

The background of the entire image is a dark, moody composition of red roses and a dandelion seed head. The roses are in various stages of bloom, with some showing deep red and others lighter, almost pinkish tones. The dandelion seed head is positioned in the upper left quadrant, its seeds radiating outwards. The overall lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the petals and the fine hairs of the dandelion seeds against the dark background.

LIAR

PART ONE

LIAR

D'ARCO MAFIA DUET

JAYE PRATT

LIAR LIAR - PART ONE

D'ARCO MAFIA DUET

JAYE PRATT

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First Edition.

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Formatting by Formatting and Design by Jaye.

Editing by Jenni Gauntt.

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Blurb

Have you ever compromised your morals for the ones you love? I did. I never wanted to fall for the Mafia boss, his bodyguard, and the serial unaliver in the basement, but life has a funny way of screwing you over.

I needed money fast after my sister was sold to the highest bidder. Becoming a mattress actress wasn't my chosen career path, but when the Mafia boss walks in and picks me, what's a girl to do but run with it? Especially when I'm told that he might be the very man that could help me find my sister.

Our first session ends with me in his bodyguard's lap and tears running down my face. Not the best first impression I could have made, but I must have done something right because he comes back and offers me a live-in position.

If I want to find my sister, I have to accept his offer. Except I screw up by following him and end up in the basement, hanging from the ceiling and being put through the test to become one of them. It's not the worst thing that has ever happened to me.

When we are close to finding my sister, the Feds intervene, and I lose my chance at finding her forever. I find myself in a real mess, and I have to run, even though I know they will find me. Which is the plan. If I'm going to die, it will be at the hands of the man who promised to make it hurt. It's nothing less than I deserve.

*This book is dedicated to all the survivors.
Set the world on fucking fire with your truth.*

AUTHOR NOTE

Please know this is a dark why choose mafia romance. It does come with a trigger warning which can be found on my website.

www.jayoprattauthor.com

Or feel free to reach out to me and I can send you a list.

Some content might be disturbing and may be traumatising to some readers. This book is on the lighter side of dark but some content may not be for everyone. If you have any triggers please head over to my website before starting.



CHAPTER ONE

JORDYN

Have you ever compromised your morals for someone you love? Done things so out of character that you question who you really are? I thought I knew who I was; Jordyn Rae Edwards, born and raised in the small town of Huntersville, overrun by crime. The daughter of Sophie Edwards; former beauty queen, who hooked up with the wrong boy in high school. Her parents turned her away, and we landed here where she discovered drugs numbed her pain, and men supplied her just enough money to get her next fix. And maybe, once a week if I was lucky, they would bring food because they felt sorry for me. I didn't need their pity, at least not at first.

My best friend, Harper, lived in an apartment in the same building with her grandmother, and they would make sure that I ate and had clothes. They were also poor, but they never made me feel like a burden. Everything changed when I was nine. My mom got herself knocked up by some guy; no idea who because there were so many that came and went. That's around the time that child services came sniffing around. It was one thing not looking after me, but Pixie, she was a baby and needed milk. I was nine and had no way of making money. That was when I told my teacher what was going on, hoping and praying that someone would come and take my sister far away from this life.

All that happened was my mom became great at lying and hiding the truth. So, at eleven, I got a paper route, which meant getting up before the sun every day, leaving Pixie in the hands of that woman for three hours, and praying she didn't wake up before I came back. I made enough to get the food she needed. I have held down a job every day since, no matter how much abuse came my way. It's not like I wasn't used to it anyway. The men my mother brought home have done many questionable things to me, but I never complained. If they hurt me, it meant Pixie was safe, at least until she wasn't. Everything changed the day she turned twelve. I had one week left until I turned twenty-one. I had an apartment lined up for us, first and last saved up. Everything was looking up for us. It was a Wednesday. I finished up at my first job as a server and walked the three blocks to Pixie's school. I waited for half an hour before going inside, thinking at twelve, maybe she got caught up with her friends. She didn't make it to school that day. The police wouldn't do a report straight away. They claimed I had to wait since, more often than not, the kids come back.

I ran all the way home, and my mom and her fuck of the week, Alek, were high on the sofa. Mom was passed out cold as usual, and when I asked where Pixie was, he laughed and held up his glass pipe. Everything inside me crumbled. He said she fetched a good price. Again, the police did nothing except file a report. Alek just made me out to be crazy, saying he would never sell a child, but I knew better. I was the one who would smell his rank breath on my skin at night, the one who bore the pain.

I needed money and fast, that's how I ended up here at The Range with Harper. Last week, I filled out the forms and walked straight back out. I can't fuck men for money. Harper says it beats giving it out for free or men just taking it. I guess she has a point. Every woman in this room comes from the wrong side of the tracks, raped, molested, beaten, destroyed by the men from our side of town. It's a part of life that we all just accepted. I like to believe that I still held on to a small part of my innocence, even if it's laughable when I say it out loud.

Harper called me last night and asked me to meet her here. I have been tracking down all of Alek's contacts. I know he had connections with the Russians, but they didn't seem too impressed to hear his name come out of my mouth and literally threw my ass out onto the street. Gravel rash is a bitch to heal.

The women coming onto shift all file into the room, dressed in their lingerie and faces of makeup that hide the horrors of their lives. Then there is me, sweats, my ombre hair that Harper said made me look mysterious, black that tapers down into a silver gray piled on top of my head in a messy bun, and make-up free because who wants to waste money on material things. Angie, one of the workers, plops down beside me and lights a cigarette.

"Girl, I'm telling you I have a regular client, Tony. He got a work call while I was riding him. He obviously doesn't realize I speak partial Italian. Apparently, from what I could piece together, I heard skins, teenage girls, and the docks next month. I asked Camille to run some missing person checks, and Pixie wasn't the only girl to go missing. All young girls from around twelve to sixteen."

My head drops to my hands, and a tear rolls down my face. "Dolly, don't cry. You know we will all help however we can. You want us to search the docks and every shipping container they have? We will be there. I don't advise it without a solid plan. The Mafia shoots first and asks questions later. If you ask me, it makes no sense that the Italians are involved. We know the D'Arco family is taking over fresh territory, and the Russians hate it. Who knows, but you need to be careful."

What could I do anyway? You can't just walk up to someone in the Mafia and start questioning them, anyway. However, if it's true that they have kidnapped my sister, I have a month to rescue her before she disappears forever.

"Shit," Lady Maine says, rushing into the room. "Girls look alive. Enzo is here."

Who is Enzo, and why do they care so much? All the girls try to act natural while standing in a line. Usually, Lady Maine

makes me go back into the lunchroom while the customers come in, but today, she must not realize that I'm sitting here, or she just doesn't care.

I keep my head down while the girls all giggle. The air in the room changes, and I lift my head, my eyes connecting with the most beautiful man I have ever seen. So much so, it almost knocks the air from my lungs. He scans the girls in front of him and his brows furrow. My phone chirps in my pocket, and his gaze snaps to mine, and I'm mesmerized by his whiskey-colored eyes.

"Her," he says in a tone that has a finality to it. My mouth drops open, and Lady Maine tries to convince him to pick another girl, one with more experience. "Did I fucking stutter?" he asks her, and she shakes her head no. He takes two steps closer to me, and I'm still entrapped in his web, my brain not realizing what is happening.

"What's your name?"

My brain short circuits, and I stupidly just blink up at him. Harper jumps in. "Her name is Dolly, and she is shy. It's her first day."

He squats down in front of me. A small moan slips from my lips when his cologne hits my senses, and he chuckles. "Don't be shy, Doll, at least you get a real man for your first experience."

My first what? Harper chuckles. Lady Maine steps up beside us. She has owned this brothel for as long as I have been alive. Harper says she offers girls a clean, safe place to work instead of on the streets.

"I will take you to your room while... Dolly," she says Harper's nickname for me through gritted teeth, "gets ready." She gives me a pointed look that says don't fuck this up. "She won't keep you waiting."

The beautiful man looks up at Lady Maine and nods. He stands and winks at me. Why does a man that looks like that come to a place like this? Maybe he has a small dick and needs

a girl who will inflate his ego. That has to be it. Once the door clicks shut, my head snaps to Harper.

“I can’t do this. I’m not a whore.”

Molly, a twenty-five-year-old med student, gasps, “Girl, you know we are mattress actresses. Whore is beneath us.”

The girls all laugh. I used the whore word because the girls here don’t care. They call each other whores daily. They all move around the room, and Molly hands me some lingerie. “I can’t wear that.”

“Why not?” she asks.

“It’s see-through. He will see all of this.” I gesture to the curves. All the girls here could pass as runway models. I’m not overweight, I’m just aware that when I sit my stomach has rolls, and my breasts are twice as big as theirs. Molly has rocks in her head if she thinks that scrap of material will fit me.

“Oh hush, girl, the wax I dragged you to last week should still be good, and we would kill to have a figure like yours.”

I scoff at them, and Harper grabs my sweater and tries to pull it from my body. “Harp, what are you doing?”

She pauses and looks me dead in the eyes. “Jordyn Rae Edwards, I have known you most of your life, and I know what your sister means to you. You will make a shitload of cash with a man like that, and if what Angie says is true, that man that picked you could know something about Pixie. So you get these clothes off, put on the lingerie, and you walk into that room and blow his mind. You know the routine. You have heard us talk about it so many times.”

I nod and relax as she pulls the army green sweater over my head. “Just go in there and light the candles and relax.”

I can’t believe I’m doing this. Many years ago, I promised myself that I wouldn’t become my mother. Selling my body, and yet, here I am. I would do anything for Pixie, and if something connected this man to her disappearance, I have no choice. I have to do what needs to be done.

Lady Maine comes storming back into the room, madder than a cut snake. “Why were you even in here? This client is for the most experienced girls. A pleasant experience for him means more high-end clients.”

Harper snorts. “Calm your tits, Dolly will do just fine, and he picked her while she wore that hideous outfit.”

Lady Maine sighs, “Fine, remember, shower, check his cock for any lumps, bumps, or cuts. Condoms are a must, and no touching unless he pays extra. Extras are where you make most of your money. The house takes their cut, and you get a base rate plus all the extras they pay for. Make sure he leaves happy.”

I nod, and she turns on her heels and leaves. Molly throws the white lingerie that looks like something a bride would wear on her wedding night at me, and I strip down and pull it on. Harper pulls the scrunchie from my hair and lets my long hair fall down my back.

“Go get him, girl, make that coin.”

“What room?”

“We have one spare room at the end of the hall. You will be in there. Don’t overthink this. You will be fine.”

I take a deep breath and walk out of the room and down the hall. I hesitate for a split second and open the door.

Here goes nothing.



CHAPTER TWO

JORDYN

My hands shake as I step into the dimly lit room. Mr. Tall, Dark, and Handsome has his shirt off and stands with his back to me. His tattoos catch my attention, and though I can't make out the details, it looks like a church stained-glass window, but I can't be sure.

"Fallo," he snaps into his phone and turns to face me. We stand awkwardly for a split second. Could this gorgeous dark-haired man, with a chiseled jaw and perfectly sculpted body, really lead me to my sister?

"Doll, I have never done this before, so you will have to lead the way."

"Neither have I," I blurt out, and he chuckles. The sound sends a shiver down my spine. "You need to shower."

He nods and slips his shoes off, then he drops his pants, kicking them aside. I can't help but stare at this God, standing stark naked in front of me. My hands shake; I have never willingly done this, but I'm far from a virgin. Men just take what they want. I naively thought that one day, when I was ready, I would give myself to the man I loved. Closing my eyes as he steps under the spray of water, I try to hold back the tears. I'm doing this for Pixie. I would do anything for her, which is why I started my shit list. Right at the top is Alek, a handful of men who touched when they shouldn't have, and every man who has hurt me. I'm going to hate adding this guy

to the list. He isn't forcefully taking it from me, but it is what it is.

A knock at the door has me pulled from my thoughts. I cross the room and open the door, a man with mismatched eyes and a crooked smile stands on the other side.

“Can I help you?”

“Sorry, Doll, he is my bodyguard and had to check the building. He will sit in the corner, and you won't even know he is here.”

My mouth falls open as he steps past me. I turn and stand there. “I will pay an extra five hundred dollars for him to be here.”

I nod my head and watch out of my peripheral vision as the newcomer sits in the chair placed in the corner of the room.

“What's next?” he asks, and I turn my full attention to him.

“Next, I need to check your—”

I point to his crotch and, much to my surprise, he is already hard. He definitely is not here because he has a small penis like I initially thought.

He nods and gets himself onto the bed. I walk to the small supply cart in the room and put on a pair of gloves. Harper says that it's protocol to wear them and to make sure they don't have visible diseases. It makes sense; I suppose.

