifting back to the blueprints. "I can't help it. He's unpredictable, and that worries me."

Ryder, who had been silent until now, placed a comforting hand on my shoulder. "We won't let him harm you or the inn,

Rosie. You have our word.”

Despite their reassurances, I couldn't help but feel the strain of the situation seeping into our interactions. Our usual playful banter was replaced with hushed conversations and shared concerns. Even our shared glances held a certain tension, a silent acknowledgment of the storm brewing on the horizon.

One night, as we were sitting in the inn's living room, a silence fell over us. It wasn't the comfortable silence we usually shared, but a heavy, suffocating one. The kind that spoke volumes without uttering a single word.

“I miss us,” I blurted out, the words tumbling out before I could stop them. “I miss how we used to be...carefree, happy. Now, all we do is worry and stress.”

Dylan, Logan, and Ryder exchanged glances before Dylan finally broke the silence. “We miss it too, Rosie,” he admitted, his voice soft. “But we can't pretend that things haven't changed. We have to face these challenges head-on.”

“I know,” I sighed, “I just...I just wish things could go back to how they were.”

Logan reached out, gently taking my hand in his. “We can't go back, Rosie,” he said, his green eyes meeting mine. “But we can face this together. That's what we've always done.”

Ryder nodded, his gray eyes filled with resolve. “We're in this together, Rosie. Always.”

Their words, filled with determination and unwavering support, brought a small comfort to my troubled heart. We

were indeed in this together, and together, we would face whatever challenges lay ahead. And despite the storm that was looming, I knew we would weather it, just as we had weathered everything else - together.

## Chapter 30

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Logan

Rain lashed against the window of the inn, the rhythm steady and insistent. I sat in the dimly lit living room, a glass of whiskey cradled in my hand. Across from me, Dylan and Ryder wore similar expressions of concern.

“Dylan,” I began, “We need to talk about Landon.”

Dylan sighed, running a hand through his disheveled hair. “I know, Logan. I’ve been thinking about it too.”

“And you, Ryder?” I asked, turning my gaze to the quiet landscape architect.

Ryder, who had been staring into the fire, turned his smoky gray eyes towards me. “I agree. Landon is a threat. Not just to the inn, but to Rosie as well.”

“Then we’re all on the same page,” I said, relief washing over me.

“We need a plan,” Dylan stated, his piercing blue eyes focused and determined. “We can’t let him get anywhere near Rosie or the inn.”

“I have a few contacts in the financial sector,” I offered. “I can find out more about Landon’s dealings, see if there’s anything we can use against him.”

“That’s a good start,” Dylan agreed. “Ryder, you have a way with words. Maybe you can try to sway public opinion about the inn, make it clear that it’s not up for grabs.”

“We need to be there for Rosie,” I added, my heart clenching at the thought of her dealing with Landon’s threats alone. “She’s strong, but this... this is a lot.”

Dylan and Ryder both nodded in agreement.

“Good,” I said, downing the rest of my whiskey. “We need to stick together. For Rosie, for the inn.”

The room fell silent, the only sound the relentless rain against the window. Despite the storm outside, I felt a strange sense of calm. We were united in our purpose, ready to protect Rosie and the inn at all costs.

There was an unspoken understanding between us, as we silently pledged our allegiance to protect the woman we all loved and the inn that held so much of her dreams. We were an unlikely trio, our connection anchored in our shared feelings for Rosie and our resolve to safeguard her.

I turned my gaze towards the flickering flames of the fire, reflecting on our complex situation. We had each found ourselves drawn to Rosie’s infectious energy, her relentless spirit, and the love she held for the inn. Now, those same

feelings were compelling us to work together, to stand against a common enemy.

“We’re all here because of Rosie,” Dylan voiced out, breaking the silence. “Despite everything...we need to remember that.”

Ryder nodded, a silent agreement etched on his face.

I could see it in the way Dylan’s eyes softened at the mention of her name, and in the protective stance Ryder took whenever he spoke about her. I knew, because I felt it too, a burning desire that twisted my insides whenever I thought of her.

The room had settled into a heavy silence, broken only by the drumming of the rain against the windowpane. The air was thick with unspoken thoughts, the weight of our predicament sinking into us. It was Ryder who finally shattered the silence, his smoky grey eyes flickering towards me.

“We have to keep this... arrangement with Rosie... to ourselves for now.” His words were measured, cautious. “It’s best if the town doesn’t find out.”

Dylan leaned back, his gaze on the window. “That might be difficult,” he pointed out, the blue of his eyes almost as stormy as the sky outside. “We’re not exactly living in a city. People talk.”

“And if Landon finds out?” I added, voicing the concern that had been gnawing at me. “He’s already a threat. We don’t need to give him any more ammunition.”

A grim silence followed, a stark reminder of the precarious situation we found ourselves in. But as I looked at Dylan and Ryder, I knew we were united in our determination to protect Rosie. No matter what.

Ryder gave a curt nod. “We’re just going to have to be careful,” he stated simply. “And hope for the best.”

The tension eased a little, and Dylan even managed a small, lopsided smile. “Hope for the best, but plan for the worst, right?”

I returned the smile, appreciating the sentiment. “Exactly.”

“Whatever it takes,” Ryder echoed, his voice firm. “For Rosie.”

I raised my glass, the amber liquid catching the flicker of the firelight. “To Rosie.”

“To Rosie,” they echoed, and the clink of our glasses cut through the quiet room, a beacon of hope amidst the gathering storm.



## Chapter 31

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Rosie

The rain had begun as a soft drizzle, barely enough to warrant the opening of an umbrella. But as I made my way from the Azure Cove town center towards Driftwood Dreams Inn, the drizzle had transformed into a full-blown rainstorm. I squinted against the torrent, the cold droplets pelting my skin and soaking through my clothes.

My thoughts, much like the storm around me, were a tempest of their own. The inn, our relationships, Landon's threats... it was a lot to handle. And despite the shared love between Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, there was a part of me that was terrified of what the future held.

As I trudged on, the inn a distant silhouette against the stormy backdrop, a car pulled up beside me. I jumped, heart pounding in my chest, as the passenger window rolled down.

"Rosie! What are you doing out here?" Logan's voice, laced with concern, broke through the pounding rain.

I peered through the curtain of rain, meeting his green eyes, shining with worry. “I... I needed some air,” I admitted, shivering as a gust of wind blew rain into my face.

He frowned, his eyes scanning over my drenched form. “You’re going to catch a cold at this rate,” he said, reaching over to open the passenger door. “Get in, I’ll drive you back to the inn.”

I nodded, rushing over to the car and climbing in.

The warmth of the car was a stark contrast to the cold rain outside. Logan turned up the heater, the warm air filling the car as he pulled back onto the road.

We drove in silence for a few minutes, the only sound being the patter of rain against the car’s roof. Finally, Logan broke the silence.

“Rosie, you can’t keep taking on everything by yourself,” he said, his voice soft yet firm. “You don’t have to carry all this weight on your own.”

I turned to look at him, his profile illuminated by the car’s dashboard lights. He was right, of course. But the fear of being found out, of facing the town’s judgement and Danny’s reaction, was overwhelming.

“I know,” I said, my voice barely above a whisper. “But I can’t help but worry.”

He reached over, gently taking my hand in his. His touch was warm, grounding. “We’ll face whatever comes our way, together,” he said, giving my hand a reassuring squeeze.

His words, much like the warmth of the car, enveloped me, offering a semblance of comfort amidst the storm. And in that moment, despite the fear and uncertainty, I believed him.

Logan's concerned gaze lingered on me, making my heart flutter despite the chaos swirling in my mind. The silence in the car was almost deafening, the rain pounding on the roof a stark contrast to the warm quiet inside. I found myself unable to meet his gaze, my eyes focusing on our intertwined hands instead.

"Rosie," Logan began, his voice barely above a whisper, pulling me from my thoughts. I looked up at him, finding his green eyes filled with a mix of concern and... something else. "I know this is hard, and I know you're scared. We all are."

His honesty took me by surprise. I'd been so wrapped up in my own fears and worries that I'd failed to see how the situation was affecting them too. I swallowed hard, nodding in understanding.

"I'm sorry, Logan," I said, my voice shaky. "I've been so focused on... on everything."

He squeezed my hand, his thumb gently rubbing circles on the back of my hand.

I turned to him, my eyes meeting his. The intensity in his gaze made my breath hitch, and for a moment, everything else faded away. The inn, Landon, the storm outside... it all seemed insignificant compared to the man sitting next to me.

“Thank you, Logan,” I whispered, my heart pounding in my chest. “For being here... for being you.”

He smiled, a soft, genuine smile that reached his eyes. “Always, Rosie. Always.”

As he turned his attention back to the road, I leaned back in my seat, my mind filled with a newfound sense of determination. We were in this together, and together, we would face whatever came our way.

There was an undercurrent of energy in the car now, something far more powerful than the earlier comfort. The silent understanding had quickly given way to a palpable tension, one that felt both familiar and entirely new.

We arrived at a red light, the eerie glow painting the car in an intimate crimson. The sound of the storm outside, the beating rain, filled the silence. He was still holding my hand, thumb absently tracing circles on my skin. A tremor went through me at his touch, a thrill of anticipation I tried to push away.

The tension was almost tangible, a pulsing energy between us that I wasn't sure what to do with.

Logan glanced over at me, the red light from the traffic signal illuminating his handsome features. I watched as his gaze traveled over my face, settling on my lips for just a fraction longer than it should. My breath hitched, my pulse thrumming loudly in my ears.

The red light flicked to green, but neither of us seemed to care.

“Logan...” I began, the words caught in my throat as he leaned closer, his breath warm against my cheek. My heart pounded like a drum, so loud I was sure he could hear it.

“Shh... Rosie,” he said, his voice husky. His fingers, still intertwined with mine, tightened their grip. He was close, so close I could smell the lingering scent of his cologne, could see the emerald flecks in his green eyes. My pulse quickened, a wave of desire rushing through me.

“Logan...” My voice was a whisper, my breath hitching as his other hand cupped my face, thumb brushing my lower lip. A whimper escaped my lips, the sheer intensity of his gaze making my head spin.

“Rosie,” he murmured, his lips inches from mine. My breath hitched in my throat as I waited, waited for the touch I’d been longing for.

And then it came, a soft, tantalizing brush of lips that sent a jolt of desire straight to my core. The world outside disappeared as Logan kissed me, his hand cradling my face as if I was the most precious thing in the world.

The kiss deepened, our tongues dancing together, the taste of him intoxicating. I forgot about the storm outside, about Landon, about the potential judgement of Azure Cove. For a moment, there was only Logan and me and the searing heat that passed between us.

His hand slipped from my face to my neck, pulling me closer. His other hand squeezed mine, fingers locked in a tight

embrace. I found myself melting into him, craving the contact, the connection.

His kiss was a promise, an assurance, and I clung to it desperately, finding solace in his embrace. His thumb traced my jaw, before gently pulling back, his breathing as ragged as mine. Our eyes met, the heated look in his making my breath hitch.

“I...” he began, his voice thick with emotion. “We should get you back, Rosie.”

A laugh bubbled out of me, despite the intense moment we had just shared. I nodded, feeling a blush creep up my cheeks. “Yes... we should.”

As he turned back to the road, the heated energy still humming between us, I couldn't help but lean against him, craving the contact, the closeness. He squeezed my hand again, a silent promise. And as we drove the remaining distance back to the inn, the rain pounding against the roof, I found myself looking forward to what awaited us. I yearned for more, craved his touch. I wanted him, in every way imaginable, and as we neared the inn, my heart pounded in anticipation of what was to come.

The drive back to the inn was a blur, the tension between Logan and I palpable. As he pulled up to the drive up to the inn, the rain still pounding against the roof of the car, he turned to me, his green eyes dark with desire. “Rosie,” he murmured, his voice low and husky.

I nodded, not trusting myself to speak. We both knew what was coming next, the air between us charged with anticipation. Without another word, he turned off the car, and we dashed through the rain into the inn.

Once inside, Logan pulled me against him, his hands on my waist as he pressed his lips to mine. I responded eagerly, my hands reaching up to tangle in his wet hair. His tongue swept into my mouth, his taste intoxicating. I moaned into his mouth, my body already aching for him.

“Shower,” he growled against my lips, his hands moving down to cup my ass. “Now.”

I nodded, allowing him to lead me up the stairs and into the bathroom. The room was steamy from the hot water, the scent of his cologne lingering in the air. He helped me out of my wet clothes, his hands lingering on my bare skin. I returned the favor, my fingers trailing over his toned chest and down to the bulge in his pants.

“Fuck, Rosie,” he groaned, his eyes dark with lust. “You’re so beautiful.”