I sit beside him, and with shaky hands, I lift his thick hard cock and inspect it, or at least appear to. My wobbly hands hold his cock, and I notice nothing big and nasty, not that I know what I'm looking for. And honestly, it wouldn't be the first time I have caught an STI. I was thirteen when I contracted chlamydia. Harper and I went to the clinic with her grandmother to get it sorted, and the doctors there put me on birth control for the first time. I didn't tell them how I contracted it. It's not a red flag that a young girl is having sex from our area. Girls that age stand on street corners. It's just how it is.

“Looks good...I mean, it looks clean.”

I stand and fuck. This is awkward. “How do you want to do this? I’m sorry I’m awkward.”

“Don’t apologize,” he says, standing, bringing himself close to me and taking my chin between his thumb and pointer finger. His face slightly dips like he wants to lean in and kiss me. “How much would it cost for me to touch you, to press my lips to your skin, and let my man over there touch his cock while I do it?”

I try to turn my head to look at the man in the corner, but he doesn’t let me turn my head. “Price, Doll.”

“Um, two...”

“Two thousand, done.”

Two fucking thousand? I would have been happy with two hundred extra. His lips descend on mine, and I follow his lead. He backs us up to the bed, and he lowers us down, not breaking our kiss. The way his body feels against mine has all my worries melt away. Heat pools between my legs, a sensation that is foreign to me. Sex is dry and painful, like razor blades between my legs, but not now. I can feel the wetness between my thighs. He pulls back, breaks the kiss, and presses his lips to my neck and works his way down to my breast, biting my nipple through the white fabric. My back arches of its own accord, wanting more of what he is giving.

The man speaks in Italian, and I don’t understand a word he is saying, but the man in the corner answers with a “Si.”

The dim lighting makes me feel more confident. I hate being naked, and I thank the gods that the outfit I’m wearing has crotchless panties. Most of the scars on my body are small, but I hate when people see them and ask how I got them. The cigarette burn on my right hip is from Johnny, a boyfriend my mother had a few years ago. He thought it would be funny to see me cry while he fucked me. But when he didn’t get my tears, he found a way to get them; they all did in the end.

Enzo, if I remember his name correctly, runs his hand down my stomach. I suck it in to flatten it out, which makes

him growl, but he keeps his descent until he gets to my pubic bone; he inhales deeply before pulling back, his hands finding my knees. He spreads my legs wide.

“Fuck, that’s the hottest thing I have ever seen,” he says, moving his body aside for his bodyguard to get a good look. A clit piercing was Harper’s idea. I went for moral support, and somehow, I walked out with it done and that bitch chickened out. I guess I’m numb to a lot of pain. My brain tucks it away with the rest of my trauma. Harper was lucky, in a sense. Her mother might have been in and out of her life when it was convenient for her, but her grandmother Maya is a beautiful lady and would never let men into her house. Not one of her mother’s boyfriends was ever allowed to step foot over the threshold. Some nights, taking Pixie to stay at Maya’s was a tremendous relief off my shoulders. Knowing just for a night that I was safe.

“Oh shit,” I whisper when Enzo’s head appears between my legs, and he sucks my clit into his mouth. This is new, men who take don’t give, and when he flattens his tongue and swipes it along my slit, my eyes roll in the back of my head. My fingers tangle in his hair, and my hips buck into his face.

“Oh fuck!” I scream as a tidal wave of pleasure hits me hard and fast. Before I have time to come down off my high, he has me flipped onto my stomach, facing the man he called his bodyguard, who has his thick, hard length in his palm stroking himself.

The sound of a condom wrapper opening is the only warning I get before he enters me. I grit my teeth and close my eyes, waiting for the excruciating pain to slice through me, but it doesn’t. He fully sheaths himself and then pauses, giving me a moment to accommodate his size. His large frame leans over me, and his mouth comes to my ear. “Relax, Doll, let me make you feel good.”

I nod, unable to speak as emotions flood through me. Some include disgust that I sold my body to a man who could partially be responsible for my sister going missing and to willingly giving it up to a stranger, and anger that I shouldn’t be here. I should have had parents who looked after me so I

could have saved myself for the man I fell in love with, even though I have always known that was not my reality and all I had left was consent.

Tears threaten to burst as the thrusts come harder and faster, my body at war with my mind. It feels oh so good, and yet I want to do nothing more than curl into a ball and cry.

“Boss!” the man across from me booms.

The thrusts keep coming, and the tears pour over. I’m a whore just like my mother; Pixie is missing and could be anywhere, and I have willingly let a man inside me.

“Shut the fuck up, Sarge.”

Sarge stands from his chair and pulls a Glock from his waist, and the click has Enzo go still inside me. Now the tears just flow. I know it’s stupid, but I thought I could fake my way through it.

“Remove your cock from the girl now,” Sarge demands. Enzo does what he is asked, and I curl into a ball. Sarge crosses the room in two strides and pulls me into his arms. A weird feeling surrounds me, and out of nowhere, I feel safe. What the fuck is wrong with me? I’m anything but safe around these men. I can sense it, and I have gotten really good at reading men.

Enzo squats down in front of us. “Did I hurt you, Doll?” he asks, and I shake my head no. “First day jitters, huh? I remember my first day being a shit show, but it gets better. And just know, in this room, you don’t need to be afraid of me. I won’t hurt you.”

I sniffle and wipe my eyes. “And outside of this room?”

“You wouldn’t be able to get close enough to find out. Outside of this room, I’m a different man.”

Sarge rubs circles on my back while I talk to Enzo. All my fears and worries about being a whore fade away.

“Is that why someone that looks like you is here?” I ask. I never understood why men frequent these places, not that I have an issue with it. More so that someone who looks like

Enzo would have women throwing themselves at him. He doesn't need to pay, surely.

“In my world, you can't trust anyone. One of the two men I trust with my life are in this room.”

Huh, so maybe his life isn't so different from mine, except he clearly has money, and I don't. Still, I would prefer to go without than to hand over hard-earned money for sex.

“We can finish now. I'm so sorry for having a breakdown.”

He smiles at me, and all my worries melt away. “We will stop for today.”

“Are you sure?”

He nods. “I'm a man of my word. I will be back to collect.”

I nod in return, and Sarge kisses the top of my head. Enzo stands and walks over to where his clothes are and starts to get dressed.

“It was nice to meet you,” Sarge whispers, lifting me and placing me on the bed. He rights his slacks, and his demeanor changes back to the serious man at the door.

Enzo opens his wallet and pulls out a stack of bills. “Please, no, you don't need to do that.”

“Don't insult me, Doll, take the money and buy yourself something nice.”

I nod, and he leaves the room, followed by Sarge. I don't move from the bed, too shocked to even move. Harper flits into the room and squeals when she spots the pile of cash, picking it up and counting it.

“Holy shit, girl, what the fuck did he make you do for this kind of money?”

“Nothing. He kissed me, ate me out, I cried, and he still left it.”

She rushes to the bed and sits beside me, pulling me into her arms. “Shit, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have even pushed you to do it. I should have known better.”

I rest my head on her shoulder. “It’s not your fault. I need the money to find Pixie. I wanted to do it, but I was inside my head the entire time. I felt like I was her.”

“Shh, you will never be her. You’re the best person I know.”

She hands me the money, and we leave the room after she helps me strip the bed and shows me how to clean the room. Then, once I’m dressed, Lady Maine tells me to keep my phone on because if he requests me again, she will call. I nod, but I know he won’t be back. He would be stupid to. After all, who wants to pay for pussy for it to end in tears?



CHAPTER THREE

SARGE

The look in the little doll's eyes as Enzo fucked her threw me back into a place I never wanted to be. I know Enzo will hand down punishment because I pulled my gun on him, and I will deserve it. Even if he understands why I did it, it's no excuse. And for what? Some whore he was fucking. Any other day, I would have put the Glock to her head and pulled the trigger, but in that moment, she wasn't a whore. She was Missy staring at me with tears in her eyes while I told her I loved her. My wife, my life, my everything, was raped and killed in front of my eyes. The sick fuck came on her lips and slit her throat while I watched. The messed-up part was my brother ran with a gang, not me, not her, and yet a rival gang wanted revenge, and that's how they repaid him. I don't blame my brother anymore. Though, I did a long time ago. When you grow up on the streets, a gang becomes a family that you so desperately need. Lance, being the eldest, took it upon himself to be the protector. He refused to let me join, forced me to go to school and to be the first person in our family to make something of myself.

I met Missy my senior year of high school; we fell in love and got married not long after we graduated, and we both enrolled in community college. She wanted to work with kids and was a gentle soul, someone you wish you could grow old with. And they took it all away from me.

Enzo and I met years before. My brother's gang is into dealing drugs. No surprise there. Enzo's father had to pay them a visit, and Enzo tagged along. He gave me my first ass beating that day and, for some reason, I gained his respect when he asked why I would join a gang so young. I laughed and asked him the same question about being involved in what his family does, and he said it was his birthright. He declared that day that I needed to know how to fight. He came downtown once a week at first to teach me how to kick ass. We became inseparable from then on. He made sure that every member of the rival gang faced a slow and painful death when Missy was murdered, avenging her death and leaving the man responsible for me. That was the first day I killed someone with no remorse, and if I could do it over again, I would have made it ten times more painful.

"I'm going to let it slide," Enzo finally says as we pull into the driveway of his family mansion. After his father died last year from a heart attack, Enzo stepped into his father's shoes. Mario was a good leader, ruthless, but good. Those who needed to, respected him, and those who didn't, feared him. His mother, Elena, moved back to Italy to live with her aging parents. Her grief was too much to stay where everything reminds her of her husband. I can understand that. It's why I took on the role of Enzo's personal security after I spent some time as a mercenary. My grief and anger needed an outlet, and Enzo hooked me up.

"I can't let you do that, Boss; you can't show weakness to any man."

He slams his foot down on the brake. I pull my weapon, ready to defend him to the death, scanning the area. There is no threat.

"You are not any fucking man, Sarge, you're my best friend, a brother I always wanted."

I laugh. Enzo has a brother who works as his underboss, as per his father's wishes. Angelo is a ladies' man. He cares more about where he sticks his cock than he does his father's wishes. "No one knows what went down in that room, and no one will."

I nod. “Go and check in with Kill and see if that rat has had anything to say.”

Enzo has other men who he could send, his brother for one, but Kill won't talk to any of them. He barely talks at the best of times unless he is torturing someone. He has a lot to say then. Fuck, it makes my skin crawl just thinking about the shit he does. I wish he was around eight years ago. Kill saved Enzo's life five years ago. The crazy bastard had his hands tied behind his back, and he still escaped and used his teeth to rip the man's throat out.

Enzo parks his sleek black Ferrari in his underground garage. After the door is closed, I jump out of the car, and we walk side by side to the elevator. Once inside, he scans his eyes, and we start to ascend to the top floor where his bedroom is. We part ways, and I take the stairs back down to the basement, thankful no one else seems to be here. I'm not in the mood to talk. Korn blasts through the speakers at a deafening level. My ears ring when I open the door, and a fucking knife lands in the wall right beside my head.

“What the fuck? You could have killed me.”

Killian laughs. “If I wanted you dead, you would be.”

He isn't wrong. “Boss man wanted me to see if the rat is squealing.”

I glance over at the man suspended from the ceiling by his ankles, blood pooling on the floor below him, straight into a large drain.

“The fucking cunt bit his own tongue off, so I'm draining his blood to an inch of life,” he says with a sickening smile. “He just passed out because I cauterized his wound, and when he wakes up, it's playtime. I have some incentive on its way.”

“Wife or daughter?” I ask, and he laughs. Kill has less torture ways to get men to talk when they think their woman is being hurt. The thought makes my stomach roll.

“Does it matter?” he asks, knowing damn well that I don't condone what he is doing.

“I suppose not. Keep me updated if he agrees to tell you what he knows, even if he can’t talk.”

“I left him with his hands for that reason.”

I nod and take in the man once more, shaking my head. That’s what they get for going against the D’Arco family. They take no mercy, and someone is trafficking children from our territory and making it look like it’s us. Enzo won’t rest until he takes them all out.

I head back upstairs. I regret not taking the elevator. It’s slow as shit, and I can walk faster, but you can’t stay hidden. Angelo bursts through the door with some bimbo on his arm, and they both giggle, barely able to stand on their own feet.

“Oh, look, it’s my brother’s butt buddy,” he snorts.

“Oh, look, it’s the spare, always living in his brother’s shadow.”

It’s no secret Angelo and I hate each other. He won’t touch me out of fear of his brother’s wrath. Enzo’s patience with him is wearing thin, and he knows it. He flips me the bird and drags his bitch through the foyer. I watch as they disappear up the stairs to Angelo’s wing.