I blushed, stepping into the shower and pulling him in after me. The hot water cascaded down over us, the steam fogging up the glass. His hands roamed over my body, exploring every inch of me. I gasped as his fingers found my clit, the sensation making my knees buckle.

“Logan,” I whimpered, clutching onto him for support. He chuckled, his fingers continuing their torturous movements. I could feel the pressure building, my body on the edge of

release. But before I could cum, he pulled his hand away, leaving me panting and frustrated.

“Patience, Rosie,” he teased, his eyes sparkling with mischief. He then turned me around, pressing me against the cool tile of the shower wall. I gasped as I felt his hard cock pressing against my ass, his hands moving to spread my legs.

“I need you, Rosie,” he growled in my ear, his breath hot against my skin. I nodded, reaching down to guide him to my entrance. He groaned as he slid into me, his hands gripping my hips as he began to move.

The sensation was overwhelming, his cock filling me completely. I moaned, my hands scrabbling for purchase on the slippery tiles. His thrusts were slow and deliberate, each one sending waves of pleasure coursing through me.

“Logan,” I gasped, my body quivering with need. “Faster.”

He obliged, his thrusts becoming more frantic. I could feel my orgasm building, my body tensing as I neared the edge. With a few more hard thrusts, I came, my body shaking with the intensity of my orgasm. Logan followed soon after, his cock twitching inside me as he filled me with his cum.

We stood there for a moment, panting and clinging to each other as the water washed over us. Finally, he pulled out, turning me around to press a soft kiss to my lips.

“That was...” I began, my voice trailing off. He chuckled, pulling me against him.



“Amazing,” he finished for me, his arms wrapping around me. I nodded, leaning against him as we let the water wash over us.

## Chapter 32

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Rosie

The air was thick with the smell of fresh paint and sawdust as we worked on the inn. The noise of hammers and drills was a constant background hum, drowning out the turmoil in my heart. We were a well-oiled machine, each of us focused on our tasks.

It was in the midst of this controlled chaos that I found a moment of calm. Standing on the grand staircase, looking down at the men I loved working together, a sense of pride filled me. We were doing this, despite the emotional roller coaster we were on.

But there was a growing concern that gnawed at me, a shadow looming over our shared secret. The curious glances, the hushed whispers whenever I stepped into town were becoming more frequent. The fear of being discovered was growing.

One evening, after a long day of work, I found myself sitting with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder in the inn's living room. The

day's work had left us exhausted, but the fear that had been gnawing at me forced me to speak up.

"Guys," I started, biting my lip nervously. "I think... I think people are starting to talk."

The room fell silent. They exchanged glances, their expressions mirroring my own concern.

"What makes you say that, Rosie?" Dylan asked, his brow furrowed in worry.

"The way people look at me when I'm in town. The whispers that stop when I pass by. It's like they know... or at least, they suspect something," I admitted, my heart pounding in my chest.

"We knew this could happen," Ryder said, his voice steady but his eyes revealing his worry. "But we also knew we couldn't control what others think or say."

"I know," I replied, wringing my hands in my lap. "But what about Danny? What if he finds out?"

The mention of my older brother's name brought a fresh wave of anxiety. Danny was protective of me, almost to a fault. If he discovered our secret, there was no telling how he would react.

"Danny won't find out," Logan said, his voice firm. "We'll make sure of it."

"And how are we supposed to do that, Logan?" Dylan challenged. "We can't control what people talk about."

“No, but we can control how we react,” Logan replied, meeting Dylan’s gaze. “We need to act normal. Be normal. If we don’t give them anything to talk about, there won’t be any rumors.”

“I agree with Logan,” Ryder said, nodding. “We just need to be careful. Be aware of how we act around each other, especially in public.”

They were right. We had to keep our emotions in check, to guard our secret fiercely. But as the days turned into weeks, I couldn’t help but wonder how long we could keep up the façade. Would our love story be confined to the shadows forever? Or was there a chance for us to live our truth, openly and freely? As the fear of exposure lingered, the hope of acceptance remained a distant dream.

Every day was a test of our resolve. A constant battle to keep our emotions under control, our affections hidden from prying eyes. We threw ourselves into our work, the hum of saws and the smell of fresh paint serving as a welcome distraction from the fear that threatened to consume us.

“Rosie, hand me that drill,” Dylan called out from atop a ladder, his focus solely on the beam he was securing. I handed him the tool, our fingers brushing in the brief exchange.

“Everything alright, Rosie?” Logan asked, looking up from his laptop. His eyes, sharp and analytical, seemed to see right through me. I forced a smile, nodding my head.

“Just tired,” I lied, turning away to hide the blush creeping up my cheeks.

Ryder, who was knee-deep in a pile of blueprints, glanced up at me, his smoky eyes soft with concern. “Why don’t you take a break, Rosie?” he suggested. “We can handle things here.”

“No, I’m fine,” I replied quickly, the thought of being alone with my thoughts more terrifying than the fear of being discovered.

We continued to work, the air heavy with unspoken words and suppressed emotions. Laughter was scarce, replaced by silent glances and secret smiles. We were a ticking time bomb, waiting to explode.

As the days turned into weeks, the strain of our secret began to show. Dark circles under our eyes, forced smiles, hushed conversations late into the night. But we held on, united by our shared love for each other and our dream of restoring the inn.

The arrival of Landon’s latest letter, however, threatened to shatter our fragile peace. His words, veiled threats disguised as business proposals, hung over us like a dark cloud. Yet, we refused to let him break us. Instead, we found strength in our unity, in the promise of a future together, no matter how uncertain.

“Dylan, Logan, Ryder,” I said one evening, holding the letter in my hands. “No matter what happens, no matter what Landon tries, we can’t let him win. We can’t let him take this away from us.”

Their nods of agreement were my source of strength. Despite the challenges, the fear, the uncertainty, we were in this together. We were willing to fight, to protect what we had

built, both in our hearts and within the walls of the inn. The question remained, however, how long could we keep up this charade? How long before our secret was exposed, and our world came crashing down?

## Chapter 33

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Rosie

The days melted into each other, as we all worked tirelessly to breathe life back into Driftwood Dreams Inn. It was like a labor of love, each stroke of paint, each replaced plank, each tightened screw an act of affection towards the shared dream we held.

One afternoon, I was busy on a stepladder, guiding Ryder with the placement of a hanging light in the main hallway. My sketchpad was filled with hurriedly drawn plans, and the soft light filtering in through the large windows lent an ethereal glow to the inn's interiors.

"You're holding it too high, Ryder," I called down to him, my hands on my hips. "It should be right about...there."

"Like this?" He asked, adjusting the light fixture accordingly.

I nodded, "Yes, perfect."

Just as I was climbing down, I caught sight of Dylan, who was engrossed in some carpentry work in the corner of the

room. He looked up, his eyes meeting mine. I felt a familiar warmth bloom within me, as he flashed me a small smile, his gaze full of unspoken affection.

“Dylan, how’s the bar coming along?” I asked, sauntering over to where he was stationed.

“Almost done,” He replied, his hands moving with a practiced rhythm. “Just some final touches left.”

As I reached out to touch the polished surface of the wooden bar, a soft hand enclosed mine. Logan stood by my side, his fingers intertwining with mine in a comforting squeeze.

“It’s beautiful, Dylan. You’ve outdone yourself,” He complimented, his gaze locked with mine. His eyes were bright, and full of something that looked a lot like admiration.

We worked like this, each day full of shared glances and secret touches. Each day, our bond grew stronger, fueled by the hours we spent working side by side, the shared laughter, and the quiet moments when our gazes would meet and linger just a bit too long.

Yet, the fear of our secret being exposed was omnipresent, a constant weight on our hearts. Each curious glance from the townsfolk, each whispered conversation that ceased when we approached, it all fed into our fears. The arrival of the mail was dreaded, each envelope a potential bombshell that could unravel our world.

But, it was our shared desire to protect what we had that kept us going. Our love was like the sturdy walls of the inn, a solid



structure that was battered by storms but never faltered. Each smile, each touch, each word of encouragement was a testament to the resilience of our relationship.

We knew the challenges we faced were significant, but we also knew that together, we were stronger. So, we continued working, pouring our love and passion into the inn, hoping against hope that our secret would remain just that – a secret. And as we worked, our hearts echoed a silent vow - we were in this together, come what may.

“Can I help?” I asked Dylan, my gaze falling on the wooden plank he was sanding.

His eyes crinkled at the corners as he smiled at me, “Always, Rosie.”

As I worked alongside him, I felt Logan’s eyes on me. I looked up, and he gave me a reassuring nod, his emerald eyes sparkling with affection. It was a look that spoke volumes about his feelings for me.

When Ryder brought us lunch, his hand brushed against mine as he handed me a sandwich. I caught his eye, and he winked at me, his smoky eyes warm and inviting. It was these small moments that held the most significant impact.

After a while, Logan came over, gently tugging at my hand, “Come, Rosie. Let’s take a break.”

We found a quiet corner in the inn where we sat together, my head resting against his shoulder. His arm was wrapped around me, providing me with a sense of comfort and safety. And

Despite the looming fear of our secret being exposed, we were steadfast in our resolve to protect what we had. Our shared laughter, the stolen glances, and the moments of intimacy were precious. Each one a testament to our enduring love.

But the dread was omnipresent. Each envelope delivered by the mailman was a potential detonator that could blow up our world. Yet, it was our collective strength and love that kept us moving forward. The four of us were like the walls of the inn, battered by storms but still standing tall.

Just as we were soaking in the peace of the moment, the sound of footsteps echoed through the hallway. We froze, the familiar tread sparking a new wave of anxiety.

“Danny,” I breathed out, my heart pounding in my chest as the tall figure of my brother came into view.

Logan’s grip on my hand tightened, a silent reassurance. We quickly pulled apart, rearranging ourselves into a more casual pose.

“Hey, sis,” Danny greeted, his hazel eyes, so much like mine, twinkling with a warmth that only a loving older brother could possess. “I thought I’d drop by to see how things are going.”

“Things are going well, Danny,” I replied, trying to keep my voice steady. “We’re getting closer to being done with the renovation.”

“That’s great,” Danny said, his gaze sweeping across the room. His eyes lingered on Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, a

knowing smile playing on his lips. “I see you have a good team here.”

“We do,” I agreed, forcing a smile. I could feel the tension in the room, like a tightly coiled spring waiting to snap.

“So, how about a tour?” Danny suggested, oblivious to the undercurrent of anxiety.

“Sure,” I replied, getting up. As I led Danny around the inn, I could feel the eyes of Dylan, Logan, and Ryder on us. Their silent support gave me the strength to carry on with the facade.

We showed Danny the progress we’d made, the painstakingly restored rooms, the refurbished bar, the carefully designed outdoor spaces. He praised our efforts, his genuine appreciation warming my heart.

Throughout the tour, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder maintained a careful distance, their conversations casual and work-focused. But the shared glances, the quiet words exchanged when Danny wasn’t looking, spoke volumes of the underlying tension.

Once the tour was over, we all gathered in the main room. Danny looked around, a proud smile on his face. “You guys have done an amazing job,” he said, clapping Dylan on the shoulder. “I can’t wait to see the inn bustling with guests.”

“Thanks, Danny,” Dylan replied, his voice choked with emotion.

After a few more minutes of idle chatter, Danny announced that he had to leave. As he walked out of the inn, a collective

sigh of relief echoed through the room. We had managed to keep our secret safe, at least for now.

As I sank into a chair, Logan knelt in front of me, his hands on my knees. “We did well, Rosie,” he said, his voice filled with quiet conviction. “I don’t think he suspected anything.”

Dylan and Ryder echoed his sentiment, their faces mirroring the same determination. We were a team, and we would face whatever came our way together. But as we basked in the relief of having dodged a bullet, we were oblivious to the new threat that was approaching.

The sound of a car pulling up outside the inn had us all on edge. We exchanged worried glances, a silent understanding passing between us. We had barely recovered from Danny’s visit, and now, we had another uninvited guest.

“Who could that be?” Dylan asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

I stood up, my heart pounding in my chest. I walked over to the window, pulling the curtain aside just enough to peek outside. The sight that greeted me sent a wave of panic coursing through me.

“Landon,” I breathed out, my heart sinking.

Logan was by my side in an instant, his hand resting on my lower back. “Are you sure, Rosie?” he asked, his voice steady despite the tension in his eyes.

I nodded, my gaze still locked on the sleek black car parked outside. “Yes, it’s him.”

We all fell silent, the reality of the situation sinking in. Landon was here, again.

Before we could discuss our next move, the front door of the inn swung open, and in walked Landon, looking every bit the successful businessman in his designer suit. His sharp blue eyes scanned the room, a smug smile playing on his lips.

“Good afternoon, everyone,” he greeted, his voice echoing through the silent room. “I hope I’m not interrupting anything important.”

“No, not at all,” I managed to reply, forcing a smile. “What brings you back here, Landon?”

“I was just passing by and thought I’d check on the progress of the inn,” he said, his gaze flickering over Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. “I must say, you all have done an impressive job.”

“Thank you,” Dylan said, his voice cold. “We’re quite proud of our work.”

“I can see why,” Landon replied, his gaze lingering on me. “But I do have a few questions about the finances of this project.”

His probing words sent a chill down my spine. Was he onto us? Did he suspect something?

Logan stepped forward, his tone icy. “Our finances are none of your concern, Landon.”

Landon raised an eyebrow, a challenge lurking in his sharp gaze. “Why’s that, Hartley? Afraid I’ll find something... amiss?”

“We have nothing to hide,” I interjected, feeling the need to stand my ground. I rose from the couch, Dylan’s hand sliding away reluctantly. “The finances are in order. We don’t need your investment.”

Landon’s eyes lingered on me for a moment too long, a knowing smirk playing on his lips. “If you say so, darling,” he finally said, the insinuation in his voice causing a chill to snake down my spine. The atmosphere in the room was thick with unspoken threats and suspicions, a foreboding storm on the horizon.

Landon’s eyes narrowed, his gaze flicking between Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and me. His smirk widened, and he chuckled, a low, mocking sound that echoed in the silent room. “Well, isn’t this interesting?” he drawled, crossing his arms over his chest. “A carpenter, a financial advisor, a landscape architect, and a beautiful woman, all so... intimately involved in a renovation project.”

Dylan’s jaw clenched, his blue eyes darkening with anger. “Watch your mouth, Landon,” he warned, his voice dangerously low.

Landon’s laughter echoed around the room, his green eyes glinting with amusement. “Oh, I’ve hit a nerve, haven’t I?” he taunted, stepping closer. “What is it exactly that you’re hiding, Rosie? Some sort of secret arrangement with your...partners?”

Logan stepped forward, his gaze locked on Landon. “That’s enough,” he said, his voice as cold as ice. “This is none of your business.”

Landon's smirk widened. "On the contrary, Logan," he countered, his gaze sweeping over us. "I find it very interesting. A shared investment, shared work, shared... companionship."

The insinuation hung in the air, a dangerous spark ready to ignite. Dylan moved, stepping between Landon and me, his tall frame a protective barrier. "Get out," he growled, his tone brooking no argument.

Landon held his hands up in mock surrender, his smirk never leaving his face. "Very well," he conceded, backing towards the door. "But remember, Rosie," he said, his gaze lingering on me. "Secrets have a way of coming out."

With that, he turned on his heel and left, leaving a chilling silence in his wake. We stood there, staring at the now-closed door, the echoes of Landon's words still ringing in our ears. His insinuations, his suspicions, had struck a nerve, and we all knew it. The secret we'd been so desperate to keep was now teetering on the edge of exposure, and the fear that came with that realization was more potent than any of us had anticipated.

"That was... close," he muttered, raking a hand through his blond hair.

"Too close," Dylan agreed, his gaze never leaving the door. "He knows something."

"He suspects," Ryder corrected, his gray eyes meeting mine. "That's not the same as knowing."

“But it’s enough to cause trouble,” I added, the pit in my stomach growing.

The room fell silent again, the weight of our shared secret pressing down on us. We were teetering on the edge, our relationship threatening to spill into the open. The fear was almost tangible, wrapping around us like a cold shroud.

“I can’t believe he had the audacity to show up here,” Dylan finally growled, his fists clenched at his sides.

Logan let out a dry chuckle. “Landon has never been one to shy away from stirring the pot.”

“But why now?” I asked, wrapping my arms around myself. “Why is he so interested in the inn?”

Logan shrugged, his green eyes thoughtful. “Maybe he sees it as a business opportunity. Or maybe...”

“Maybe he’s just trying to mess with us,” Dylan finished, his blue eyes dark with frustration.

We all fell silent, the gravity of our situation sinking in. Landon’s unexpected visit had shaken us, his veiled threats and insinuations threatening to expose our secret.

“He’s going to be a problem,” Ryder finally said, breaking the silence. His gaze was on me, a mixture of concern and determination in his eyes.

“We can handle him,” Dylan said, his tone firm. “We’ve faced worse.”



“Have we?” I asked, my voice barely a whisper. The fear was creeping in, the walls of our secret haven starting to crumble.

“We’ll figure it out, Rosie,” Logan assured me, moving to sit beside me. His hand found mine, giving it a reassuring squeeze. “We always do.”

I nodded, trying to draw strength from his words. But the fear was still there, a nagging voice in the back of my mind. We were in uncharted territory, our secret relationship on the brink of being exposed.

## Chapter 34

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Rosie

After Landon's unwelcome visit, we moved into the inn's grand parlor, a room we'd lovingly restored to its former glory. The antique furniture, the crackling fireplace, and the ocean view through the large windows offered a comforting familiarity. But tonight, the room felt different - tense and charged with an underlying current of fear.

"Rosie," Logan started, his green eyes reflecting the fire's glow. "We knew this day might come. That someone might find out about us."

"And we've always said we'd face it together," Ryder added, his voice firm, his smoky gray eyes intense.

"But Landon..." I started, the words sticking in my throat.

Dylan cut me off. "Is just a man, Rosie. A man who thinks he can intimidate us with insinuations and threats."

I looked at each of them, my heart aching with love and fear. "What if he tells Danny?"

The room fell silent. The thought of my protective older brother discovering our secret relationship was a nightmare we'd all dreaded.

Logan, ever the optimist, broke the silence. "Then we'll deal with it, Rosie. We're not kids anymore. We can handle Danny."

"But the inn..." I started, my voice trailing off. The inn was my dream, our dream. And the thought of losing it because of our relationship was unbearable.

"We won't let that happen, Rosie," Ryder assured me, his voice steady and soothing. "The inn is as much a part of us as we are of it. We'll fight for it."

"And for each other," Dylan added, his hand reaching out to grasp mine.

I looked into their eyes, finding a determination that matched my own. We were a team, in love and in life, and we would face whatever came our way together.

"Danny needs to know," I finally said, the words heavy in the air.

They nodded, understanding my decision. I looked at each of them, searching their faces for signs of fear, of hesitation. But I found none. Dylan, with his warm blue eyes, wore a comforting smile, his hand giving mine a reassuring squeeze. Logan, with his disarming charisma, tried to lighten the mood, throwing me a playful wink as he leaned back casually on a winged armchair. Ryder, ever the introspective, quietly

assessed the situation, his steady gaze telling me he was ready for whatever was coming.

“I know this isn’t what we had planned,” I started, biting my lower lip. “But we need to tell Danny before someone else does.”

Dylan nodded. “I’ve known Danny for years. It won’t be easy, but we can handle it, Rosie.”

“No secrets. No hiding. Danny’s a tough cookie, but he’s always cared about us, about you, Rosie. We just need to explain things to him. He’ll understand,” Logan added, his voice soothing.

I shot him a skeptical look, which he returned with a reassuring smile. I wanted to believe him. To believe that everything would be fine.

“Ryder?” I turned to the quiet architect, who’d been listening quietly, his arms folded across his chest. “What do you think?”

He took a deep breath before he spoke. “It won’t be easy. Danny... he’s always been protective of you. But,” he paused, meeting my gaze, “he also knows how strong and determined you are, Rosie. And how much you love this inn... and us. I think... I think he’ll understand, in his own way.”

A small smile crept up my face as I took in their words, their assurances. “Thank you, guys. I... I just don’t want to lose any of you. Or the inn.”

“You won’t,” Dylan stated firmly, giving my hand another reassuring squeeze.

“We’re in this together, Rosie,” Logan echoed, standing up and extending his hand towards me. “Always.”

“Through thick and thin,” Ryder added, his smoky gray eyes conveying his earnest promise.

As I took their outstretched hands, a wave of reassurance washed over me. They were right. We could handle this. We were stronger together, and we would face whatever lay ahead as a team, as lovers. It was our shared secret, our shared dream. And we were ready to fight for it.

As the day wore on, the heaviness of our earlier conversation faded into the background. It didn’t disappear, but it took a backseat to the more immediate needs of the inn. We spent the day immersed in the final touches, creating a place we could all be proud of, our love and shared dreams interwoven into the very fabric of Driftwood Dreams Inn.

In the cozy kitchen, Dylan was putting up the last piece of refurbished cabinetry, his muscular arms flexing with the effort. Logan, the constant charmer, was sipping coffee by the counter, offering cheeky commentary about Dylan’s ‘flex show’. I laughed, rolling my eyes at their antics.

“It’s not a ‘flex show’, Logan,” Dylan defended himself, a grin tugging at the corners of his mouth. “It’s work.”

“Yeah, sure, it’s ‘work’,” Logan winked at me, and I joined him in laughter, my worries momentarily forgotten.

In the corner, Ryder was absorbed in his sketchpad, working on last-minute designs for the inn’s exterior. I walked over,

leaning in to admire his detailed drawings.

“Looking good, Ryder,” I said, squeezing his shoulder. He gave me a small, appreciative smile, the lines around his eyes softening.

Despite the undercurrent of tension that persisted, we found comfort and laughter in these moments, reminding us of the deep bond we shared. When the sun began to set, painting the sky in hues of red and orange, we stepped outside, leaning on the porch railings and absorbing the serene view.

“Who knew that we’d all end up here together?” Logan murmured, his gaze on the setting sun. His words echoed the unspoken thoughts in our minds.

“We did,” Ryder countered quietly, his gaze shifting from the horizon to meet mine. His smoky eyes reflected understanding and solidarity.

“Yes, we did,” I affirmed, reaching out to hold their hands. Our fingers entwined, anchoring us in the love and shared strength we drew from each other.

There was no denying the looming confrontation with Danny, but in that moment, as the sun kissed the horizon goodnight, we knew that no matter what, we had each other. And that, above all, gave us the strength to face whatever was coming our way. The promise of shared dreams and undying love in their eyes emboldened me. Danny deserved to know. The following morning, I’d tell him everything. I didn’t know how he would react, but the secret was no longer just mine to

keep. It was ours. It was time to reveal it to protect what we held most dear.

## Chapter 35

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Danny

It was afternoon when Rosie asked me to join her in the garden of the Driftwood Dreams Inn. The setting sun drenched the outdoor space in a soft, orange glow, giving it a picturesque feel. The scent of fresh wood and paint hung in the air, a testament to the blood and sweat poured into restoring the old inn. We settled onto a weathered wooden bench, Rosie nervously fidgeting with her floral dress.

“Danny,” she started, biting her lower lip in a telltale sign of her apprehension.

“Yeah, Rosie?” I asked, studying my younger sister. There was something different about her, a subtle shift in her energy that I couldn’t quite place.

She took a deep breath and blurted out, “I need to tell you something.”

I looked at her, my eyes urging her to continue.

“I’m...we’re...” she stammered, glancing towards the inn where Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were working. “We’re



together, Danny.”

“Together?” I echoed, struggling to understand her meaning.

“We’re in love,” she stated, more confidently this time, meeting my gaze head-on. “All of us.”

I was silent for a moment, grappling with the sudden revelation. Rosie and my best friends, all in a relationship together? It was a lot to digest.

“Why didn’t you tell me sooner?” I finally managed to ask, trying to keep my voice steady.

“I... we... were afraid of how you’d react,” she admitted, her eyes welling up. “But we don’t want to hide anymore, especially not from you.”

I felt a pang of guilt at her words. My role as the protective big brother had always been a given, but in this moment, I felt like I’d let her down. I’d made her feel like she had to hide something so fundamental from me.

I took a deep breath and reached out, squeezing her hand. “Rosie,” I said, my voice choked with emotion, “you don’t ever have to hide from me.”

“But...” she started, looking at me with wide hazel eyes, her surprise evident.

“No buts, Rosie,” I cut her off gently. “It might take me a while to fully understand this... arrangement. But all I want is for you to be happy. If Dylan, Logan, and Ryder make you happy, then that’s all that matters to me.”

The relief in her eyes was immediate and profound. She let out a shaky laugh, wiping away a tear that had escaped down her cheek. “Oh, Danny,” she murmured, hugging me tightly, “thank you.”

I returned the hug, my mind whirling with thoughts and concerns. But I kept them to myself. Rosie needed my support now, not my questions or doubts.

The weight of Rosie’s relief was palpable as she sagged against me, her body shaking with the force of her silent sobs.