I take the stairs to Enzo’s room two at a time. My room is on the second floor, and it’s just Killian and I on this level, even though he spends most of his time in the basement.

Enzo’s door is cracked open, and I push through it as he steps out of his ensuite naked. I bite my lip. The tension between us in moments like this is off the charts, but he is my best friend and my boss. He looks at me with the same intensity. I ball my hands into fists and look away first. I refuse to cross that line with him. Since Missy died, I haven’t been able to touch another woman. I feel like it will tarnish her memory.

Thankfully, his phone rings, and when I look up, he has pulled on a pair of sweats.

“Speak,” he says and places the call on speakerphone.

“I have been tracking movements at the dock, and everything seems normal. Your shipment is due in within the week. The Russians have stayed on their turf. Everything is quiet.”

“Too quiet,” I mutter, and Enzo nods.

“Keep me updated.”

“Yes, Boss.”

The kid on the other end of the line is some shit kicker that wants in with Enzo. If he can prove his worth, Enzo might consider it. Poor bastard has to withstand Killian first. He has some light torture techniques he likes to try on the newbies to see if they will squeal. Enzo needs loyal soldiers, not piss ants with loose lips.

A knock on the door has me automatically step in front of Enzo and my hand on my hip. Aldo laughs. He is the consigliere; he has been in his position since Enzo’s father took over for his father. Enzo has been on me to take his place when he retires. I’m still on the fence. Missy wouldn’t have wanted me involved.

“We need to talk,” he says, eyeing me down. “Alone.”

“With all due respect, that isn’t going to happen. Sarge stays.”

Aldo nods. “I think you’re making a huge mistake pushing the Russians.”

“And why is that? Someone is framing us. We have always had issues with them.”

“I have been around a long time, and it makes no sense they would hide their moves. They have always been flashy mother fuckers.”

Enzo thinks it over, Aldo isn’t wrong, and he knows it. “Fine, call a meeting, and I will ask them myself.” Aldo opens his mouth but snaps it shut when Enzo narrows his eyes at him. “Ivan and my father had an understanding. There is no reason we can’t have a civil conversation.”

Aldo nods and leaves the room. Enzo is so much like his father, and Aldo knows I don't miss the sadness in the old man's eyes every time he is in a room with Enzo.

“What did Kill have to say?” Enzo asks.

“Not a lot, the rat bit his own tongue off, so he is trying a different tactic, but you know Kill. He always gets them to talk.”

“Fuck, whoever it is, they are covering their tracks well and they have connections. No sane person bites their own tongue off.”

“Lucky for you, Kill is far from sane. That man scares the pants off me.”

Enzo laughs. Kill has been on the receiving end of torture a few times from before he worked for Enzo. The guy has acid burns on his face, and it goes all the way down, or so Enzo tells me. He also only has use of one eye, the other was damaged beyond repair.

“Same, but fuck, he is good at what he does. I'm all good here if you want to go to bed.”

I nod and head back to my room to get changed. I won't sleep just yet. The nightmares keep me awake well into the early hours of the morning. Enzo has night security for the grounds, soon I will head down to the gym where I will train until every muscle in my body is screaming at me, and when I hit the pillow, I'm out like a light. It's the only way to keep the demons at bay.



CHAPTER FOUR

ENZO

My father left me an empire, a well-oiled machine that runs to perfection and has, for the last twelve months, under my watchful eye. Until now. Someone thinks they can come in and ruin years of his hard work, but all they have is a death wish.

The Russians agreed to meet out of respect for my father. I haven't spent time rubbing shoulders with these men. My father did all the hard work. I wouldn't go as far as saying they were friends, but they had an understanding. A few of their little shit kickers tried to move in on our territory, so we pushed back and took a small portion of theirs. Ivan knows how it works, which is why I presumed we were good. Yet word on the street is they are trading in young girls and making it look like it's me ordering it to be done.

I am many things, none of them good, but one thing my father instilled in me was some loose morals. They involved no skin trades. No one's children deserved that. Someone took my father's older sister when she was just a child, and he never saw her again. And women, we don't involve them unless it's absolutely necessary. I may or may not bend that rule of his slightly, but they all walk out of here alive and with their major body parts intact. Which is really all that matters.

"Are we sure this is a good idea?" Aldo asks. "We always meet on neutral ground, and you are walking us straight into

theirs.”

“We are their guests. Don’t worry.”

Sarge snorts. We are far from stupid. The snipers are all in place. He recruited some men from his time abroad. The best of the best, and they come in handy at times like this. They stopped us at the gates to the Kozlov’s empire. Fully armed men open the gates and wave us through as we would expect from a fortress. When we park, they usher us from the SUV and pat us down, telling us to leave any weapons in the vehicle, which we do. Sarge is on edge. He hates being without his Glock, the same one he killed his wife’s murderer with.

“Welcome,” Lev, Ivan’s youngest son, greets us at the door. The man is a giant even at such a young age, and has his hair braided back like a viking.

He leads us into a sitting room where Ivan is waiting. His guards line the wall behind him like obedient soldiers.

“Four in the room, twelve outside, and three as we walked through the halls,” Sarge whispers.

With my head held high, I walk to Ivan, and he stands, offering me his hand, and then Aldo. Sarge stands behind me once I sit. As soon as we are seated, Ivan commands his men to step out, and they all obey. “It’s nice to see you again, it has been a while.”

“My father’s funeral,” I reply. Ivan made an appearance to pay his respects. He nods.

“It has come to my attention that there has been a discrepancy amongst my men. I can assure you we have dealt with it.”

“That we know, as payment, we moved our line to compensate. Word on the street says someone close to you is trying to frame me.”

“Why would I want to do that? My uncle was the man who helped your father look for his sister. We have always been peaceful.”

Lev leans in and whispers in his father's ear; his eyes widen, and his lips form a thin line. "Tell them," Ivan demands.

"Some bitch came to me last week, spouting shit that her sister went missing and name dropped someone of no importance to us. We threw her out. We put it down to another teenage runaway. Alek likes to talk shit."

"Where can I find this Alek? Maybe he can answer some questions for me. To find out how my name came across his lips."

Lev looks to his father and sighs, "Huntersville, the old apartment building behind the basketball courts, apartment 205."

Lev says something to Ivan in Russian. Lev looks at me. "Please leave me his body."

I nod. "If he answers my questions, he will leave with his life. You have my word."

We end our meeting, and when we leave the gates, I decide we need to drop Aldo back to the house and bring Killian along for this trip. Just in case this mother fucker needs some splinters under his fingernails to talk. I'm happy to put a bullet in a man's skull, but splinters under a person's nails makes my skin crawl.

Sarge doesn't bother parking; Killian is waiting outside, and when Aldo slides out, Kill takes his place. The fucker needs to get more sun; he is white as a ghost. He pulls his hoodie off once the door is closed and puts his bag on the seat next to him.

"Where are we off to?" he asks.

"I just need a few answers from a man who might know something about the girls going missing all over town."

Kill nods, and Sarge drives back down the driveway and out the gates. Thirty-five minutes later, we pull up out the front of the run-down apartment building.

A pack of young men gather out the front, eyeing us suspiciously like good little street gangsters. It's laughable that they would think they even stood a chance against us. The one who looks to be the leader of their little pack stands taller. He must recognize us as we step out of the car.

As we approach, he steps forward. Sarge has his hand on his weapon, ready to take out any man he needs.

"Mr. D'Arco, it's a pleasure. Is there anything we can do for you?"

"Yes, watch my car, and you didn't see or hear anything and neither did anyone in the building."

"Done," he says with a nod. Kill leads the way into the decrepit building, and Sarge follows me in. The elevator has an out-of-order sign plastered across its door. Alek better pray to whatever god he believes in today.

We take the stairs. Thankfully, no one else is around. It's most likely because everyone in the building is on drugs and high as fuck inside their pathetic little shoe boxes they call apartments.

Some might call me a hypocrite, and they would want to hope that they don't say it to my face because it wouldn't end well for them. I supply the drugs, but no one forces them to shoot it up their arms, neglect their families, and fuck up their lives. It's pathetic and weak. It's just business, supply and demand. They demand it, and I supply it. I never claimed to be a good man.

We find the apartment easily. Kill stands in front of the door and turns back to face me. "Want me to kick the door in?"

"Did you want to try the handle first?" Sarge suggests. Kill shrugs and turns back to the door and twists the handle, pushing the door open.

We step inside, and the room is quiet. You can see the entire apartment from the door. A musty smell lingers in the darkened room, a combination of crack and cigarette smoke crossed with ass. Two bodies are slumped on the tattered sofa.

Sarge does a quick scan of the room, and Kill stands behind the sofa, ready in case the crackheads wake up and try to run.

I step into the kitchen, making sure that there are no obvious weapons lying around. Once, we didn't check, and poor Kill had a steak knife thrown at his back. The insane bastard laughed, pulled it out, took it home, and used it to kill the woman's husband.

The kitchen is completely empty. A lone photo on the refrigerator catches my attention. I pull it off and study it up close. One of the girls in the photo is very familiar. It can't be. I walk back out into the living area. Kill now has a small bag in his hand. A small amount of rock sits inside. He smirks and holds it up.

"Fuckers are cutting the fuck out of your product."

"The place is clear," Sarge says, joining us.

"Wakey, wakey!" Kill shouts. Alek stirs and opens one eye and quickly scrambles up straight.

"Who the fuck are you?" he shouts at Kill. Both Sarge and I stand behind the sofa. He hasn't realized that we are even here.

"I'm your worst fucking nightmare," Kill says ominously, placing the small rock on a spoon and leaning down to pick up a jet lighter from the table.

"Put my shit down," Alek snaps, standing from the sofa. Sarge laughs, and Alek's head whips sideways, his eyes widening when he finally realizes he is fucked.

"Tut tut, that's no way to speak to your houseguests." Kill picks up a needle next, and he fills it with the liquid. "A little birdie told us you might know a thing or two about girls going missing."

"I will tell you what I told the pigs when that ungrateful little bitch called them. I don't know shit about nothing."

I step forward, and Alek squirms. "You mean this bitch?"

I hold the old and worn photo out toward him. "Yeah, her, the small one ran away. I don't blame her. The older one is a

cunt.”

I nod. “He’s lying. He comes with us.”

The bitch next to him starts to stir. She mumbles something but doesn’t fully wake up. “I want them both downstairs.”

Sarge steps forward and grabs the woman and throws her over his shoulder. Kill circles Alek. We know he likes to play with his kills first. “Meet us downstairs.”

Sarge leads the way, and I follow behind. “Why are we bringing the woman?”

“The photo I found, it’s Doll. It all seems like too much of a coincidence for my liking. I want another appointment with her asap. Someone has to know something, and one of them will talk.”

“Fair enough. Let’s get these crackheads back for Kill to work on, and I will get it set up for you.”

Sarge gets the woman in the back of the SUV and handcuffs her to the *oh shit* handle. Hopefully, she stays passed the fuck out for the drive.

Within five minutes, Kill is exiting the building with Alek slung over his shoulder and a huge smile on his damn face. He high-fives one of the young men standing guard near the front entrance.

“He tried to run, so I accidentally pushed him down the stairs. He fell like a sack of shit.”

I shake my head. The fuck is in for a world of pain when he wakes up. The slimy cunt knows something, and men like him squeal easily.



CHAPTER FIVE

JORDYN

I'm no closer to finding Pixie than I was yesterday. No one saw her leave, not even Dax, who is the drug dealer that sits outside our building. He called me and told me some men came and dragged Alek and my mother out of the apartment building. If I had more time to care, I may have tried to look for my mom, but with Pixie missing, she will have to work this one out on her own. I'm sure they owed the wrong people money. Dax stopped selling to Alek because he refused to pay. I paid him on the condition that he didn't sell to them. Lucky for me, Dax has wanted in my pants for as long as we have lived there. Dax just hasn't realized the only way into my pants is to take it, and he has morals, apparently.

I used the money I made at The Range to hire a private investigator. It's the best I can do right now with zero connections. I'm still convinced the Russians are involved in taking my sister; Alek wouldn't have connections anywhere else.

My phone vibrates from the pocket of my sweats, and when I pull it out, Harper's face flashes on the screen.

"Hey, I thought you were working today."

"I am, but so are you."

I stop dead in my tracks. "Me?"

“Yup, Mr. Tall, Dark, and Handsome called in and requested you. Maybe he is into girls who cry.”

I laugh, “I have heard of weirder kinks thanks to a best friend who overshares.”

“You know you live for my stories. If you don’t want to do it...”