“Thank you, Danny,” she whispered into my chest, her voice muffled by my shirt.

“Always, Rosie,” I responded, a lump forming in my throat. “I’ve got your back, no matter what.”

I could feel her nodding against me, her tears soaking through my shirt. But I didn’t mind. My sister needed me, and I was there for her.

Eventually, she pulled away, wiping her eyes with the back of her hand. She offered me a watery smile, one that I returned with a nod. I watched as she straightened her dress, took a deep breath, and turned to face the inn.

“I need to get back to work,” she said, her voice stronger than before.

I nodded and watched her walk into the in. After a minute I followed her in and was met with a flurry of activity. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were busy with their respective tasks, the air filled with the scent of fresh wood and paint. Their

camaraderie was palpable, and I found myself admiring their dedication. These men, my friends, loved my sister, and they were pouring their hearts into making her dream a reality.

“Hey, guys,” I called out, gaining their attention. They turned towards me, tools in hand, their faces smudged with dust and sweat.

“Danny,” Dylan greeted, a hint of apprehension in his voice. Logan and Ryder merely nodded, their expressions mirroring Dylan’s. They were waiting for the other shoe to drop, I realized.

I decided to cut to the chase. “Rosie told me,” I stated simply.

Their faces drained of color, their eyes wide with surprise and fear. I could see the panic setting in, their bodies tensing up in anticipation of a confrontation.

“Relax,” I said, raising my hands in a placating gesture. “I’m not here to fight. I just... I wanted to tell you that I’m okay with it.”

Their shock was palpable. They shared a look, as if communicating without words. Finally, Dylan stepped forward. “You’re okay with it?” he asked, his voice filled with uncertainty.

“Yeah,” I said, meeting his gaze squarely. “I am.”

“But...” Logan began, only to be silenced by a glare from Ryder.

“We appreciate it, Danny,” Ryder said, his voice low and steady. “We didn’t want to hurt you. We just... we love her.”

“I know,” I responded, my heart aching for them. “And I can see that she loves you, too.”

Dylan let out a sigh of relief, his shoulders slumping. Logan looked like he was about to pass out, while Ryder merely nodded, his expression unreadable.

“I won’t pretend to understand it,” I confessed, running a hand through my hair. “But as long as you treat Rosie right, we won’t have a problem.”

Their nods were immediate, their determination clear. “We would never hurt her, Danny,” Dylan said, his voice filled with conviction. “We love her.”

“I know,” I said, my voice softer this time. “Just... take care of her, alright?”

“We will,” they chorused, their voices filled with resolve.

With that, I turned to leave, my heart lighter than it had been in days. Rosie’s secret was safe, and she was loved. What more could a big brother ask for? As I stepped out of the inn, I took a moment to glance back at the three men, watching as they returned to their work with renewed vigor. They were in this together, ready to face whatever came their way. And I was right there with them.

## Chapter 36

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Rosie

The aroma of fresh paint mingled with the salty ocean breeze, a testament to the hard work we'd put into restoring the Driftwood Dreams Inn. My eyes took in the grandeur of the renovated inn, and my heart swelled with pride. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were scattered around the space, their sweat and smiles evidence of our shared accomplishment. We had come a long way from the rundown structure that my aunt had left me.

Logan leaned against the door frame, his green eyes sparkling with satisfaction as he surveyed the finished space. "We've done a great job, haven't we?" he said, a proud grin tugging at the corners of his mouth.

"More than just a great job," Ryder replied, coming up behind him. His gray eyes twinkled as he looked at me, his gaze softening with a tender affection that made my heart flutter.

"We've created something beautiful here," Dylan chimed in, joining us. His muscular arms, stained with paint, crossed over

his chest, and his blue eyes were alight with the same sense of accomplishment.

“Something beautiful,” I echoed, my voice choked with emotion. I caught each of their gazes, my heart brimming with love for these men who’d become my everything. Our shared smiles, full of love and understanding, spoke volumes about the journey we’d embarked on together.

Dylan approached me, his large hand tenderly cupping my face. His touch ignited a familiar warmth, and I leaned into it, closing my eyes as I savored the moment. “This is just the beginning, Rosie,” he murmured, his voice soft but full of promise.

A soft chuckle pulled me out of my reverie, and I turned to see Logan grinning at us. “Can’t you two keep your hands off each other for a minute?” he teased, but his green eyes held no malice, only a fondness that warmed me to my core.

I rolled my eyes, laughing as I extricated myself from Dylan’s arms. “Says the man who couldn’t keep his hands off me in the kitchen yesterday,” I shot back, my voice laced with playful defiance.

Ryder’s laughter echoed in the room, and I turned to him, my eyes twinkling with mirth. “What about you, Ryder? Do you have any confessions to make?”

His smoky eyes met mine, a hint of a smirk playing on his lips. “Well, Rosie, there might be a few,” he said, his voice low and teasing. The glint in his eyes made my heart flutter, a silent promise of things to come.

We spent the rest of the day in high spirits, basking in the joy of our shared accomplishment. Our conversations were light and full of laughter, a stark contrast to the tense atmosphere that had enveloped us not too long ago. Our shared secret, now known to Danny, felt less like a burden and more like a testament to our bond.

As the day faded into night, we found ourselves in the master suite, the anticipation of our shared intimacy palpable in the air.

Dylan was the first to break the silence. “Rosie,” he began, his voice low and husky, “you’re breathtaking.”

His compliment sent a shiver down my spine, my heart pounding against my chest. I felt a rush of heat pool between my thighs, my body responding instinctively to his words.

Before I could respond, Logan moved behind me, his hands sliding around my waist. “He’s right, you know,” he murmured against my ear, his warm breath sending a jolt of desire coursing through me. “You’re a vision, Rosie.”

Ryder, ever the silent observer, moved closer. His gray eyes held a storm of emotions, the intensity making me gasp. He gently cupped my face, his thumb tracing my bottom lip. “You’re more than just a vision, Rosie,” he said softly. “You’re our reality.”

Their words were a catalyst, igniting a flame of desire that had been simmering just beneath the surface. Dylan’s lips found mine, his kiss a potent mix of sweetness and urgency. Logan’s hands began to roam over my body, each touch

sending sparks of pleasure coursing through me. Ryder's gaze never left mine, his eyes promising a night of pleasure and passion.

My dress was discarded, my bra and panties soon following. Their clothes were shed hastily, the urgency of our shared desire making us impatient. We moved towards the large bed, our bodies entwining in a dance as old as time.

Logan mouth moved towards me, his lips finding my hardened nipples, his tongue swirling around the sensitive peaks. I moaned, my hands tangling in his hair as he continued his sweet torture. His green eyes never left mine, the pleasure he derived from my reactions evident in his gaze. He chuckled against my skin, the vibrations sending shockwaves of pleasure through my body.

"Look at you, Rosie," Dylan murmured against my ear, his hand trailing down my body, his fingers finding my wet, swollen clit. "So beautiful... so fucking wet." His words were punctuated by a sharp thrust of his fingers, his thumb circling my clit in a torturous rhythm.

"Fuck," I gasped, my hips bucking against his hand, my walls clenching around his fingers. "More, Dylan... please."

Behind me, Ryder chuckled, his lips pressing against the sensitive spot on my neck. His cock was nestled between my ass cheeks, his hands kneading the soft flesh. "She wants more, Dylan," he drawled, his voice low and teasing. "Why don't we give her what she wants?"



Dylan pulled his fingers out, his lips capturing mine in a passionate kiss. His taste was intoxicating, the sensation of his tongue tangling with mine making me whimper. I could feel him hard against my thigh, his thick, hard cock begging for my attention.

Logan moved away from my breasts, his lips finding mine. His kiss was passionate, his tongue exploring my mouth. He pulled back, his green eyes sparkling with mischief. “Turn around, Rosie,” he ordered, his voice commanding yet gentle.

I complied, turning my back to Dylan. His hands immediately found my hips, guiding me onto his cock. I moaned as he entered me, his girth stretching me, filling me to the brim. “Dylan...” I whimpered, my head falling back onto his shoulder.

Ryder was behind me, his fingers sliding down my ass crack before teasing my puckered hole. He coated his fingers in my wetness before he pushed one finger inside, his thumb continuing to circle my clit. “Relax, Rosie,” he whispered, his lips brushing against my ear. “Let us take care of you.”

His finger was replaced by the head of his cock, the pressure causing me to gasp. He pushed in slowly, allowing me time to adjust to the feeling of being double penetrated. Once he was fully seated, he paused, his hands on my hips, his breathing heavy in my ear. “Are you okay, Rosie?” he asked, concern lacing his words.

I nodded, my eyes fluttering shut as I adjusted to the fullness. Dylan and Ryder began to move, their thrusts

coordinated, the sensation overwhelming me. I moaned, my hands gripping Dylan's arms, my nails digging into his flesh.

Logan watched us, his hand stroking his cock. His eyes were hooded, his gaze raking over our entwined bodies. He moved towards us, his hand finding my breast, his thumb brushing over my nipple. "You look so fucking beautiful, Rosie," he breathed, his voice hoarse with desire.

The room was filled with the sounds of our moans, the slap of skin against skin, the low growls of pleasure from the men. I was lost in the sensations, the pleasure building within me. Dylan's cock hitting my sweet spot, Logan's hand on my breast, Ryder's cock filling my ass. It was too much, the coil in my belly tightening.

"I... I'm close," I whimpered, my body trembling as I approached my climax.

Dylan's thrusts became more erratic, his cock hitting that sweet spot inside me with each thrust. "Cum for us, Rosie," he grunted, his fingers finding my clit. "Let us feel you."

That was all it took. I came with a cry, my body shaking with the force of my orgasm. My walls clamped down on Dylan's cock, triggering his own release. He groaned, his hot cum filling me.

Ryder followed soon after, his thrusts becoming more frantic as he sought his own release. With a final, deep thrust, he groaned, his own release filling my ass.

We collapsed onto the bed, our bodies tangled in a heap of spent desire. I was sandwiched between Dylan and Ryder, their cocks still buried inside me. Logan was still hard, his green eyes full of lust as he crawled between my legs. His cock replaced Dylan's, his slow thrusts reigniting the pleasure within me.

“Round two,” he growled, his hands gripping my hips as he began to move. His cock felt so good inside me, stretching me, filling me. I could still feel Dylan and Ryder, their cocks semi-hard against my skin.

I couldn't help but moan, my hands tangling in Logan's hair as he began to pick up the pace. “Logan,” I whimpered, my walls clamping down on his cock. His thrusts were hard and fast, his cock hitting that sweet spot with each thrust.

With a final, hard thrust, he groaned, his hot cum filling me. We lay there, panting and sweaty, the air filled with the scent of sex and desire. The night was far from over, our bodies still yearning for each other. As I drifted into a post-coital haze, I couldn't help but smile. I was in love with these men, and they were in love with me. Our love was passionate, raw, and so very real. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

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The next morning came, filled with the sweet cacophony of chirping birds and rustling leaves. As I walked down the inn's refurbished corridors, the creaking of the floorboards under

my feet echoed with memories. We'd built something more than an inn; we'd built a haven.

With the grand reopening just a week away, we found ourselves buried in an avalanche of challenges. The inn's operations were like a beast to be tamed. Yet, I was undeterred. Dylan, Logan, Ryder, and I had survived countless hurdles together, and we weren't about to let this one break us.

Ryder walked in with a handful of sketches. "We need to discuss the outdoor space before we move ahead," he said, a hint of exhaustion seeping into his tone.

I watched as Logan shifted through papers, his forehead furrowed in concentration. "And the finances," he added, glancing at me.

Dylan nodded in agreement, wiping his sweaty brow. "And we need to figure out how to deal with Landon."

Ah, Landon. Our unwanted guest who seemed hell-bent on revealing our secret. Yet, the fear of exposure only steeled our resolve.

"And we can't forget about maintaining a discreet public image," Dylan added, glancing at me with a softness that was reserved for our private moments. The notion that we had to suppress our feelings for each other in public felt like a cruel joke.

"Your dreams are our dreams," Logan had chimed in, his green eyes mirroring his sincerity. "The inn, our relationship... we'll protect it all."

And Ryder, the quietest among us, had looked at me, his gray eyes holding an ocean of promises. “Together,” he’d whispered. That one word held so much meaning for us. We’d overcome every obstacle, big or small, together. And we would continue to do so.

We were in this together. All of us. And no matter how tough the journey, no matter how high the stakes, we were determined to succeed.

For the next few days, our lives were consumed by the hustle and bustle of preparing for the grand opening of the inn. Dylan spent most of his time in the workshop, creating the final touches to the interior décor. His capable hands worked magic, crafting unique pieces that reflected our shared history and the love that flowed through every room of the inn.

Meanwhile, Logan buried himself in paperwork, sorting out finances and negotiating deals with vendors. Despite the serious frown that often marred his handsome features, there was a glimmer in his eyes, a testament to his love for challenges. “Numbers don’t lie, Rosie,” he’d often say, followed by a contagious laughter that made the dreariness of spreadsheets a bit more bearable.

And Ryder, he was everywhere, constantly moving, shaping, and adding life to the outdoor space. Under his watchful gaze, the gardens transformed into a sanctuary, blooming with flowers and humming with the sweet sound of chirping birds. His earthy presence and calm demeanor made even the hardest tasks seem easy.

As for me, I was the orchestrator, the conductor leading this symphony of chaos. With my sketchpad in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other, I navigated through the myriad of tasks, balancing designs, overseeing progress, and making endless lists.

In the midst of it all, we stole moments of togetherness. They came in various forms - a stolen kiss in the pantry, a lingering touch in the garden, a heated glance across the dinner table, a quiet conversation under the starlit sky. These moments of intimacy fueled our drive, igniting a passion that kept us moving forward.

One evening, after a particularly long day, we found ourselves in the living room. The sound of laughter filled the room as Dylan recounted a humorous incident involving a runaway goat and a flower bed. Despite the strain of the impending opening, the shared laughter lifted our spirits, echoing our unity and resolve.

“I don’t think I’ve ever worked so hard in my life,” Logan confessed, a touch of weariness in his voice. Yet, his smile was bright, and his eyes twinkled with excitement.

“And I wouldn’t trade it for anything else,” Dylan said, grinning at me. His words resonated in the room, echoing our shared sentiment. This project was more than just an inn; it was a symbol of our love and dedication.

Ryder leaned back, studying us through half-lidded eyes. He remained quiet, a hint of a smile on his lips. His silence wasn’t unsettling; instead, it was comforting, mirroring our collective

thoughts and emotions. “Neither would I,” he finally spoke, his voice deep and soothing.

His simple words held an unspoken promise. We’d fight for our love, for our inn, and for our dreams. And no matter what came our way, we’d face it together, stronger than ever. Despite the uncertainty that lingered like a shadow, we knew we had each other, and that was enough to conquer anything.

As the waning sunset painted the sky in shades of pink and orange, we sat in the garden. Their arms were around me, our fingers interlaced, and our hearts beating in rhythm. The sense of shared anticipation was palpable as we spoke of the grand opening, our laughter punctuating the silence of the twilight. Despite the occasional worries that loomed on the horizon, the shared camaraderie was a comforting presence, a constant reminder that we were not alone in this journey.

The grand reopening of the inn was not just a dream anymore; it was a reality we were ready to embrace, armed with our shared passion and unwavering determination. With these men by my side, I knew we could face anything. Together, we were invincible. We were not just renovating an inn; we were building a life, a love that transcended the norms, a testament to our undying devotion to each other.

## Chapter 37

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Rosie

Sunlight poured through the windows of Driftwood Dreams Inn, casting an inviting glow on the freshly painted walls. A hum of excitement tingled through my veins, a welcome distraction from the nerves knotting my stomach. The day we had all been working towards loomed near. Tomorrow was the day: the grand reopening party.

Dylan was hunched over a table in the corner, meticulously carving a delicate design into a piece of wood that would be a centerpiece. His intense focus was alluring, the way his strong fingers cradled the chisel, the muscles in his forearm flexing with each precise movement.

Across the room, Logan was pouring over financial papers, his striking green eyes narrowed in concentration. His intelligent mind, usually filled with charm and flirtatious banter, was dialed in, double checking every number and every detail. I admired his dedication.

Near the grand archway leading to the garden, Ryder was immersed in his world of flora. His curly hair, slightly tousled



from his efforts, reflected the rays of sunlight filtering in. The calm and composed look on his face mirrored the tranquility he brought to my life.

Feeling their supportive presence in the room, I approached Dylan, smiling at the exquisite design forming under his expert touch.

“It’s beautiful,” I praised, reaching out to gently brush a speck of sawdust off his cheek. Dylan looked up at me, his piercing blue eyes softening with affection.

“Nothing less for our Rosie,” he replied, his tone sincere, igniting a warmth that spread through my heart. I planted a kiss on his cheek before heading towards Logan.

“You’ve got the finances covered?” I asked, peeking over his shoulder at the documents spread across the table. Logan glanced up at me, a mischievous glint in his eyes.

“Don’t you worry, Rosie. The only numbers you need to concern yourself with tonight are the ratings we’re going to get from the guests for this fabulous party,” he joked, reaching out to tug at a loose curl that had escaped my updo.

Feeling reassured, I moved on to Ryder, who was fussing over an arrangement of flowers. His fingers delicately pruned the vibrant blossoms, each one chosen with care to compliment the ambiance of the inn.

“These flowers are enchanting,” I whispered, inhaling their intoxicating scent. Ryder gave me a small, genuine smile, his gray eyes gleaming with pride.

“Wait till you see the garden,” he said, the promise in his words sending a thrill of anticipation through me.

We were more than friends. We were partners in love and in life, and Driftwood Dreams Inn was our shared passion project. The nervous energy of the morning turned into a flurry of activity, each of us busying ourselves with last-minute preparations, occasionally sharing a reassuring touch or an encouraging word. It was these moments of unity, shared smiles and laughter, that held us together.

When the afternoon light started to fade, the inn sparkled with renewed grandeur, the evidence of our hard work, dedication, and love evident in every corner. As we stood together in the heart of the inn we’d poured our hearts into, there was a palpable feeling of accomplishment, but also of anticipation.

We had prepared as much as we could. Now, it was time to open our doors and share our vision, our dream, with the rest of the town. The grand reopening party was no longer a distant event; it was here, a few hours away. And we were ready.

Satisfied with our work, we took a moment to rest, stealing away to the inn’s private quarters, away from the anticipation and looming event. We huddled together on the grand canopy bed that overlooked the ocean, seeking solace in each other’s presence.

“We’ve done an incredible job,” Dylan’s voice broke the silence. His hand instinctively found mine, lacing our fingers together.

“That we have,” Logan echoed, his arm wrapping around my waist. His lips brushed the shell of my ear, eliciting a shiver down my spine.

“I hope they love it as much as we do,” I murmured, looking from Dylan to Logan and finally resting my gaze on Ryder, who was sitting at the foot of the bed, pencil in hand, sketching the view from the window.

“I think they will, Rosie,” Ryder replied without looking up, his attention still on his sketch. “We poured our hearts into this place, and it shows.”

The room filled with a silence that was comforting rather than unsettling. We took a moment to simply bask in each other’s presence, allowing the quiet intimacy to wash over us. My heart fluttered with warmth and appreciation for these incredible men, their unwavering support, and our shared journey.

Dylan’s fingers traced a gentle path up my arm, goosebumps prickling my skin. I turned to look at him, my heart swelling at the affectionate gaze he offered. He leaned in, pressing a lingering kiss to my lips, heat pooling low in my belly.

My focus shifted as Logan’s hand grazed the curve of my waist, drawing me closer to him. He brushed his lips against my neck, his hot breath sending shivers down my spine. I could feel the heat of him against me, a delightful reminder of the intimate connection we shared.

My gaze locked with Ryder’s, his eyes smoky under the afternoon sun. His pencil stopped moving, and he closed the

distance between us, his fingers lightly grazing my cheek, before he tilted my head and captured my lips with his, stirring a fiery need within me.

This was us. A complicated tangle of emotions and desires, yet beautifully simple in our shared love and understanding. In these stolen moments, our bond deepened, growing stronger with each passing second. We were a tapestry of love, support, and companionship, woven together by shared dreams and ambitions.

The air became thick with unspoken words and shared looks. Our intimacy was palpable, creating a sanctuary amidst the looming chaos. It was these shared intimate moments that saw us through the trials, pulling us closer, reinforcing our resolve.

Despite the thrill of the impending event, there was an undercurrent of tension, an unspoken fear that shadowed our excitement. But in that moment, huddled together, stealing kisses and sharing soft touches, the threat felt insignificant.

Our bond had grown stronger, our resolve unwavering. The Driftwood Dreams Inn was more than just a business venture. It was a symbol of our relationship, our unity. Whatever judgment or scrutiny we would face, we'd stand strong, unyielding. We had built this inn and our love together. It was us against the world, and we were ready.

The prospect of revealing our relationship to the town heightened our anxiety. There was a sense of trepidation in the air, but our resolution was stronger. We were a united front,

supporting each other and ready to face the judgment and consequences together.

Dylan broke the silence, his voice steady. “We’ve come a long way. It’s not just about the inn anymore, it’s about us. Our relationship.” He squeezed my hand gently, a silent reassurance.

“You’re right,” Logan chimed in, his voice firm. “We’ve built something beautiful here, not just the inn, but us.”

A quiet strength radiated from Ryder as he simply nodded, his gray eyes full of determination. His quiet resolve was as much a part of him as his dry wit, and it was a comfort in the face of our shared apprehension.

The support and unity I felt in that moment bolstered my own resolve. “I couldn’t have done this without you guys,” I admitted, my voice thick with emotion. “You’re not just my partners in this project. You’re my partners in life.”

Dylan’s smile was soft, but his eyes held a fierce determination. “We’re with you, Rosie. All the way.”

Logan’s hand slipped into mine, his fingers interlacing with mine in a comforting squeeze. “We’re in this together. Whatever comes, we face it as one.”

Ryder, ever the quiet one, simply reached out to gently brush a strand of hair from my face, his touch light but full of meaning. “We’ve got this, Rosie.”

Their words, their unwavering support, their unyielding resolve...it was all I needed. I was ready to face whatever

came our way, knowing that I had three amazing men by my side.

With a deep breath, I let out a sigh of relief, a small smile tugging at my lips. “Let’s do this,” I said, a newfound confidence surging through me.

The room echoed with our shared determination, a sense of unity filling the space. It was us against the world, and we were ready.

Gathering my resolve, I rose from the bed and turned to face my partners. “Let’s get to work, guys,” I announced, trying to inject some energy into my voice.

With an approving nod from Dylan, Logan and Ryder, we ventured back to the heart of the inn, which was slowly transforming into a party haven. With everything falling into place, I could finally breathe a sigh of relief. “We’re almost there, guys,” I announced, looking around at the faces of the men I loved. Their nods of agreement brought a smile to my face, my heart swelling with pride at what we’d accomplished together.

“We’ve got this, Rosie,” Dylan reassured me, pulling me into a quick embrace. His strength, his calm demeanor, they always served as a grounding force in the chaos.

“And even if things don’t go perfectly, we’re in this together,” Logan chimed in, his hand finding mine, giving it a reassuring squeeze. His charisma, his light-heartedness, always managed to lift my spirits.

“And remember, no matter what, we’re proud of you, Rosie,” Ryder added, his quiet voice resonating with sincerity. His steady presence, his introspective nature, always provided a comforting sense of stability.

I smiled at them, their words providing the reassurance I needed. With one final look around the inn, the culmination of our hard work and dedication, I knew we were ready.

## Chapter 38

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Rosie

The first rays of sunlight peeked through the lace curtains, casting a soft glow across the room. I blinked open my eyes, taking in the sight of Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, all sound asleep, their bodies tangled together in a warm cocoon of sheets. A lump formed in my throat as I studied their peaceful faces, a stark contrast to the turmoil of emotions churning within me.

“Morning, Rosie,” Dylan’s sleepy voice broke the silence, his piercing blue eyes meeting mine. He reached out, his fingers gently tucking a loose strand of hair behind my ear. “Nervous?”

I gave him a small smile, tracing the freckles scattered across his nose. “Just a little.”

Logan stirred next, his green eyes blinking open. He let out a soft yawn, stretching his lean body before turning to me. “You’re not alone, Rosie. We’re all in this together.”



I glanced at Ryder, who had just woken up. He was silent, his smoky gray eyes thoughtful as he watched us. He had always been the quiet one, but his silence often spoke volumes.

“We’ve got your back, Rosie,” Ryder finally spoke, his voice low and steady. “No matter what happens, we’re with you.”

The reassurance in their words warmed me from the inside, strengthening my resolve. I knew then, more than ever, that we were ready to face the day.

“We’re going to do this,” I said, determination steeling my voice. “And we’re going to do it together.”

They nodded, their expressions mirroring my own. This was our moment, our day, and we were ready to face it head-on, no matter what came our way.

The morning slipped into a flurry of activity as we began to prepare for the party. Friends from town trickled in, their faces alight with excitement and curiosity. Laughter and chatter filled the inn, the air thick with anticipation.