“I do,” I blurt. “The PI I hired doesn’t come cheap.”

“How quickly can you get here?”

I look at the time on my phone. “Ten minutes, but I need a shower.”

“Get in an Uber, and you can use my stuff. See you soon.”

She ends the call, and I order an Uber with the last of the money I have in my account. I guess I don’t need to eat today. I have a shift tonight and will make enough tips from the college kids. The owner turns a blind eye to their age, and as a thanks, they tip well.

Fifteen minutes later, I’m pulling up to The Range and hustle into the back entrance where Harper lets me in. She leads me down into the staff shower and hands me a bag of shower products. “Shave, pluck, and make yourself smell edible. I will come and get you if he turns up early.”

I nod, and she leaves the room. I grab a towel from the huge rack filled with fresh white towels and twist the handles in the shower to start the water running. When steam fills the room, I get in and shave everything; I don’t bother plucking because they’re just eyebrows. By the time I finish moisturizing, Harper is back in the room with a black bra with silk material that drapes down underneath it, matching panties, and black heels.

“Let’s get your face on.”

I must screw up my nose because she laughs. “Girl, get your ass over here, and thank god you didn’t wet your hair.”

She takes half an hour to curl my hair and give me a full face of makeup. When I look at myself, I don’t recognize the woman staring back at me. The black, smokey eyes that she

has done make my blue eyes pop. I have never thought of myself as beautiful, but the woman staring back at me today is stunning. It's amazing what some makeup can do.

A knock at the door has me looking away from my reflection, and Belle pops her head in. "Your client is here."

"Thanks, Bells, we will be right out. You can show him to the room," Harper says, and Belle nods. Belle is the receptionist and handles most of the men that come through the doors.

I take a deep breath in. "You can do this. He came back, so he must like you. Don't question it, just think of the money."

I nod. I need the money. It would take forever in tips to make that kind of cash I made the last time that he was here.

Harper leads the way out of the shower room and down the hall to the room that I was in last time. I twist the handle and push the door open. The same two men are in the room again.

"Doll," he says with a nod as I close the door behind me.

"Sorry to keep you waiting. Did you want to shower?"

It comes out like a question, but Lady Maine was very clear that they must shower, and you have to check their genitals every time and no unprotected sex. Ever.

Enzo strips down, and I walk over to the man in the chair, his eyes not straying from me. I reach above him where the shelf holds the scented candles, and as I take one, my ankle twists in these stupid heels. His hands grip my thighs in an effort to keep my ass off the floor, and electricity shoots across my skin leaving goosebumps behind. I quickly take a step back, my heart beating erratically in my chest. I have felt nothing like that in my life.

Enzo shuts off the shower and steps out, taking a towel that sits on a rack. He dries off, and this time, it's me that can't take my eyes off him. His body is covered in a myriad of black and gray tattoos, and my fingers itch to trace the delicate lines. I find myself wondering if they have any meaning.

He walks over to the bed, knowing the protocol. I follow him, and when he lays down on his back, I forget I need gloves and wrap my hand around his length. A hiss leaves him at the contact.

“Ride me today.”

I nod, slipping off the bed, opening the nightstand drawer, and pulling out a foil packet, then I sit back down. My hands shake as I open it, the sound of the crinkling foil loud in the quiet room. *Fuck, Jordyn, breathe*, I internally chastise myself.

Once I manage to get it on, my mind spins out of control at messing it up like a nervous virgin. I should have made him do it. It's not like the men who have fucked me in the past have bothered to rubber up. So, instead, I take the pill like clockwork. I don't want kids, and if they would tie my tubes, I would have had that done already. This world is no place for innocent children, not when there are monsters lurking in every corner.

I straddle his waist, and he goes to touch my hips, and I look down at him. He winks. “I will tip well again, Doll, let me touch you.”

I nod my head, and instead of my hips, he half sits up and takes my face between his large hands, his lips closing over mine.

Wrapping my hand around his length, I use the tip to move the material out of the way and slowly sink down onto his length as he fucks my mouth with his. For the first time in my life, I enjoy the sensation of a man completely filling me.

A low moan is muffled by him sucking my tongue into his mouth. He pulls back and opens his eyes. “Fuck, you're so tight.”

I straighten my body, and his hands go to my waist under the camisole, urging me to start moving my hips. I slowly buck forward.

“I need to ask you a few questions about Alek.”

I freeze as if he has thrown a whole bucket of ice water over me. I try to push myself up, and his grip on my waist

tightens.

“What do you want to know?” I seethe as tears build behind my eyes. It is stupid, but I thought just maybe this guy wanted me, and yet now I know that’s not the case.

“How do you know him?” he asks as he thrusts up inside me.

“He is my mother’s boyfriend.”

“Hmm,” he says. “And what about the accusations you made to the police?”

He presses his thumb against my clit over the thin material, sending shockwaves through my body.

“It was the truth. He sold my sister,” I whimper.

“I believe you, Doll, do you know who he sold her to?”

I shake my head no as he cups my face and wipes away my tears. “All I know is there will be a shipment in just over three weeks, and if I don’t find her, she will be gone forever.”

Enzo lifts me off his lap and flips me over, drags my underwear down my ass, and runs his cock over my entrance. He thrusts inside me as thoughts of my sister fill my head, and he quickly fucks me into an orgasm. Once he finishes, my limp body drops to the bed, and I feel used, satisfied, and broken.

I open my eyes when I’m pulled into large arms again, mismatched eyes bore into mine, laced with sadness.

“Don’t cry, pretty girl,” he whispers.

“I’m okay,” I sniffle. I see Enzo out of the corner of my eye getting dressed. And why wouldn’t he? This is a business transaction. He places a pile of money on the bedside table.

“How would you feel about a full-time job?” Enzo asks. I slide off a set of solid thighs and look up at Enzo.

“I already have two jobs,” I reply.

“Do they pay well? Come and live with me.”

I scoff, walking over and taking a silk robe off a hanger and wrapping it around my body. “And what, be your live-in whore?”

He shrugs. “If that’s the job title you want to call it, I will pay you ten grand a month, plus expenses.”

Is he insane? Ten thousand dollars a month? With my mouth agape, I snap it shut and blink at him. He can’t be for real.

“Can I think about it?”

Enzo nods and pulls out his wallet, handing me a business card. “I expect an answer within twenty-four hours. Sarge, let’s go. We have a meeting.”

Sarge stands from the bed and straightens his slacks. “It was nice seeing you again, Doll.”

I smile at him. This all has to be a dream. Both men leave the room, and I look down at the business card.

D’Arco Enterprises

Enzo D’Arco

And it has his cell number on it. The card is embossed with gold and looks very fancy. Harper comes into the room like an excited chipmunk.

“How did it go?”

I shrug. “Good, I think. He asked me to work for him full-time.”

“OMG,” she squeals, “This is your pretty woman moment.”

“My what? Seriously, he wants me to be his live-in whore.”

“Mattress actress, babe, and how much does it pay? Because your bullshit jobs don’t pay all that much.”

“Ten grand.”

She laughs hysterically. “Bitch, go pack your bags and call the man.”

I tuck the card into my bra and start pulling the sheets off the bed. Harper helps with getting me a clean set.

“I can’t do it, Harp. I don’t know what he expects of me for that much money.”

“You service the man; you could do worse. He is fucking hot and word on the street is,” she lowers her voice, “he is in the Mafia.”

I’m not surprised, Ange said as much. Maybe I should because I didn’t tell Enzo the information I heard from her that she got from a man named Tony, an Italian. Being close to him might give me an opportunity to keep my ears to the ground.

“If I ask for money upfront, it could help me find Pixie.”

“If you suck his cock like a Hoover, he might help you find her.”

I snort and shake my head. “Fine, but if I go missing, it was nice knowing you.”

“Girl, if you don’t find Pixie, I know your life won’t be worth living, so if they do chop you up and feed you to the fishes, at least you tried.”

“You’re ridiculous,” I say, and she wraps her arms around me and pulls me into a hug.

“Maybe. Is his dick big? I mean, we can’t send you off if it’s not. My girl needs to experience D the right way.”

“It’s pretty damn big.”

Lady Maine starts barking out orders in the hallway, and Harper jumps to her command and goes out to find out what she wants. I pack up my things and get dressed, ready for the night shift at my waitressing job.

An hour later, an Uber drops me off at the bar, and I go in through the back entrance. My swipe card gets me into the door. I navigate my way into the staff room, which is just a small room in the back where we can leave our shit.

“Looking good, Jordy,” Tyson says, dumping his gym bag on the bench, removing his shirt, throwing it into his bag, and

then he pulls out his really tight black muscle shirt. Ty is one of the bar staff. “One of these days, babe, I will get you to agree to a date with me.”

“Unlikely,” I say, throwing my hair up into a messy bun. “I don’t plan on being another notch on your belt.”

“It’s not my fault I was blessed with a face like this. Girls love me.”

He isn’t wrong. Ty is a very good-looking man with a body to die for, but pretty fuck boy really isn’t my type. Most people are not my type. I have next to no interest in anyone.

Our boss, Mikey, walks into the room. “Ty, stop hitting on Jordyn. She is way out of your league.”

I laugh at Mikey and head out to the floor to start my shift.



CHAPTER SIX

JORDYN

I stare at the card in my hands. The PI called me this morning and has sent me a file on what he could find on Alek, which wasn't a whole fucking lot. So I'm back to square one.

I text the number on the card.

ME

I'm in, pending some conditions.

It's fifteen minutes before I receive a reply.

ENZO

I will send Sarge to pick you up.

I send a message back straight away.

ME

Don't you need my address?

No message comes back, so I decide to fill a small duffle bag with my bare essentials just in case he agrees to my conditions. I don't have a whole lot, anyway. I have never had many material things that I could be attached to. As long as I have my shitty old phone, a handful of outfits, and clean underwear, I'm good to go.

Patience is not my strong suit. I check my phone every five minutes for almost an hour. A knock on the door has me tucking my phone in my pocket and grabbing the baseball bat I keep beside the door before I look out the peephole.

Sarge stands on the other side, dressed down today. The two times I have seen him, he has been dressed in a suit, but today he is in a distressed pair of jeans and a tight shirt that hugs his biceps. I undo the locks on the door, all four of them, and pull it open.

“Hey, come in. I just have to grab my bag. I wasn’t sure if anyone was coming.”

Sarge steps into the tiny apartment. It’s not much, but it beats living with my mother and whatever man she is fucking. It was supposed to be a safe place for Pixie and I to live.

I leave him in the open plan room. You can take a handful of steps and be from one side of the room to the other. I retrieve my bag from the tiny box I call a room. When I come back out, he is looking at photos I have hung on the wall.

“That your sister?” he asks.

“Sure is,” I reply, coming to stand next to him.

“She is just a baby.”

I nod. She is. She might have thought she was grown because we had no choice but to grow up quickly.

Sarge is parked right out the front of the building next to the sidewalk. The lights on the SUV flash when he presses the button. He opens the passenger side door for me, and I smile up at him as I slide in.

Sarge hits the screen on the dash, and Spotify opens up and *Play with fire* by Sam Tinnez and Yacht Money flashes on the screen, and the song filters through the speakers. Sarge taps his fingers against the steering wheel as he pulls onto the road.

“A few things you need to know before we get there,” Sarge pipes up when we are well into our trip. I look over at him and he keeps his eyes trained on the road. “Enzo has a

brother, do not fuck him. He will try because he is a fuck boy and likes to piss Enzo off.”

“Okay, that’s easy. What else?”

“If you meet Killian, don’t look at his bad eye or his face at all if you can help it. He is sensitive about it.”

“I can appreciate that.”

“And do not snoop, eavesdrop, or do anything stupid. You seem like a smart woman and know that Enzo’s business isn’t just in the nightclub scene. You will be required to sign an NDA. Anything you hear during your stay, you won’t be able to talk about.”

I shrug. “It’s not like I really have anyone to talk to besides Harper, and Enzo’s business dealings won’t be what we talk about.”

Sarge nods, and we spend the rest of the drive in silence. When we pull into a driveway that is connected to a freaking mansion, I’m lost for words. This is not what I was expecting. The gates open, and Sarge drives right up and into a garage.

“I need to pat you down,” he says as we exit the car. I drop my bag to the ground and hold out my arms. He respectfully runs his hands over my body, and a shiver shoots up my spine. He also checks my bag, and when he deems me safe enough, he takes me into the mansion.

“Don’t tell me that my brother is finally getting his cock sucked. It might remove the stick from his ass.”

Sarge stiffens, and I turn to look at the man. He looks similar to Enzo, just less put together.

“What your brother does and doesn’t do is none of your business.”