The inn was buzzing with life, a stark contrast to the desolate structure it had been. As I looked around, I couldn’t help but feel a surge of pride. We had breathed life back into the Driftwood Dreams Inn, turning it into a beacon of hope and love.

Viv was in the kitchen, her fiery red hair bouncing as she moved with an energy that was infectious. “Rosie, I need you to taste this,” she called out, holding out a spoonful of what

looked like a chocolate mousse. I walked over, my heart fluttering with anticipation and excitement.

The moment the sweet concoction hit my tongue, I closed my eyes, letting out a sigh of pleasure. “Viv, this is heavenly.”

Viv chuckled, her blue eyes twinkling behind her glasses. “I thought you’d like it. It’s your favorite, after all.”

Dylan was busy in the corner, hammering away at a last-minute fixture. The sound of his tool hitting the wood echoed in the room, blending with the chatter and laughter. He looked up, meeting my gaze. His blue eyes were filled with warmth, and he flashed me a grin that sent butterflies fluttering in my stomach.

“Everything’s coming together nicely, isn’t it?” Logan asked, sidling up to me. He had a glass of champagne in his hand, the golden liquid sparkling under the soft lights.

“It is,” I replied, taking a sip from the glass he offered. “I couldn’t have done it without you guys.”

Ryder was in the garden, surrounded by a sea of flowers. He was deep in conversation with Marilyn, their heads bent over a sketchpad. I could see him gesturing, his hand moving fluidly as he explained his design.

“I’m telling you, Marilyn,” Ryder said, his voice carrying over to where I stood. “These hydrangeas are going to look amazing in the spring.”

Marilyn nodded, her green eyes sparkling with interest. “I can’t wait to see it, dear.”

I watched them, my heart swelling with gratitude. We had come a long way, and it was all thanks to the people who had believed in us, who had supported us. Our friends, our family, they were our pillars of strength, and I couldn't be more grateful.

As the day wore on, the inn began to transform. The once dilapidated building was now a haven of warmth and love. Each room was filled with laughter and chatter, the air thick with anticipation. It was a sight to behold, a testament to our hard work and dedication.

As I looked around, I felt a surge of pride. We had done it. We had brought the Driftwood Dreams Inn back to life. And as the sun began to set, casting long shadows across the room, I knew that we were ready. Ready to face whatever came our way, together.

There was a lightness to the day, a heady mix of nerves and elation that was contagious. Viv was darting around, her quick wit cutting through the tension as she regaled us with tales from the bakery. Marilyn had somehow turned into the party planner, ordering the hired staff around with a firm but gentle hand. Rick, too, was on hand, his trusty toolbox by his side, always ready to help.

Logan was weaving his way through the crowd, a charming smile on his face as he engaged the early arrivals in conversation. I saw him pause by Mrs. Johnson, our resident gossip, and charm her with his wit, eliciting a burst of laughter from the older woman.

The inn was bustling with life, a testament to the hard work and love we had poured into it. Everywhere I looked, there were reminders of our journey—the new wallpaper that Logan and I had spent an entire day choosing, the renovated staircase that Dylan had painstakingly worked on, the blossoming garden that was a testament to Ryder’s dedication and talent.

And in every corner, every crevice of the inn, there was us. A silent, secret love story etched into the walls, invisible to others but as clear as day to us. Our shared glances, the soft brush of hands as we moved around each other, it was our language, our own silent symphony amidst the clamor of the day.

“Dylan, these tables look amazing,” I heard Viv’s voice from the corner where she was arranging a lavish spread of her best pastries.

“Thanks, Viv,” Dylan’s voice was humble, but the pride in his eyes was unmistakable.

“You really outdid yourself, Ryder. The garden looks magical,” Marilyn said, admiration lacing her words.

Ryder merely shrugged, his gaze soft on the woman who had been a part of the inn longer than any of us. “Couldn’t have done it without your advice, Marilyn.”

Their praises, their acceptance of the men I loved, felt like a warm embrace. It bolstered my spirits, made me feel seen, understood, and loved. The day was going by in a beautiful, joyous blur, and as I glanced at my boys, their faces reflecting

my happiness, my heart swelled with an emotion so intense it took my breath away.

Throughout the day, I stole moments with each of them, shared secret smiles and whispers that were just ours. Logan squeezed my hand reassuringly as he passed by, Dylan stole a sweet kiss when we found ourselves alone in the hallway, and Ryder, ever the quiet one, simply enveloped me in a hug that said more than words ever could. They were my rock, my fortress against the storm that we knew was coming.

The camaraderie, the love, the unity - it was all there, a palpable entity. And as the inn filled up with more and more people, our confidence grew. The collective energy, the vibrancy was heartwarming. The threat of exposure, of scandal, seemed distant in the face of the warmth that surrounded us.

There was still a hurdle to cross, an announcement to make, but looking around at the friends who had become family, I knew we could face it. We could face anything, as long as we were together. As the sun dipped lower, casting long shadows, we shared a look, an unspoken agreement passing between us. The guests were beginning to arrive, marking the beginning of the long-awaited party, and we were ready, more than ever, to embrace our future.

I looked at my boys - Dylan, his face flushed with pride as he showcased his craftsmanship; Logan, his green eyes sparkling with excitement as he entertained the guests; Ryder, his gaze soft as he watched over us, the corners of his mouth

turned up in a gentle smile. My heart clenched with love and an indescribable sense of rightness. This was it. This was our moment.

“Rosie,” Logan whispered, his voice barely audible over the din of the crowd. He reached for my hand, squeezing it reassuringly. “Are you ready?”

I took a deep breath, looking at the room filled with familiar faces, friends who had become family. I glanced at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, their expressions calm and encouraging. The butterflies in my stomach fluttered nervously, but I squeezed Logan’s hand back, offering him a shaky smile.

“I’m ready,” I said, my voice stronger than I felt.

And with that, we turned to face our guests, our friends, our family. As the party kicked off, marking the grand reopening of Driftwood Dreams Inn, we braced ourselves for the reactions, the judgments, and the whispers.

We were ready to share our story, to reveal our truth. No matter what happened, we knew we had each other. And that was all that mattered.

“Let’s do this,” I whispered, looking at each of them. Dylan, Logan, and Ryder nodded, their faces a mirror of my own determination.

## Chapter 39

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Rosie

The laughter and chatter of the party began to dim as the clock struck nine. The grand chandelier hanging from the ceiling bathed the room in a warm, golden glow, and the sounds of soft jazz music played in the background. It was time. I took a deep breath, my hand still intertwined with Dylan's, and glanced at Logan and Ryder, who had subtly moved closer.

"I have an announcement to make," I said, my voice carrying across the room. The music faded into silence, and all eyes turned to me. The tension in the room spiked, but I stood my ground, my heart pounding in my chest. "Many of you know that the Driftwood Dreams Inn holds a special place in my heart. It's more than just a business venture. It's a symbol of love, hard work, and dreams. Dreams that I've shared with three incredible men."

I felt Dylan squeeze my hand reassuringly, and I glanced at him, drawing strength from his unwavering support. I then

looked at Logan and Ryder, their expressions filled with admiration and affection.

“Logan, Ryder, and Dylan,” I continued, “Have been more than just partners in this venture. They’ve been my rocks, my pillars of strength, my...” I paused, swallowing the lump in my throat. “My loves.”

The room fell into a stunned silence. I could see the surprise on many faces, the confusion on others. I saw Viv’s eyes widen in shock before a slow smile spread across her face. I noticed Marilyn, her green eyes thoughtful, and Rick, his kind brown eyes filled with understanding.

“Is she saying...?” I heard someone whisper, their voice barely audible over the pounding in my ears.

“Yes,” I said, my voice stronger than I felt. “I’m in love with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. We are in love with each other. It’s unconventional, yes. It’s different, and it’s not what many of you are used to. But it’s real. It’s beautiful. And it’s ours.”

As I finished speaking, the room stayed silent. I held my breath, bracing myself for the reaction.

“It’s true,” Dylan spoke up from behind me, his voice echoing my conviction. “We love Rosie. All three of us. It’s not something we chose or controlled. It just happened. And we are not ashamed of it.”

There was silence. Then Viv’s voice rang out, strong and unwavering, “I for one, am proud of you, Rosie! And if



anyone here has a problem with it, they'll have to answer to me!"

Viv's statement sparked reactions throughout the room. Vanessa, another longtime friend, stood up and raised her glass. "To Rosie, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, for their courage to live and love authentically."

Despite the mixed reactions, there was a sense of respect. The four of us had always been fixtures in the town. We were part of its heartbeat. As people began to digest the revelation, conversations buzzed around. It wasn't acceptance from everyone, not yet. But it was a start.

After the initial flurry of reactions, Dylan pulled me into a hug, Logan joined us, followed by Ryder. The genuine love and happiness that radiated from us in that moment seemed to permeate the room. Yes, it was an unconventional love. But it was our love, and we were ready to stand for it, together.

As we broke away from our group hug, I looked around the room, taking in the mixed expressions on everyone's faces. The initial shock had worn off, and now, the room was abuzz with hushed whispers and shared glances. I could see Mrs. Johnson, a well-respected elder in our town, whispering to Marilyn. Her eyes met mine, and she gave me a small nod, a glimmer of acceptance in her gaze.

Rick, the town's handyman and a good friend, approached us with a warm smile. "Well, I can't say I saw that coming, but love is love," he said, his gaze moving from me to Dylan, Logan, and Ryder. "And you four seem to have plenty of it."

“Thank you, Rick,” Dylan replied, his voice thick with emotion. “That means a lot to us.”

Before Rick could respond, Viv bounded over, her fiery curls bouncing with each step. “Rosie, you’re amazing! I’ve never seen anyone as brave as you,” she exclaimed, pulling me into a tight hug.

Logan chuckled, wrapping an arm around Viv. “Well, she did have some help,” he said, gesturing towards himself, Dylan, and Ryder.

Viv rolled her eyes, but there was a smile playing on her lips. “Yes, yes, you three are amazing too.”

Just as I was about to turn away, Landon stepped out of the shadows, his sharp blue eyes fixed on us. A cold shiver ran down my spine as he walked towards us, a smirk playing on his lips.

“Quite the announcement, Rosie,” he said, his voice oozing with insincerity. “I must say, I didn’t expect such... unconventional news.”

I felt Dylan’s grip on my hand tighten, and I squeezed back, a silent promise that we were in this together.

“Love doesn’t have to be conventional, Landon,” I replied, holding his gaze. “It just has to be true.”

He chuckled, crossing his arms over his chest. “True love, is it? And how do you plan to manage that? Splitting your time, your affection, your... attention between three men?”

The insinuation in his words was clear, and a ripple of anger coursed through me. But I wasn't about to let him rattle me. Not tonight.

“I don't need to explain myself to you, Landon,” I retorted, my voice steady. “Our relationship, as unusual as it may be, is none of your business.”

His smirk faltered, and for a moment, I saw a flicker of surprise in his eyes. But it was quickly replaced by a steely determination.

“Well, Rosie,” he said, his tone laced with bitterness. “I just hope you know what you're getting yourself into.”

With that, he turned on his heel and walked away, leaving a tense silence in his wake. I watched him go, a knot of unease forming in my stomach. But then, I felt a hand on my shoulder, and I turned to see Logan standing beside me, his green eyes filled with concern.

“Don't let him get to you, Rosie,” he said, his voice soft. “We knew not everyone would understand.”

I nodded, forcing a smile. “I know, Logan. And I'm okay with that. As long as I have you, Dylan, and Ryder, I can handle anything.”

His smile was warm, and he pulled me into a hug, his arms wrapping around me in a comforting embrace. As I looked over his shoulder, I saw Dylan and Ryder watching us, their faces reflecting the same resolve.

As the night wore on, Landon's words became a distant memory, drowned out by the laughter and warmth that filled the room. We had faced our first challenge, and we had come out stronger. As long as we had each other, we were invincible.

"You were amazing," Dylan said, wrapping an arm around my waist. His eyes were warm, and there was an undeniable pride in his voice. Logan and Ryder were right behind him, their faces echoing the same sentiment.

"You should've seen their faces, Rosie," Ryder grinned, his smoky gray eyes twinkling. "You left them speechless."

A light laugh escaped my lips, the tension in my shoulders easing. I looked around the room, at the faces that had gone from shocked to understanding, from judgmental to accepting. And there, standing with my partners - my lovers, my best friends - I felt a warmth spread through me. It wasn't the all-consuming fire of passion, nor the soothing comfort of friendship. It was a mix of the two, a feeling so profound and overwhelming that it left me breathless.