The man walks closer to us and looks me over. “When you get bored with him, my bed is always open.”

I scoff. “In your dreams, buddy, there is no way I would willingly ever let you touch me.”

He throws his head back and laughs. “Who said anything about willingness? I’m happy to take what I want.”

Sarge steps forward, a menacing glint in his mismatched eyes. “Touch her and you die.”

“Ohhh, touchy. It seems you have caught the attention of the staff. I wonder if my brother knows that. Or is that the plan? You share her as an excuse to get your cock near Enzo.”

Sarge throws a right hook straight into Enzo’s brother’s face, and blood spurts from his nose. Sarge takes my hand and drags me up a set of stairs.

“Please stay away from Angelo. He will use you to get to Enzo.”

“Trust me, I have zero intention of going anywhere near that man.”

Sarge drops my hand. “Good, follow me and I will show you to your room.”

We walk to the end of the hall, just beside another set of stairs, and he pushes a door open. We step inside, and emotions bubble up inside me. This space is bigger than my entire apartment.

“This will be your room to use when you’re not required to be with Enzo. If you need anything, my room is just next to yours. Kill’s is the first from the main stairs. I don’t advise running to him for help. He barely comes up here, anyway.”

I nod, taking in the information. I drop my duffel bag on the floor beside the bed, running my fingers along the covers. They feel so soft. I’m not sure that I have ever felt something so nice.

“Let’s go to Enzo’s office and get your paperwork squared away, and then you can settle in.”

Sarge leads me out of the room and back the way we came and down a hallway. This place is like a maze, and there is no way I will remember my way around.

Sarge knocks on a door and opens it. We step into Enzo’s office, and I take in the wooden decor. It seems slightly

outdated for what I would have imagined for a man like Enzo.

“You’re here. I wasn’t expecting you this quickly.”

“When you don’t have a lot to pack, it doesn’t take long to be ready.”

Enzo motions for me to sit in the large leather seat opposite him. He nods at Sarge, who then exits the room and shuts the door behind himself.

“I had my team draw up some paperwork. If you are happy to sign an NDA first, I can then talk more freely.”

He slides the paper across the large desk, and I pick it up and scan it. None of this really means shit to me, but the gist of it is that I can’t talk about Enzo.

“I have one question.”

“Shoot,” he says.

“This says I can’t talk about you at all, but my friend knows I’m here. Can I at least tell her generic stuff if it pops up? Nothing of a personal nature. Like can I say, my room here is bigger than my entire apartment, or if she asks if the sex is good, can I answer those questions?”

He fucking smirks at me. “Yes, you can talk about general things with only your best friend. I just don’t need anyone knowing my business, where I go, and who comes here.”

I nod as he talks. “That information is safe with me.”

Signing the NDA with a pen that looks more expensive than I do, I slide it back to him.

“Good, now, I’m a private man, and I’m sure that you’re aware I have needs. I can’t have women coming and going. It’s in my best interest for it to look like I have one woman. You will be required to come to events with me. You don’t have to stay all night. I just need pictures to be taken. But I hear that you have some requirements yourself. So you can start.”

Taking a deep breath in, I decide to cut to the chase. “As you know, my sister is missing, and I would like help finding

her. There is no need for payment for my services if you agree with that. I know you have the right connections, and it seems that you are invested in these missing girls. I don't need to know details of said business to know if you catch my drift."

He stares at me for a few minutes. "As far as anyone is concerned, I'm in the nightclub business, but you can rest assured that I have my own interest in finding whoever is behind these girls going missing."

"I can appreciate that, but you want the men behind it. I want the girls rescued and my sister back. This job would have paid for a private investigator, but after some recent information that has landed in my lap, I don't think you would want anyone sniffing around."

His eyes slice to mine and narrow on me. "And why would they be sniffing around me?"

"All I'm saying is a man, an Italian man named Tony, knows about this. Do you happen to know a Tony?"

Enzo laughs. "Do I know a Tony? I know four Anthony's that go by Tony, two Tony's, and a Larry that is known as Tony."

"Well, maybe you need to look into them. My friend doesn't really speak Italian, but she made out a few words, enough to know he knows something."

Enzo nods. "I will look into it. Speaking Italian narrows it down some. Let's go over your contract, shall we?"

Over the next half an hour, we go over the terms of his contract. I can come and go as I please when he doesn't need me. I'm required to be available most nights, and I was shocked when he said that we don't have to be exclusive, but if I was to spread my legs for someone else, as he so eloquently put it, to make sure it's not someone looking to get to him through me. Once the media gets wind he is no longer a bachelor, I will be watched closely. So being discreet is in my best interest.

He also gives me a credit card for expenses such as clothes, jewelry, and shoes that I will need for events. The

monthly payment he insists I take will be deposited into my account on the last day of each month. He has also given me free range of the mansion, so long as I stay out of Angelo's wing, his office, and bedrooms that are occupied.

Once I'm dismissed with a list of things that I am required to purchase today, he sends me on my way. Since I haven't eaten since yesterday, I make my way down to the kitchen, which is thankfully empty. I open and close cupboards until I finally find the pantry. There is a whole shelf of cereal, and I push up on my tippy toes to try to reach the Lucky Charms; they were Pixie's favorite. Even if I couldn't afford it, I made sure to get her a box. A girl should be able to eat the fucking cereal of her choice.

Tears spring to my eyes at the thought of my sister and the fact that I can't reach the box, which tips me over the fucking edge. A large body leans over me and grabs the box and hands it to me. I turn to find he hasn't moved. When I look up, I realize that this must be Killian, the man Sarge said not to look at, but it's hard not to. I want to reach up and run my fingers along his scars. It's like they call to me. I don't pity the man, but if he is anything like me, his past has made him who he is today. But there's no point in dwelling on the past, it's not like we can change it even if we wanted to.

"Thank you," I manage to say finally when the fog in my brain wears off. He nods and steps back out of the pantry. I take a seat at the counter on a stool and shove my hand into the box, shoving a handful of the cereal into my mouth.

I watch as Killian moves around the kitchen and pulls things out of the fridge. He doesn't talk to me or even acknowledge I'm sitting here, but he knows, and it's not an uncomfortable silence, either. I imagine it's like when you're around your best friend and you don't need to fill the silence with words. It's nice.



CHAPTER SEVEN

KILLIAN

A snuffle catches my attention when I enter the kitchen. I needed a break from the bitch downstairs crying. If he just gave up his contact, it wouldn't hurt so much. It's not fucking rocket science. Tell me who you sold the girl to, and I will make your death painless. I know Enzo promised if Alek squealed that he would let him go, but fuck, bottom feeders like him don't deserve to walk this earth. I mean, come on, who the hell sells children?

I have no morals, and I will cross any line that needs crossing. But children don't deserve to be sold. Some fully grown women on the other hand, that could be a trade I could do. Like the woman downstairs. She has done nothing other than beg me for crack, some vomiting, and more begging. I gave her a sedative just to stop the noise in my fucking head. I don't want to have to kill her, but I will if she keeps getting on my nerves.

The crying comes from the butler's pantry. A tiny little thing tries jumping to get a box of cereal from the shelf. While she is small, she has an ass on her that's just asking to be fucked. It's not often a woman's body speaks to me. Most women can't handle how I fuck. I need them to not look at me or touch me. That would end in their death. It's why I haven't touched a woman in a very long time. They don't need to die because I'm fucked up. Even my cock agrees and hasn't been hard for anyone in a very long time.

I lean over her and pull the box off the shelf and hand it to her. My body lingers close to her, breathing her in. She smells like the sunrise. I take it all in, knowing when she turns around and takes one look at me, it will be with disgust or pity. That's a woman's go-to.

She turns, and I'm immobilized; she looks up at me with her big blue eyes, and as she takes me in, there is no pity or disgust. I can't place it, but it feels an awful lot like two kindred souls. She understands, and that thought makes me murderous. I want to hunt down and kill the fucker that made her feel that way.

"Thank you," she says. Her words bring me back to the room and I step back when I realize what I'm thinking.

I busy myself with pulling out food to make lunch or breakfast; fucked if I know what time it is.

She pulls out a stool and starts to eat the cereal from the box, telling me she isn't the normal bimbo Angelo brings here. They never stay long enough to eat, and she isn't hired help. They wouldn't be so brazen as to eat in front of anyone. Grabbing a bowl from the cupboard and a spoon from the cutlery drawer, I place them in front of her and then retrieve the milk from the fridge. She doesn't look like a woman who drinks some weird shit, and even if she did, we don't stock that shit here. We just have regular milk.

"Thank you. I don't know where everything is yet, and I didn't realize that the fridge looked like a normal cupboard."

I smirk at her and quickly pull my mouth into a thin line. *What the actual fuck.* I try not to look at her while I make my sandwich, or while I'm packing away the ingredients. But I make a point to sit by her side. It's harder to look at someone that way. A human hasn't fascinated me in such a long time. I want to chain her up and find out what makes her tick. It's the only way I can get to know someone. Women want to touch, and just the feeling of someone running their hands on me makes my skin crawl.

She is the first to break the silence. "Sarge made you out to be scary, but you don't seem that bad."

I slowly turn to meet her gaze. "I'm worse."

She smirks at me and nods. "Maybe."

She slides off her stool and takes her bowl and spoon to the sink and washes them up. "It was nice to meet you, Killian."

I don't reply. I hate forced words. When someone says they love you, you feel obliged to say it back, and pleasantries annoy the shit out of me. I don't want to say hello to you. If I talk, I need answers, and small talk is pointless. People need to learn to be comfortable in silence. It's okay to not fill the void.

She leaves the kitchen, and I sit alone and soak in the nothingness that surrounds me. Once I have finished my sandwich, I rinse off the plate and head back downstairs. I need answers today. I don't want to fuck around with this scum any longer than I need to.

The woman is still passed out. I gave her enough sedative to take down a horse. I plan to take her back to her apartment if I don't need her. The piss ant in question is suspended from a hook I connected to the crossbars. Just high enough that his toes can touch the ground. A small sense of security that he could try to escape. But newsflash. He can't. He wouldn't be able to get out the front doors. Everything here is secure.

"Let me go, I don't know anything, I swear."

Picking up a pair of bolt cutters, I turn back to the man. Fuck slowly working up to pain. I need answers.

"Who did you sell the girl to and don't say the Russians? I spoke to them, and they gave me you in return."

"They wouldn't tell you shit."

I bellow out an obnoxious laugh. "See, that's where you're wrong. When you need to keep the peace between families, sometimes the weakest links have to go. Lev asked for your body back when we were done with you, so he must care about you."

Stepping closer, he uses his toe to push himself backwards. I squat down and wrap my hand around his ankle. Opening the

bolt cutters, I angle his toe between them. I'm not a total monster. I clean my tools and sharpen them. Work smarter, not harder, I say.

He screams before I even apply any pressure, and I clamp the tool shut, watching with rapt fascination as his toe falls to the floor. His screams die off too quickly for my liking when he passes out. With available time until he wakes, I wipe off the tool and place it back on the stainless-steel counter that holds all of my most used tools.

The silence doesn't last long, and he starts thrashing around. "Are you ready to talk? I just need a name."

"He will kill me," he spits, and I hold up a sharpened knife.

"Right now, if I don't get a name, I will kill you. Naming buys you time to vanish."

I take a handful of steps toward him and press the tip to his stomach. Glee spreads through my lips. I love nothing more than slicing a man open and his guts spilling out onto the floor. That look on their face when they realize that they're dead.

"Fuck, fine!" he screams as I force the tip to break the skin. "The Italians."

I dig deeper; the lying scum. "It's the truth. I don't know his name. He plays poker on South."

"And how much did they pay you?"

"Ten grand."

A gasp sounds from behind me. I react by pulling the blade from the man and flicking it behind me, causing the girl to scream. I pivot around, grinding my teeth together. I thought I might like this one, but now I have to kill her. For whatever reason that she is here, I now have to make sure that she won't rat us out.

She stands stunned for a second and looks at the large knife right beside her head, stuck in the doorframe. Her small hand wraps around it, and she pulls with everything that she

has. I watch, intrigued. Does she really think that she can kill me?

“You fucking asshole!” she screams, and it’s then when I realize I’m not her target. I should let her attack Alek, I shouldn’t care, but I step in and wrap my body around her back, just before she can do any damage.

“Let me go, please. He sold my sister.”

She sobs and begs for me to let her go, and my cock stirs. Her soft cries turn me on, and nothing has interested me in so long, I almost forgot what it felt like.

“Shh, Poppet, he will meet his maker, but killing a man; can you live with that black mark on your soul? Love does weird things to a person, and you think you can, but then it festers inside you and slowly eats away at the person you once were.”