"This is just the beginning," Logan said, pulling me closer. His voice was low, the corners of his lips curling into a smile.

"Of our love?" I asked, meeting his gaze.

"Of our love," he confirmed, pressing a kiss to my forehead. "And our lives together."

## Chapter 40

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Rosie

The sun rose on Azure Cove, painting the town in hues of gold and pink. The town was awake and humming with chatter, all of it centered around the grand reopening of Driftwood Dreams Inn and the unexpected announcement from the night before.

Sitting at the breakfast table with Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I watched as the morning unfolded, our faces still tingling from the remnants of last night's confession. It felt liberating to be open about our love for each other, to not hide our affection, to be just... us.

Yet, the apprehension of how the town would react to our relationship remained. The buzz from the grand reopening party had permeated into every corner of Azure Cove. From Mrs. Gilmore, the town gossip, whispering at the grocery store, to Mr. Bennett, the barber, discussing it with his customers, our revelation was the talk of the town.

The bell above the entrance jingled, announcing the arrival of a group of townsfolk. I glanced over, catching snippets of

hushed conversations. I braced myself, but instead of the anticipated disdain, I found an array of reactions - shock, disbelief, acceptance, and yes, a few glares of disapproval.

Dylan, ever the protective one, immediately reached out, gently squeezing my hand under the table. I felt his steady strength flow into me, anchoring me amidst the brewing storm. Ryder and Logan, too, shared looks of quiet support, their presence reassuring.

Logan cleared his throat, standing to face the room. "Morning, everyone. You've probably heard the rumors. They're true." His gaze met each person's, unwavering and firm.

I saw Dylan rise beside Logan, a hint of defiance in his blue eyes. "We love Rosie. All of us. It's unusual, we know, but it's our truth."

A murmur swept through the room, but Logan continued. "We aren't asking for your approval, just your understanding."

Finally, Ryder, our strong, silent pillar, stood. His voice echoed with quiet conviction. "We care about this town, its people, and most of all, Rosie. We won't let anyone hurt her."

Silence reigned, their declarations hanging heavy in the air. I watched as faces softened, shoulders relaxed, and acceptance seeped in. This was Azure Cove, our town, and though we were different, we were still part of it. Our love was unconventional, but it was real. It was powerful. And no one could deny that.

The three men took their seats, their gazes meeting mine. A surge of love rushed through me, and I couldn't help the smile that graced my lips. Together, we faced the aftermath, ready to brave the whispers, the judgments, and the opinions.

As if on cue, the door swung open, revealing Viv, a beacon of vivacity with her flaming red curls, and Vanessa, the embodiment of grace with her serene smile. They marched in, their heads held high. A sense of determination shimmered around them, instantly commanding the attention of the room.

“Oh, my goodness! Can we get some breakfast over here, or are we all too busy staring?” Viv announced, her voice reverberating across the room, breaking the tense silence.

Everyone's eyes turned towards her, and a chuckle rumbled through the crowd. The corners of Vanessa's lips curled into a smile. She stood beside Viv, a perfect juxtaposition of Viv's loud vivaciousness with her calming elegance.

“I believe there are some whispers going around. Are they about the Driftwood Dreams Inn's fantastic renovation, or is it something else?” Vanessa inquired, feigning ignorance.

“Oh, Vanessa, I think you missed it. There was quite the confession last night.” Viv stage-whispered, eliciting a ripple of laughter.

“And here I thought it was just about Rosie's phenomenal redesigning skills.” Vanessa joined in.

Dylan chuckled, leaning back into his chair, while Logan's eyes twinkled with unshed laughter. Ryder shook his head, a

slow smile spreading across his face. The tension seemed to ebb away, replaced by the familiar camaraderie.

“But since we are talking about it, isn’t love the most beautiful thing? It’s like the inn. Old, worn out, but then you give it a little attention, pour your heart into it, and look how it blooms!” Viv said, gesturing around, her voice softening.

“And it doesn’t matter if it’s a bit unusual. Unusual love can be beautiful too,” Vanessa added, her gaze sweeping over us, her eyes shining with support.

In that moment, I felt a swell of gratitude for these two amazing women. They were more than just friends; they were family, our family. And having them stand up for us meant the world.

I caught Dylan’s eye across the table, his face softened with relief and gratitude. Logan gave a small nod, a silent ‘thank you’, and Ryder... he just smiled, a genuine, heartfelt smile that was worth more than a thousand words.

Our declaration might have come as a shock, but with Viv and Vanessa’s unwavering support, we felt fortified. The whispers and judgment that seemed so threatening earlier suddenly felt less daunting.

As the day progressed, we fell into a comfortable rhythm, moving around the inn with an ease that was hard-earned. The inn was abuzz with townsfolk, some curious, some supportive, and some still taken aback by our revelation. Yet, we moved around them with an unspoken confidence, our bond evident in every shared look, every touch, every word.



As the sun began to set, casting long shadows across the room, I couldn't help but feel a sense of calm wash over me. We were still in the eye of the storm, yet there was an undeniable sense of peace.

I glanced around the room, taking in the faces of the men I loved. Dylan, his blue eyes soft with affection. Logan, his green eyes twinkling with a hint of mischief. And Ryder, his grey eyes warm with quiet understanding.

In the soft glow of the setting sun, we shared a moment of tranquility. A moment that spoke volumes of our shared past, our present, and the uncertain future that lay ahead.

Dylan broke the silence, his voice gentle. "Remember when we first walked into this place? It was falling apart, much like us."

A soft chuckle escaped Logan's lips. "Yeah, we were a mess. But look at us now."

Ryder nodded, his gaze on our entwined hands. "We've come a long way."

"And we'll keep going," I added, my voice resolute.

The room fell silent once again, our words echoing the promise we had made to each other. A promise of unity, of resilience, of undying love.

## Chapter 41

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Rosie

“**R**osie, the cinnamon rolls are done!” Dylan called from the kitchen, the sweet smell of fresh baked goods wafting through the inn. His culinary skills had turned breakfast into the most popular meal at Driftwood Dreams, our guests setting their alarms just to indulge in his homemade pastries.

“Alright, I’m coming,” I hollered back, finishing up with the check-in of our latest guest, a couple who’d driven all the way from Colorado to bask in the inn’s reputation and the idyllic Azure Cove. Their wide-eyed admiration for the inn and our home-made decor filled me with a warmth only rivaled by Dylan’s freshly baked cinnamon rolls.

In the kitchen, Dylan, Logan, and Ryder were in their usual state of organized chaos. Dylan at the oven, donning an apron smeared with flour, Ryder setting up plates, and Logan fiddling with the espresso machine. Despite the morning rush, their smiles never faded, laughter echoed off the warm, rustic walls of our kitchen.

I approached Dylan, reaching up to brush a rogue curl off his forehead. “How are the new recipes coming along?”

His eyes twinkled as he turned to me. “Wait until you taste these, Rosie.” He handed me a warm roll, its cinnamon scent heavenly. I bit into it, my taste buds singing praises at the explosion of flavors. I nodded my approval, my mouth too full to articulate it.

From across the room, Logan chimed in, “Ryder and I managed to fix the water pressure in the east wing.”

“And?” Ryder prompted, looking over from his plate-setting duties.

“And,” Logan chuckled, his eyes meeting mine, “We got the rose bushes planted by the gazebo. Thought you’d like that.”

My heart fluttered, knowing he remembered my offhand comment about wanting to have a rose garden. Ryder’s nod, a soft smile tugging at his lips, confirmed they’d both been in on the surprise.

The bell over the front door jingled, announcing the arrival of more guests. With a shared glance and smiles, we all dove back into our duties. The charm of the inn wasn’t just in the restored architecture or the stunning views, but in us, the hosts who poured love into every detail.

As I greeted the newcomers, I couldn’t help but look back at my partners - each in their element, doing what they loved for the inn we cherished. It was in that moment I realized, the Driftwood Dreams Inn wasn’t just flourishing because of its

appeal, but because of our unity, our shared dreams and our love - for each other, for our guests, and for our home.

As the day unfurled, the rhythm of the inn beat on. Dylan had moved from the kitchen to the workshop, his skilled hands restoring a weathered armoire we had discovered in the attic. The soft sound of sandpaper against wood filled the air, intermingling with the distant murmur of the ocean.

“Hey, Rosie,” he called, not taking his eyes off the wood. “Can you hand me the varnish?”

I passed him the canister, my fingers brushing against his calloused ones. He flashed me a grateful smile, his eyes never leaving his work. I watched him, fascinated by his meticulous precision and devotion. It was Dylan’s handiwork that brought a certain warmth to the inn, his craftsmanship visible in every corner.

Later, I found Logan in the office, his brow furrowed in concentration as he went through the books. Numbers were his forte, his business acumen keeping the inn’s finances afloat. His fingers danced across the calculator, punching in numbers and making notes.

“I think we should consider adding a dining package for the guests,” he suggested, glancing up at me. “It’ll help boost our profits.”

I nodded, impressed by his forward thinking. “That’s a great idea, Logan. I’ll speak to Dylan about it. Maybe he can whip up a few specialty dishes for the package.”

Just outside, Ryder was hard at work, tending to the gardens that bloomed with a variety of vibrant colors. He knelt in the dirt, his hands delicately arranging a new batch of daisies by the pathway. His work brought life to the inn's exterior, turning the property into a picturesque haven.

“You know,” he began, wiping his brow with the back of his hand. “We could use some hanging baskets on the porch. Add a little more green.”

“I think that's wonderful, Ryder,” I said, picturing the cascading flowers. “I can't wait to see it.”

Each of us had our roles, our strengths that came together to create a perfect symphony of harmony within the Driftwood Dreams Inn. Our unity, our shared responsibilities, our unwavering commitment was the inn's heartbeat. We were a well-oiled machine, each of us a cog that kept the inn not only running but thriving. It was an equilibrium that worked for us, that mirrored our own relationship.

But relationships, like any machine, required constant maintenance. We had our fair share of disagreements and misunderstandings, all part of the ebb and flow of life. Yet, with every conflict, we emerged stronger, more resilient.

The rest of the evening passed in a blur of laughter, shared memories, and heartfelt words. The connection between us was palpable, our shared love a tangible force in the room. As the night deepened, we retired to our shared bedroom, our bodies entwining.

As Dylan's calloused hands traced the contours of my body, Logan's fingers danced on my skin, eliciting shivers of anticipation. Ryder's smoky eyes watched me with an intensity that made my heart race. Their touches were tender yet filled with a raw, primal need that left me breathless. The room filled with soft sighs and whispered words of love, each touch, each kiss igniting a flame that threatened to consume us.

Their love for me was a tangible force, their touches a testament to our shared journey, our shared dreams, and our shared love. As our bodies moved in harmony, I realized that this was more than just physical. It was an expression of our unity, our shared bond, and our love for each other. The passion that consumed us was just a physical manifestation of the love that ran deep in our hearts. And as I surrendered to the waves of pleasure, I knew that I was home.

Dylan's hands roamed my body, the touch of his roughened fingers on my skin setting me aflame. I could feel his cock, hard and insistent against my thigh, the anticipation of him inside me sending a jolt of desire through my core. His blue eyes, usually so calm, were now clouded with desire. "You're so beautiful, Rosie," he whispered, his voice rough with need.

I felt the soft press of his lips on my neck, trailing a hot path down to my breasts. His tongue flicked over my hardened nipples, the sensation causing my back to arch off the bed. "I love how you taste," he murmured, his voice muffled against my skin. His hands cupped my breasts, his thumbs rubbing my nipples in slow circles.

Meanwhile, Logan moved behind me, his fingers trailing down my spine, sending shivers through me. He cupped my breasts from behind, his thumbs brushing over my nipples, causing them to harden instantly. His other hand moved lower, finding the wetness between my thighs. “God, you’re so wet for us, Rosie,” he groaned, slipping two fingers inside me, causing me to gasp.

His thumb found my clit, rubbing in tight circles, matching the rhythm of his thrusts. The pleasure was so intense it was almost too much, my body shaking with need. “You like that, Rosie?” he asked, his voice thick with arousal.

“Yes, Logan,” I moaned, my voice shaky. His cock pressed against my ass, his tip teasing my entrance. I bucked against him, craving more.

Ryder watched us, his gray eyes dark with desire. He slowly undressed, his gaze never leaving us. His cock was already hard, standing proud against his stomach. He moved towards us, his hands finding my hips, his fingers digging into my flesh. “Let us take care of you, Rosie,” he murmured, pressing a kiss to the back of my neck.

He pushed his cock inside me, stretching me deliciously. His thrusts were slow and deliberate, every movement sending a wave of pleasure coursing through me. I felt filled, every part of me consumed by the sensations they were creating.

Dylan captured my lips in a searing kiss, his tongue tangling with mine as his hands moved lower, finding my clit. He began to stroke it in time with Logan’s thrusts, the dual

sensation driving me to the edge. I moaned into his mouth, my hands clutching at his broad shoulders.

Logan pulled his fingers from me, replacing them with his cock. He slid into me easily, my wetness coating him. I gasped at the feeling of him filling me, my walls clenching around him. “Fuck, Rosie,” he groaned, beginning to move in slow, deliberate strokes.

“God, Rosie,” Dylan breathed, his fingers continuing their assault on my clit. “You’re so tight.” His cock throbbed against my thigh, a testament to his arousal.

Ryder moved behind me, his cock pressing against my ass. I felt him slide into me, the sensation of being filled by both men overwhelming. I cried out, the pleasure coursing through me making my legs tremble.

“I want to hear you, Rosie,” Ryder commanded, his voice thick with need. “Tell us how good it feels.”

The room was filled with the sounds of our pleasure, our bodies moving in harmony. I could feel my orgasm building, the pressure in my core intensifying with each thrust. Dylan’s fingers never left my clit, his thumb rubbing in tight circles, driving me closer to the edge.

“I’m so close,” I gasped, my hands clutching at the sheets. The sensation of them inside me, the pleasure they were giving me was too much.

I could feel Logan’s cock twitching inside me, his thrusts becoming more erratic. “I’m close, Rosie,” he gasped, his



fingers digging into my hips. Ryder's thrusts matched Logan's, his cock stretching me deliciously.

The pressure in my core continued to build, the sensation overwhelming. I felt like I was floating, my body teetering on the edge of pleasure. "I can't hold on," I moaned, my voice barely a whisper.

With a final, desperate cry, I came, my orgasm washing over me in waves. My walls clenched around them, triggering their own releases. I felt them spill inside me, their cum filling me, marking me as theirs.

"God, Rosie," Logan groaned, his thrusts slowing as he rode out his orgasm. I felt his hot cum fill me, his cock twitching inside me.

Ryder let out a guttural groan, his hips bucking against mine as he came. I felt him empty inside me, his cock pulsing with every spurt of cum.

As the pleasure ebbed away, we collapsed onto the bed, our bodies entwined. I was sandwiched between Dylan and Logan, their bodies warm and comforting against mine. Ryder lay beside us, his hand resting on my hip, his gray eyes soft with love.

"That was amazing," I whispered, my voice hoarse. Their bodies still surrounded me, their touches still lingering on my skin. I felt cherished, loved, and utterly satisfied.

"Yes, it was," Dylan agreed, pressing a kiss to my forehead. His arms wrapped around me, pulling me closer to his body.

“Agreed,” Logan said, his hand trailing up and down my spine in a soothing motion.

Ryder just nodded, his gray eyes watching me with a softness that made my heart flutter. His hand found mine, his fingers intertwining with mine.

The room was quiet, the only sound was the soft rustling of the sheets and our heavy breathing. We laid there, spent and satisfied, our bodies tangled together in a mess of limbs. The air was heavy with the scent of sex and love, a heady mix that made me feel drunk.

We laid there, our bodies cooling down, the aftermath of our pleasure evident in the flushed skin and satisfied smiles. The love I felt for these men was overwhelming, consuming every part of me. And as I drifted off to sleep, sandwiched between them, I knew that this was where I was meant to be.

## Chapter 42

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Rosie

As the first light of dawn broke through the gaps of our heavy curtains, we woke to the beginnings of another day at Driftwood Dreams Inn. I blinked away the remnants of sleep, taking in the tranquil faces of the men sharing my life, sharing my bed. A swell of warmth unfurled in my chest as I studied each of them. The lines of their faces were etched in contentment, mirroring my own sentiment of complete and utter peace. This was home.

I quietly untangled myself from the sheets, pausing as each pair of eyes fluttered open to catch me in their tender gaze. There was a shared understanding, an unspoken promise. We were ready for what lay ahead, together.

“Rosie, come back to bed,” Dylan murmured, patting the warm space beside him where I had lain. His blue eyes were sparkling, filled with warmth and love.

“No escaping the real world today, Dylan,” I teased, “Besides, our guests won’t feed themselves.”

He chuckled, running a hand through his tousled hair before rising to pull me into a gentle hug. “Who knew running an inn would be this exhausting,” he admitted, pressing a kiss to my forehead.

“Not as easy as woodworking, is it?” I shot him a teasing glance. Dylan’s face broke into a sheepish grin, acknowledging my playful jab. We both knew how tirelessly he had been working on perfecting the smallest details of the inn.

Rising from the other side of the bed, Logan stretched, his green eyes sparkling with amusement at our playful banter. “Well, we did sign up for this,” he commented, shooting us an easy smile, “But look at what we’ve achieved. I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

He moved towards us, wrapping an arm around my waist, and added, “Right, Rosie?”

His words pulled at my heartstrings, my nod more a response to his sincerity than the jest.

Ryder, the last to rouse, sat up slowly, his grey eyes brimming with mirth. He nodded in agreement, “To think that the overgrown land has transformed into the beautiful garden it is today.” He commented, looking at me with an admiration that sent warmth coursing through my veins.

That’s when I realized what our shared dream, the Driftwood Dreams Inn, meant. It wasn’t just the bricks, the gardens, or the grand archways. It was the blood, sweat, and tears we’d poured into this project. Our shared laughter and worries, the

late nights and early mornings. It was us, etched into every single corner of this place.

“The inn’s flourishing,” I acknowledged, warmth flooding my voice as I shared a look with each of them, “Thanks to us, together. To what we’ve built.”

The affirmation hung heavy in the air, full of meaning and love. This inn, this town, this relationship—it was ours to nurture, to fight for, to cherish. The uncertainty of the future did not scare us anymore. We were ready. And whatever came next, we would face it. Together. As a family.

Hand in hand, we strolled out of our shared room and into the bustling inn. The sun-dappled lobby was alive with the chatter of guests and the aroma of fresh coffee. A sense of satisfaction swept over me as I took in the scene.

“We’ve really done it, haven’t we?” I whispered, my gaze meeting Dylan’s. His eyes were gleaming with pride, mirroring my own.

“We sure have, Rosie,” he responded, giving my hand a reassuring squeeze. His voice was soft, yet firm, echoing the strength of our bond.

We continued our walk, the grand archways leading us to the dining area. The tables were filled with guests, their laughter and conversation filling the room with a warm, inviting ambiance. I couldn’t help but smile at the sight.

Logan, who had been walking silently beside me, suddenly leaned in. “You know, Rosie,” he began, his green eyes

sparkling with mischief, “I’ve been thinking of adding a few more tables here. Maybe a grand chandelier hanging from the ceiling?”

I laughed at his suggestion, the idea both extravagant and charming. “You always did have a flair for the dramatic, Logan,” I teased, nudging him playfully.

“Only the best for our inn, Rosie,” he winked, his charismatic aura adding to the lively atmosphere.

As we ventured further, we stepped into the inn’s garden. Ryder had truly outdone himself. The once-overgrown land was now a picturesque haven, blooming flowers and trimmed hedges creating an inviting space for the guests.

“Ryder, this is beautiful,” I breathed, taking in the sight. He merely shrugged, a humble smile playing on his lips.

“I just gave it a little push, Rosie,” he said, “The beauty was always there. Just like us.”

His words hung in the air, the metaphor not lost on any of us. The inn was a reflection of our journey - the struggles, the triumphs, the shared dreams and the love. Just like the garden, we had grown and flourished, overcoming obstacles and blooming into something beautiful.

We stood there, taking in the sights and sounds of our thriving inn. Each guest, each laugh, each clink of coffee cups was a testament to our shared efforts. The inn’s renovation was not just a successful business venture, it was a symbol of our shared dreams, love, and hard work.

As we reveled in the moment, I couldn't help but feel a sense of anticipation. The inn was flourishing, and so were we. The future held countless possibilities - more rooms, events, even a trip together. Our dreams intertwined with our hopes for the inn and our relationship. As I looked at Dylan, Logan, and Ryder, I knew we were ready to face whatever came next. We had built this together, and together, we would continue to dream and achieve.

I turned to Dylan, my gaze catching his. "We should consider expanding, you know," I suggested, a flicker of excitement lighting up in his eyes.

"Expanding?" He echoed, a hint of a smile tugging at his lips.

"Yes," I confirmed, my voice resolute. "More rooms, more guests, more laughter filling these halls."

Dylan chuckled, his blue eyes gleaming with admiration. "You're unstoppable, Rosie," he said, pulling me into a side hug. "And I wouldn't have it any other way."

A flush crept up my cheeks as I leaned into his embrace. "And you, Logan," I said, turning my gaze to the financial wizard, "We need to plan some events. Weddings, parties, gatherings. The garden would be perfect for that."

Logan's green eyes sparkled with excitement, his fingers drumming a quick rhythm on the table. "That sounds like a challenge, Rosie," he responded, a wicked grin on his face. "And you know I never back down from a challenge."

Ryder, quiet as ever, observed our excited banter. His smoky gray eyes met mine, and he raised an eyebrow. “And what about me, Rosie?” He asked, a playful smirk on his face.

I laughed, turning to face him. “You, Ryder,” I began, a twinkle in my eye, “You’re going to design the most beautiful outdoor event spaces Azure Cove has ever seen.”

His face lit up, the joy in his eyes mirroring my own. “You’re on, Rosie,” he agreed, the challenge accepted.

As we continued to talk, our voices grew softer, blending with the sounds of the awakening day. The garden was bathed in the soft, early morning light, the dew-kissed flowers glistening under the sun’s gentle rays. It was as if nature herself was joining in our celebration, a symphony of chirping birds and rustling leaves providing a soothing background melody to our conversation.

We slowly made our way to the edge of the garden, where the land met the sea. The ocean, too, was a part of our story, the rhythm of the waves mirroring the beat of our shared heart. As we watched the sunrise, painting the sky with hues of pink and orange, a sense of peace washed over us.

I turned to Dylan, my eyes meeting his. The morning light danced in his blue eyes, mirroring the beauty of the ocean. “It’s beautiful, isn’t it?” I whispered, my gaze never leaving his.

Dylan simply nodded, his arm tightening around my waist. “Just like you, Rosie,” he murmured, his voice barely audible over the sounds of the waves.



A blush crept up my cheeks at his words, but I didn't look away. Instead, I leaned into his touch, my heart fluttering at his proximity. Dylan was my rock, my constant. His unwavering support and love had been my guiding light through this journey, and I couldn't imagine a future without him.

Beside us, Logan chuckled, breaking the silence. "Leave it to Dylan to turn a sunrise into a romantic moment," he teased, his green eyes sparkling with amusement.

I laughed, the sound echoing in the still morning air. "You're just jealous, Logan," I shot back, nudging him playfully.

Logan raised his hands in surrender, a wide grin on his face. "Guilty as charged," he admitted, his laughter joining mine.

Ryder, ever the quiet observer, watched our exchange with a fond smile. "I have to agree with Dylan, though," he said, his gaze meeting mine. "The sunrise is beautiful, but it's got nothing on you, Rosie."

My heart skipped a beat at his words, the sincerity in his voice leaving no room for doubt. I looked at him, at Dylan, at Logan, and realized just how lucky I was. I was loved by these three amazing men, and I loved them in return. Our love story might have been unconventional, but it was ours. And I wouldn't change it for the world.

As the sun rose higher in the sky, casting a golden glow over Azure Cove, we stood there in silence, lost in our thoughts. The air was filled with promise, with hope, with love. This was our home, our sanctuary. This was where we belonged.

Looking at their faces, alight with happiness and love, I knew we were ready. Ready to face whatever the future held for us. Ready to continue our journey, hand in hand. Ready to write the next chapter of our story.

As the sun painted the sky with its vibrant hues, I squeezed their hands, my heart full of love. “To the future,” I whispered, my voice full of hope.

They turned to me, their faces mirroring my own. “To the future,” they echoed, their voices intertwining with mine.

As we made plans for our future, our hearts brimming with excitement, I knew we were on the right path. We had built this together, our dreams merging into one beautiful reality. We were ready for whatever the future held, ready to face it together. And as we stood in the garden, our laughter filling the air, I couldn't help but feel hopeful. The future was ours to shape, ours to live. And I couldn't wait to live it with them.

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### **About Carmen Black**

With a penchant for a nice glass of red and a good steamy story, Carmen Black can usually be found either writing at her computer or snuggled under a blanket as she binges one of her favorite TV series. Either way, her four-legged fur babies, Crash and Chloe, are always by her side as she crafts wicked tales of unconventional love.