Alek laughs, “I would have sold you as well if anyone wanted a whore like you.”

Sliding my hand slowly down her arm, I gently take the blade from her, and before she or Alek can even blink, I dig the blade into his stomach as far as it can go and twist.

When I pull back, blood sprays on her, and she just blinks and looks down, stunned silent. Alek’s head falls forward, and the asshole is dead. I would have loved to have made his death painful, but seeing someone die could still break her. Something inside me wants it to be me who breaks the beautiful girl with a fire in her eyes.

She has to be in shock, and I can’t let her run back to Angelo and spill her guts. I gently move a chain above her. She pays me no attention, not until her arms are raised above her head. She moves her blank stare at me.

“Please save her,” she whispers. “Do what you want to me if it means you find her.”

She hangs her head after that. I bend down under the mass of hair framing her face, and she has passed out. Shit, maybe I scared her to death. Thankfully, when I press my fingers to her wrist, she still has a pulse. I leave her hanging and remove the

scum from the hook, let him fall to the floor, and drag his skinny ass to the freezer. The Russians wanted his body, and I will honor their request and may even sew the bastard back together for them.

Groaning has me moving toward the small cell in the corner of the room. The bitch on the floor stirs, and when she looks up at me, I hold a finger to my mouth. “If you wake my guest, I will kill you. Nod if you understand me.”

The woman nods. That’s when I see it, the resemblance to the girl hanging from my chains.

Fuck, pulling my phone from my pocket, I call a trusted friend. He isn’t in the family at all, but he is someone I trust from before my time here.

“Killian, long time between calls. Have you seen the light?”

“Unfortunately, my soul cannot be saved, but I have someone for you.”

“Can I ask if she will come willingly?”

He knows what I do; he doesn’t condone it and pretends it doesn’t happen.

“Brother, the fewer questions you ask, the less I can lie, but this one will by the time you get here. Come around to the back entrance.”

“As long as she is walking out alive, that’s all I care about. But you know it will cost you.”

“I will pay you double if you stop talking and get your ass here.”

I end the call as the fucker laughs at me. I squat down and look at the woman who has the uncontrollable shakes.

“Do you love your children?”

She looks at me and nods her head yes. “Here is the only way that you will walk out of here alive. A man is coming to pick you up. He runs a lifestyle homestead program where you live off the land.”

She nods her head again. “Don’t mistake his kindness for any form of weakness. He may look kind and wholesome, but he will end you quicker than you can blink if he needs to.”

Cal is my brother. We walked the same path, except he likes to save people, whereas I’m happy to just bury them.

Standing, I pull the key from my pocket and slide it into the lock. This is going to go one of a few ways right now. She will try to run as soon as the door is open, or she will do as I ask.

“Close your eyes and don’t open them until I tell you to. If you peep, I will slit your throat.”

Her eyes snap shut, and she nods her head. I lead her from the small cell and past her daughter hanging from my ceiling. My work space is out of sight from the cell; I don’t need anyone watching me do my thing, but the back exit is on the opposite side of the room, and I don’t need this bitch to try to be parent of the year to save her child. Experience tells me she is a damn junkie, probably hasn’t cared about her children in a while if one was missing, and she was high as fuck rather than burning down the fucking town to find her child.

When we exit the building, there is a small garden bench beside the door. “You can open your eyes now. Do not scream, don’t try to remember where you are. My boss has contacts everywhere.”

She nods, the only thing she’s capable of doing. I’m sure that this woman was once what you would call beautiful, but her natural blonde hair is no longer silky, her blue eyes are sunken into her face, and there are scabs on her face that look like she has picked at them.

Pulling a pack of cigarettes from my pocket, I offer her one. She slides it out, and I hold the lighter for her. She leans forward and sucks in her first lungful of poison, and she visibly relaxes. By the time she has sucked the entire thing down, Cal is pulling up beside us in his old station wagon. His house is only five minutes from here, which is convenient for me right now, since his reserve is an hour south. But I knew he

would be here today; he always comes in for supplies, once per week.

He exits the car, and I stand. When he reaches me, he pulls me into a hug. "It's good to see you again," he says.

"You too."

"Anything I need to know about this one?" he asks, stepping back.

"Addict, one child is here safe, the other missing, sold by her boyfriend, who is now deceased."

"I take it by the quiet tone. She doesn't yet know that the man is fish food."

I shake my head no.

"Updates."

"Please."

He walks up to the woman and introduces himself, and then he leads her to his shit box of a car, where she willingly gets in. That is two problems down and one to go. If she is trusted not to squeal, she can go back to doing whatever it is she is doing here.



CHAPTER EIGHT

JORDYN

My shoulders ache as I wake, blinking my eyes open as everything comes back to me. Kill sits on a stool with wheels, his legs spread wide, just staring at me.

“Poppet, you’re awake.”

“Why the fuck am I chained up? I work here.”

That gets his attention. “You work here? For who?”

“For Enzo, I literally just started.”

He stands from his stool. “And what is your job description? I doubt he had any openings I didn’t know about. His staff is vetted, and I know every single one of them, so I don’t kill them.”

“I fuck him,” I snarl, and he cocks his head. “Yeah, I’m a whore.”

He fucking chuckles at me. “Thing is, Poppet, no one is supposed to know what happens down here, so now I’m between a rock and a hard place.”

“I signed an NDA,” I stammer. I can’t fucking die here.

He looks at me and steps closer. “That’s a pity. You look good in chains.” He pushes a finger against my lips and moves it slowly down to my chin, “What if I promise not to hurt you...much.”

He pulls a switchblade from his pocket and slices the front of my tee. “Please don’t,” I beg. The lighting in here is too bright, the scars on me will be visible. I don’t know why I thought this was such a good idea. He notices straight away. The switchblade comes closer to the scar between my breasts. It’s not one I can hide all that well, but I still remember the jerk who gave it to me.

“What the fuck! Who are you? My cock doesn’t get hard for a woman in over a year, and yet, here we are. What’s your trauma, Poppet? It’s speaking to me.”

I laugh. “What’s my trauma? Where do I even begin? And who am I? I’m just the woman here to service your boss.”

He runs the small blade over my scar, gently, not breaking the skin. He inspects my body, and I feel exposed. Most people who see them feel sorry for me, and when they find out it’s from the abuse I endured, I’m pitied, and I fucking hate it. I don’t want their pity. These scars saved my sister, well, at least most of them did.

His thumb runs over the cigarette burn on my hip. “Do you have a list?”

“Huh?” I ask. I should be scared, I should scream, but if he wanted to hurt me, he would have already. Men that take don’t care about a poor girl’s sob story.

“A list of people who hurt you.”

My stomach dips when his finger runs along my stomach just above the waistband of my pants.

“Of course I do. It’s hard to forget.”

“I had a list once. They’re all dead now. Do you want them dead?”

That feels like he is asking for my permission to kill the men who hurt me, but I answer him anyway. “Do I hope they die slow and painful deaths? Of course I do. Will I be the one to kill them? No, I can’t afford to go to jail. If you want to be added to the list, can we get this show on the road? I have a job to do.”

He smirks at me and then laughs. Which must also shock him because his face falls a second after he laughs.

“For fuck’s sake, Kill, I swear to god...”

Sarge stops mid-sentence when he enters the space. He looks from me to Kill and back before he draws his weapon. “Let her down. Enzo will not be happy.”

“I don’t know. Enzo is a generous man. I’m sure he would share his new toy.”

“Maybe so,” Sarge says, keeping the gun pointed at Killian. “I would suggest that you ask him first.”

“Put your prop away. I wasn’t planning on hurting the girl. But she saw me kill a man, so we need to get Enzo down here before I let her go.”

“Fuck,” Sarge swears under his breath. “Why the fuck did you let her down here?”

“I don’t know. Maybe if I was told we had a houseguest that likes to snoop around, then maybe I would have locked the fucking door.”

“I wasn’t trying to snoop. In my defense, I thought this was a wine cellar. I wanted to get tipsy before I got into bed with a stranger.” Both men look at me, and I snort. “Can we find Enzo? Because I can’t feel my arms, and it’s cold in here.”

Sarge lowers his gun and pulls out his phone, pressing it to his ear. “Boss, I need you in the basement.”

He ends the call, and we wait in silence, which is deafening. Normally, I’m all for being in a comfortable silence; it’s nice to clear your head, but this is weird. Me chained to a fucking beam, my tits spilling out of my bra, a murderer on one side, and a bodyguard on the other, who has taken somewhat of a protective role over me. How is this my life? I was so close to freedom I could see the light at the end of the tunnel, and then that bottom feeder my mom called a boyfriend had to sell my sister. She could be anywhere, and men doing God knows what to her. My stomach coils, and I

gag at the thought. Both men move closer, but it's Killian who lifts me down, and I fall to my knees as everything comes out.

"Someone better explain to me what the fuck is going on."

Killian steps forward. "It's a funny story, really."

"Not you, her."

Wiping my mouth on the back of my hand and quickly getting to my feet, I meet Enzo's eyes. "I met Killian. A heads-up would have been nice. I mistook his lair as a wine cellar, and apparently, no one informed him of my being here. I was one hair away from his torture chamber when Sarge saved the day. Oh, and I forgot the important part. I may or may not have seen Alek take his last breath, but I promise you don't have to worry. I won't tell anyone. He did me a favor, really."

Enzo studies me for a second and nods. "Go get cleaned up and come back downstairs for dinner."

I don't protest or tell him I'm full from the cereal. Where I come from, if someone offers you food, you take it, not knowing when your next meal will be. But what if I fuck this up on the first night, and he kicks me to the curb?

"Sarge, take Doll upstairs, please. I need a word with Kill."

Sarge nods and holds out a hand. I turn back to Killian. "Sorry about the floor. I can come back and clean it."

Killian looks at my vomit and shakes his head no. "It's fine, Poppet. Cleaning bodily fluids is my specialty after extracting them."

My eyes widen, and my mouth pops open, but I snap it shut. I don't have a comeback for that.

I leave the room, and Sarge follows behind me. Once we clear the room and the door is shut, Sarge falls in step with me. "You got lucky down there. Kill never leaves witnesses, even if it means pissing Enzo off."

"I don't know." I shrug. "He seemed nice."

Sarge throws his head back and bellows out a deep laugh. “Just remember you said that.”

We climb the stairs, and once I’m back in my room, Sarge follows me in. “There is a dress hanging on the back of the door for dinner.”

“A dress?” My face must have screwed up because Sarge raises an incredulous brow. Look, I’m not opposed to wearing them to a wedding if I even knew someone getting married, or a funeral, but to dinner? Yeah, not my style.

“Yes, a dress. Enzo likes nice things. His personal assistant also got some makeup sent over as well.”

“I haven’t been here that long. How was that even possible?”

“Money talks, Doll.”

“You do realize my name isn’t Doll, right?” I ask as I walk to the door to check on this dress.

“Of course I do. I ran a check on you.”

“Wait...What?” I spin back around; the dress forgotten.

“Enzo needs to be careful about who he surrounds himself with. We couldn’t have a prostitute with a list of arrests. It would draw attention from the cops, and that is something we like to avoid.”

“So, what did you find out about me?” I push.

“Just the basics: name, age, parents, no criminal record. You were clean.”

“Just for the record, I have no criminal history because I have never been caught.”

He smiles at me. “We also figured that when you were born and bred in Huntersville. It’s kill or be killed on that side of town.”

I turn my back to him and go back to the dress bag that is hanging on the back of the door. I unhook it, bring it to the bed, lay it down, and unzip it.

Sarge stands by my side, and we both look down at the plum-colored dress. It's plain but pretty. If I had to guess, I would say that it would be knee length.

"Is it a special occasion?" I ask, looking up at the man. Sarge shakes his head no.

"It's your first night here. He wants to welcome you to his home."

Sarge hands me a small bag with tissue paper hanging out of the top. I ruffle through it and pull out a scrap of material and snort.

"Does he welcome all of his staff with dinner and a slingshot?"

"You're not an idiot, so what do you think? For some reason, he is drawn to you, and that doesn't happen often. If you're all good here, I will see you downstairs at seven sharp."

"I have been dressing myself for the better part of eighteen years. I'm sure I will be fine."

His brows furrow, but he nods and leaves the room. I check my piece of shit phone, and I have a text message from Harper.

HARPER

Hey girl, making sure you're alive.

I send her a text back.

ME

Not dead, might be after dinner, though. I have to wear a dress.

I forward her a picture of the dress and bring my phone with me into the bathroom. Sure enough, on the vanity is a collection of makeup, toiletries, and a few other things a girl could need.

My mouth drops open as I gape at the bathtub. It's massive, almost like a jacuzzi. I can't remember the last time

that I took a bath. Turning on the water, I fill it and use some body wash to make bubbles. I bring up the music app on my phone and hit play on my most recent playlist.

Sociopath by Stay Loose and Bryce Fox fills the room, and I strip down and sink into the warmth. It's where I stay until my skin is wrinkled and enough time has passed that I feel relaxed.

Hair and makeup aren't my strong suit. Since my hair is wet, I pull it back into a sleek ponytail. With the fluffiest towel known to man wrapped around my body, I stare at my reflection in the mirror. The dark bags under my eyes are clearly visible from lack of sleep. Time is ticking for my sister, and I don't know how to save her.

Lucky for me, Harper always used me as a test dummy when she practiced makeup as a teenager, so I have picked up a few things. I keep my eyes simple; I don't need to look like a raccoon after attempting smokey eyes. I do, however, use the matte plum lipstick that matches the dress perfectly.

Dropping the towel, I pull the thin material up my legs, and while it's a tiny little thing, I have never felt something so silky against my skin, in well, ever.

Turning to give myself one last look over, I nod at my reflection. It will have to do. I have never been the kind of girl to be hung up on her appearance. What's the point? This is what I have been given, and I have to work with what I have. Which is not height, that's for sure. My stomach is far from flat, and my breasts always spill out of my bra, which is partially because I probably wear the wrong size. I have no thigh gap, and I'm not even sure why that matters to women, but Harper seems to think it does.

Stepping out of the bathroom, I shut off my music app just as The Kooks started to play. A scream peels from my lips, and on autopilot, I throw my phone at the figure sitting on the bed. His gaze strays down my form, and my hands fly to my breasts to cover them from his sight.

“Jesus, fuck, Killian. Why are you in here?”

The door flies open, and Sarge runs in, scanning the room for danger. Killian just chuckles. Sarge swallows hard when his eyes roam over my body, and I raise a brow at him. “Sorry,” he says before backing out of the room.

I turn my back on Killian. “Poppet, I can see just as much skin from the back, not that I’m complaining.”

“Why are you in my room?” I ask, turning back around and trying to figure out how I pick up the dress without flashing him.

“I don’t know. I just wanted to see you again. Fuck, you make my cock hard.”

I snort. “Seeing a woman half naked tends to do that.”

He pushes up from the bed and brings the dress with him. “Arms up.”

I hesitate and then do as he asks. He slides the dress over my head, his fingers skimming across my skin, leaving a trail of goosebumps.

“That’s the thing, Poppet, I haven’t gotten hard over a woman in at least a year. Why you? Maybe we should find out.”

“Are you planning to just take what you want, then?”

He comes around behind me and pulls the zipper on the dress up slowly, leaning in close. “I’m many things, but I’m not a rapist.”

I snort. “You’re telling me that you have a moral compass? You murder people, for fuck’s sake.”

“I do, but would you believe me if I said that they deserved it?” he whispers against the shell of my ear. His voice is rustic and smooth. I could listen to him talk for hours. I think about it for a few seconds, and I nod. If the people he kills are like Alek, then they certainly deserve it.

“But why do you get to be the judge of that?”

“Because in my world, Poppet, no man is innocent. We all have black marks against our souls.”



CHAPTER NINE

ENZO

Angelo sits across from me, his latest bimbo by his side. Once a month, I sit down with family and friends for a meal. Just because we have a new houseguest doesn't mean that stops. I didn't invite anyone that lives outside of the house this month; I don't know who I can and can't trust. Someone is working against me from within my own fucking empire. Sarge and I have managed to at least figure that much out.

Angelo is useless. He didn't want the job that he has; he would much prefer to live off our family's money and bring whores to the house. Lucky for him, his best friend, Leo, does most of the work that my brother should be doing, and it has sucked with him being away. I'm so close to giving him my brother's role.

Sarge joins us; he is dressed the part. I like when people put in an effort to look nice. He takes a seat beside me as laughter catches my attention, and I turn to see Kill and Jordyn walking into the dining room together. She smiles prettily up at him, and he smiles back. Not once in the years I have known the man have I seen him smile from pure happiness. He smiles when he ends a man's life, but it's nothing like this.

My breath catches in my throat when I let myself take in Jordyn's appearance. Mercedes was right. She has the perfect skin tone to pull it off.

“Hey!” Angelo shouts, shaking me out of my head. “Why does she get to wear boots to dinner?”

Her eyes snap to my brother, and she cocks her head. “She has a name, and because I don’t own any fancy shoes. The ones upstairs hurt my toes, and Killian said I could wear my boots. Plus, who wears heels? What if I need to run?”

Killian laughs from beside her. She has a point. I don’t know how anyone could run in heels, and I should have thought about that. A girl from the wrong side of the tracks has never worn heels. Her shoes are for comfort, running, and fighting.

“Why the fuck do you even care?” I ask him.

He shrugs. “I don’t, but there has always been two sets of rules, brother, one for you and one for everyone else.”

I pull out my Glock and slam it down on the table. “Because I’m head of this fucking family. This lifestyle you lead is because I allow it. So shut your mouth and have some respect for my guest.”

“Well, maybe I will let mine come naked next time.”

“Do it, and you will be scraping her brain matter off the walls.”

He huffs like a petulant child, but wisely keeps his mouth shut. Jordyn takes a seat beside me, and Kill drags his chair close to her. What the hell is with this woman? Sarge goes all caveman protective of her when she cries, and now, she has Kill enamored. Maybe it’s a good thing. I haven’t seen either of them with a woman in a long time, and I’m paying her enough to take care of all three of us.

The servers start to bring out the food. I turn and watch her. She sits quietly as she bites her bottom lip, and her eyes start to water. I lean into her side a little. “Tomorrow, we should have an update on some of the matters we discussed.”

“Thank you,” she whispers back. “I miss her.”

“I can’t say that I understand. You met my only sibling.”

She smirks and seems to relax a little.

“Help yourself,” Kill tells her, and she nods. I haven’t missed how quiet Sarge is. He normally fills the dinner table with talk. But he is staring at Doll, and I can’t wait to test the waters and see how far I can push him. It’s no secret to me how he watches me, he always has, I see the small fire behind his eyes occasionally. I have never wanted to cross the line. I haven’t wanted to scare him away because that is what he will do, run for the hills.

She puts a small amount of food on her plate, and my brows furrow. Sarge scoops some potatoes on a serving spoon and dumps them on her plate just as Kill adds an extra piece of chicken.

“I can’t eat all of that,” she gasps. “I will be sick.”

“Just leave what you can’t eat. The staff will feed it to the dogs.”

She sits up straighter in her seat. “You have dogs? Can I pet them? I was never allowed a pet.”

Angelo laughs. “Go on brother, let your new pet play with the dogs.”

Doll looks at me wide-eyed. I look at Sarge, and he nods back, letting loose a whistle. It’s ear piercing, and she whips her hands over her ears as the stampede of feet come running toward us. I can’t say I really care for animals all that much, but somehow Sarge and even Kill keep bringing them home.

Ansel is the first to come and sit by Sarge and I, followed closely by Balthazar, both Dobermans, rescued from some car yard we had to raid because the fuck who owned it was trying to deal on our turf. Mutley waltzes in last, a mutt mix Kill brought home. He killed his owner just because he found the dog tied up, riddled with fleas, and malnourished. You couldn’t tell looking at him now, the spoilt shit. He makes a point to go to Kill for a pat, and Doll smiles down at him.

“How cute are you,” she says, reaching out and letting Mutley smell her hand. When he licks her, she scratches him behind his ears. “What are their names?”

“That one is Mutley, Ansel is in the black collar, and Balthazar is in the blue. Be weary with Ansel. He hates everyone.”

“You need to put the thing down. It bit my ass,” Angelo whines.

“Don’t force my animals outside when I’m not here. They sleep inside. It’s not their fault you brought back some less than favorable people and triggered him.”

I’m too preoccupied by Angelo to notice that Doll has gotten up off her seat and moves around toward the dogs. Ansel growls in warning, but she squats down and holds her hand out.

“I won’t hurt you.”

Balthazar moves first and circles her, moving in close to sniff her. Ansel is more direct. He moves closer, his sharp eyes locked on her. My mouth falls open when the traitor rolls onto his back, and she laughs, scratching his stomach. Balthazar gets jealous and nudges her from behind, and she scratches behind his ear while Mutley runs around barking.

“I think we just lost our pets,” Sarge says with a laugh. “Did you see Ansel? Since when does he like anyone?”

Doll pushes up from the ground. “Animals love me.”

“Explains why you have those three drooling over you,” Angelo says, waving his fork around, his bitch sitting quietly, picking at her salad. Doll ignores him and takes her seat. Picking up her fork, she stabs a potato while eyeing Angelo with distaste and shoves it into her mouth.

The rest of the meal goes smoothly, and I’m relieved when Angelo drags his bitch away. I won’t have to see his stupid face for a few hours.

“Can we talk about my sister now?” she asks. I nod.

“We still don’t know a great deal. I have some paperwork to show you tomorrow, but we have some leads to follow up.”

I send Jordyn upstairs once dinner is done. My phone vibrates in my pocket. It has been going crazy throughout dinner. I retrieve it and snap down the line.

“What? This better be good.”

“Sorry, boss man,” Zayne says meekly. “It’s ready, and I thought you would want to see it in action.”

“Fine, I will meet you at the docks tomorrow. This better work. Sarge will be in contact tomorrow to organize a time.”

I end the call and look up at Sarge, who is leaning against the wall in my office. Kill vanished after dinner, just like he always does.

“The kid says that his product is ready.”

“And you trust him?” Sarge questions.

I shrug. “Not really, but the Feds are up our ass. If he thinks he has found a way to help bring in more product undetected, then we might as well hear him out.”

Sarge nods. “I will organize the team to be ready. We can’t go in without eyes. I don’t trust the kid not to play us. He is going to sell to the highest bidder.”

“That is why we will bring Kill.”

Sarge’s head whips to the door, and he listens. “Sorry, I thought I heard something.”

“It’s been a long day. Go rest. I’m going upstairs to get my money’s worth. Wanna join?”

He slowly looks up at me. I can see the curiosity in his eyes. If I’m totally honest, the only reason she is here is because she sparked something in my best friend, something I haven’t seen in a long time. Having a regular fuck also works in my favor.

“I’m good,” he finally says. “You might want to keep an eye on her. Kill has taken an interest, and I can’t imagine his

playthings living long. Especially if the last one was anything to go by.”

I smirk. The last one lasted one night, but that was long before we met him. It sounds like someone is jealous. “If she is stupid enough to let him between her legs, that’s on her.”

His jaw sets hard. He doesn’t like that idea at all. I push up from my chair and shut my laptop down.

“Stop worrying, she is here of her own free will. She wants to find her sister, and she is lucky that I want to find out who the rat is.”

“And you just plan to hand her sister over and let her go, just that simple.”

I clap him on the back. “Something like that.”

He knows it’s not that simple. If I let them go and they run straight to the cops, it won’t look good for me. I don’t want to hurt them, but Kill has a way of making people keep their mouths shut. But at least she will have her kid sister back after it’s all said and done. Can’t say I would do the same for my own blood. Sarge, I would, but Angelo, I would let them have him. He is a hindrance more than anything.

“If you change your mind, you know where my room is.”

I give him a wink as I exit my office and head upstairs.



CHAPTER TEN

JORDYN

My heart beats erratically in my chest as I run back upstairs to my room. I didn't mean to eavesdrop, or I did, but only once I started listening. They are going to the docks tomorrow. Anger fuels my footsteps away from his office. I wanted nothing more than to barge in there and demand answers, but I'm not a fucking idiot. That would have gotten me a bullet straight between my eyes. A man like Enzo doesn't have feelings. From the little I have seen, Sarge is his voice of reason.

When I get to my room, I quickly strip down and pull on the lingerie left for me. It's not anything I would have chosen and shows way too much skin. I prefer to keep my stomach hidden, for a few reasons. One, it hides my scars. I hate them, but I own them. It kept Pixie safe, which means jack shit now that she is missing.

Standing in front of the full-length mirror in the room, I take a deep breath and suck in my stomach. I'm short which means, for me, I carry the weight in my stomach. I can't hide it, and normally I don't give a fuck. I have tits, an ass, and a stomach which helps me look in proportion, but under the scrutiny of Enzo, I slightly feel inadequate. Someone like him could have anyone that he wants. Hell, Harper would have been a way better fit. She looks like a supermodel.

A light knock on my door has me turning to face the door. "Come in."

The door pushes open, and Enzo steps inside freshly showered, a pair of pajama pants hanging low on his hips. His body is a work of art, literally, he is covered in tattoos. Not that you would know when he is dressed in a suit.

He stands still at the door, his eyes roaming over my body. This is when I would normally curl into myself, hide my stomach, and hope to fuck he didn't notice. Yet, as his eyes wander, a heat builds between my legs. Shit, he is intense.

"Ready for bed?" he asks. I nod and walk across the room. He leads the way, and I follow. This is it. I am officially screwed. Enzo is the only man that I have ever willingly given myself to, which is really fucking sad if you think about it. Even though it's a means to an end, he can help me find Pixie.

I'm no idiot. I didn't think it was going to be as simple as he finds her, and we run off into the sunset and live our lives. You don't get something for nothing. It's why he is paying me. If he was to do this in exchange for finding my sister, he would have to let us walk away. Or if it was black and white, he would, but by paying me, if he finds my sister, who fucking knows what I will have to do for our freedom. But since I have no actual contacts besides low-level gang bangers, what choice do I have? And it's not like fucking Enzo is a chore. He is a woman's wet dream. A hard, toned body, natural sun-kissed skin, and brown eyes that look like the color of whiskey that can bring you to your knees with just one look. Whether that look is bringing you pain or pleasure, it doesn't matter. And the man has an ass that looks like it was sculpted by the gods and should be on display in a museum.

"Night, Doll," Sarge says, pulling me out of my Enzo induced stupor as we walk past his bedroom. He is leaning against the door in workout clothes. My mouth waters at the sight of him. I knew his muscles were big from the way his suit shirt hugged his biceps, but his naked chest is perfection.

"Night, Sarge," I say politely, but keep walking, feeling his eyes burn into my back. What is with all of this sexual tension? I have never been so aware of it before. I guess good-looking men will do that to a girl.

The lights are low when we enter Enzo's room. Large sliding doors that lead out to a private balcony are open, and the sheer lace curtains lightly blow in the breeze. He steps up behind me and places a light kiss on my shoulder. It's a tender meeting of his lips against my skin, but I clamp my eyes closed and take a few deep breaths, reminding myself he isn't like the monsters from my past; he isn't taking what he wants. I'm here of my own free will.

"Relax, Doll, I won't hurt you."

My body relaxes instantly into his touch. His hands glide down my arms, not too fast or too slow, as he peppers kisses along my shoulder.

So many questions fill my head. Why is he going to the docks? Is my sister there, and if so, does he plan to tell me? I'm going to follow him if he doesn't, even if I get myself killed. Time is running out for Pixie.

I close my eyes and let the feel of his lips drown out the thoughts. I can't afford to get fired on my first day here.

"Fuck you're beautiful, Doll," he says, running his hand down my stomach, stopping just before the top of my underwear. "And we have an audience."

Opening my eyes, I scan the room and don't see anyone, not until the curtains shift with the wind, and I see Killian standing on the balcony. Enzo dips his hand beneath my panties and glides a finger across my clit ring, sending a shiver down my spine. His finger dips down further, and he spreads my lips apart, coating his fingers in my wetness.

"Fuck, you're wet. Can I taste you?"

My head nods of its own accord. Do I want this man's head between my legs? Fuck yes, I do. He moves from behind me. It would have been easier to spin me, but he leaves me facing Killian. It seems that Enzo likes to be watched. He pulls my breasts from the lacey bra and sucks a nipple into his mouth. A moan leaves my lips. My nipple pops from his mouth, and he feathers kisses down my body until his fingers

hook into my underwear. He slides them down my legs, letting them drop to the floor, and I step out of them.

“Brace your hand on my shoulder and hook your left leg up as well.”

I do as he asks, and his head dives between my thighs, his tongue sweeping across my bare pussy. The light flick of my clit ring has me bucking my hips forward.

“Oh, fuck,” I pant when his tongue pushes inside me. The sensation is foreign, but right here, right now, I don’t know why I haven’t been doing this for years. I grind against his face, chasing my release before all of this becomes too good to be true.

My eyes spring open again at the realization that we are being watched. Killian has moved in closer and leans against the balcony door. He watches on as if he is committing the sight before him to memory. His hard cock strains against his black jeans. I want him to move further into the room. He shakes his head no, as if he can read my mind. He lowers the zip on his jeans, and my eyes widen as he pulls out the monster between his legs. I didn’t know cocks could come that big. He smirks as he wraps his hand around his length and strokes himself. My orgasm starts to build low in my stomach, the slight pressure that warns you good things are coming. While I’m not one that has ever had sex before for pleasure, I have always gotten myself off. I’m still human and have needs, and Harper wouldn’t let it fly when she found out a few years ago that I didn’t even have a vibrator.

“Fuck, don’t stop, please don’t stop,” I beg as the first wave of pleasure hits, and my nails dig into Enzo’s shoulder. He sucks my clit into his mouth, and I’m gone, tipped over the edge as my body convulses.

Killian still watches me. I can feel his eyes even when I look away. Enzo stands, and something comes over me. I feel in control and powerful under the watchful eye of two men. I push up onto my toes and press my lips against Enzo’s, and I taste myself on his tongue. In the heat of the moment, I jump up into his arms, and he walks us backwards until my back

smashes against a wall, and our kiss turns heated. He fights for power and control as his hand comes between us, and before I can move, he thrusts inside me.

I whimper ever so softly. The way he moves against me, grinding into my pussy, and the movement of my clit ring has me matching his movements. He doesn't let up; he dominates me, and sweat clings to our bodies.

Suddenly, he moves us from against the wall and takes me over to his bed. We both drop down together, and his dick stays securely inside me as he tucks my legs up onto his shoulders. The new angle has me seeing stars, and screams of pleasure filling the room.

He doesn't let up; he is brutal, pumping in and out of me, drawing every ounce of pleasure from my body that he can get until another orgasm has me clamp so hard around his cock as wave after wave hits, and it doesn't stop until he comes.

When I look over at the balcony, Killian is gone, and Enzo flops down beside me, pulling my sweaty body into his, wrapping an arm around my waist.

So the boss likes to cuddle.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

SARGE

Everything's in place for our meet with Zayne, but I don't trust him and for good reason. If someone has a product that can stop dogs from alerting there are drugs inside— even if it's swabbed and it will turn up negative—then that person has something worth its weight in gold. Zayne will not hand it over just because of his loyalty to the D'Arco family.

My head has been cloudy all day from lack of sleep. I listened to Jordyn's screams of pleasure last night. Not just once, either. Enzo worked her body until all hours of the morning.

I don't know what it is about this girl, but she reminds me of my wife. Every bone in my body wants me to protect her. My head catches on quickly to that thought and dismisses the idea. I left my new guy to keep an eye on her. He is young, barely twenty-one, but he is good. She was going out with her friend, Harper. Enzo practically pushed her out the door. She isn't his prisoner, and she can come and go as she pleases as long as she has security with her. Which she rolled her eyes at and confidently told him that no one was stealing his whore. What she doesn't realize is his enemies won't know that she is paid. They will just see a beautiful girl on his arm and want her out of spite. Enzo is a good man. He takes care of the people around him, right down to his cook, so long as you follow his instructions. The only people to ever question him and live to talk about it are me and Killian. Enzo knows

Killian is insane and would not even flinch if a gun were held to his head. And I have more than demonstrated my worth.

I pull the black SUV up to the gate at the docks, and we all exit the vehicle. Enzo instructs us to keep our weapons away. He expects the meet to go smoothly, but I'm not so confident. He straightens his jacket and moves forward, pushing the gate until it opens, and we all walk in. Enzo has a shipment sitting in the docks right now. The soldiers will move it out once we have left.

Zayne is leaning against the shipping container, waiting for us. He is a weedy-looking kid in baggy clothes and a beanie pulled over his mid-length hair and black-rimmed glasses way too big for his face. He pushes forward and shakes hands with Enzo. Kill has vanished. He will look around to make sure that he didn't bring anyone with him, and I will stand out of earshot so they can talk in private. It's Enzo's way of punishing me for not taking his job offer.

Enzo opens the shipping container, and he and Zayne step inside. They are inside for less than five minutes when a shrill scream fills the air. When Enzo and Zayne step out of the container, red dots cover Zayne's chest, and his hands fly up into the air. I move to Enzo's side, ready to extract him or protect him by any means necessary.

"Just me, boss man!" Kill yells out as he steps from between two shipping containers with someone thrown over his shoulder. He drops the person to the ground, and I only realize that it's Jordyn when he pulls her up by her gray hair, so she is standing on her feet. My heart beats frantically in my chest. I want to hurt him. He can't hurt her, but I stand still beside Enzo and will see how it plays out. I thought for sure Kill was enthralled by her, but his need for violence will win out every damn time.

Enzo moves closer to her, and she fights against Kill's grip. "Let me fucking go, you asshole."

"Why are you here, Doll," he asks, gripping her chin and forcing her to look up at him. She tries to move her head so he lets go, but he doesn't.

“I won’t ask again. What are you doing here?”

“I want my sister. You’re a liar. Why would you come here and not tell me? We had a deal.”

Enzo smiles at her. “Baby girl, we had no deal. You’re a whore. I said I would find her, yes, but what I’m doing here is none of your concern.”

“Please let me hurt her,” Killian pleads, excitement lacing his tone.

“I can’t trust you anymore, Doll, and you have overheard business. I can’t let that slide, but fuck if you’re not a good lay.”

“What are you going to do? Kill me, just do it without my sister. I will do it for you,” she snaps. “And I’m not a fucking whore.”

Killian laughs. “Poppet, it’s literally your job description.”

She cackles. “I didn’t even work there, but when the big man says jump, clearly everyone jumps. All I want is to find my fucking sister, even if it means giving away the one thing I held on to, consent.”

She shocks the shit out of both Enzo and Killian. I see it just for a split second before their masks come back up.

“So, take from me, Enzo, even if it’s my life. You will be just like every other man.”

Tears fall down her face, and I hold still, torn between the feelings she erupts in me and my loyalty to Enzo. I can’t let him kill her. He presses his Glock to her head; she doesn’t beg for her life like many do.

“If you find my sister, tell her I love her,” she whispers as tears fill her eyes.

“What if we don’t kill her?”

Both Kill and Enzo whip their heads to face me, and Kill laughs. “You’re fucking weak.”

“Why don’t you give her the new soldier treatment?” I suggest. It could work. If anyone can make her loyal to us

through his whacked-out methods, it's Kill, and at least she doesn't have to die.

Kill shrugs. "It could work. If it doesn't, I'll kill her myself."

Enzo narrows his eyes but thinks it over. "Is that what you want, Doll? To be left in the hands of a madman, your loyalty tested? You'll no longer be my guest. You will belong to me."

"Will you find my sister?" she asks. Her big blue eyes look up at him with so much hope that I feel sad for her. She is so lost at how to save her sister that she would put all of her trust in a man she doesn't know.

"I'm a man of my word, even if your life ends tonight."

He is telling the truth. The one good thing about Enzo is his word.

"I'll do it. It can't be worse than what men have already done to me," she says, defeated and ready to accept her fate. If she survives his technique, she will be stronger for it.

"Take her home, but just know, Doll, I don't give second chances. You're lucky Sarge has a soft spot for you."

Killian throws Jordyn over his shoulder with a smile that could rival The Joker. "We are going to have so much fun, Poppet; I'm going to enjoy breaking you."

She doesn't respond or kick up a stink. I stand and watch until they are no longer in sight and turn back to Enzo and hope like hell there are no more hiccups tonight.



CHAPTER TWELVE

JORDYN

Two days. That's how long I have been in the basement with Killian, and he hasn't spoken to me, nor has he even hurt me. He makes sure I have just enough water to not die. Killian likes to begin his day as soon as the sun comes up. He starts with push-ups, which is at least something to watch to ward off the boredom. I have had enough of the silent treatment, and I know he is waiting for me to crack first.

"Are we getting on with the torture today?" I ask. He looks up from the bench where he is sharpening his knives and shrugs.

"Do you think you can hack it?"

"Only one way to find out."

Killian nods and stands from his chair, walks straight past me and up the stairs. Not even five minutes go past, and Sarge comes storming downstairs. His eyes look sad when he looks at me hanging from the ceiling.

"Are you okay?" he asks, barely above a whisper, and I nod. I'm weak but still alive.

"I'm going to tell you a secret, one you can't tell Kill. He is going to try any means necessary to get the information from you. You tell him, and he will most likely kill you if I confirm it to be the information that I told you."

I nod. It seems easy enough. Many men have tried to break me, to make me beg them to stop. I never do. What's the point? Begging would make them enjoy it more. I learned the hard way with my tears the first few years, so what's the point?

He steps up to me and leans in close. The smell of his cologne hits my nose. He smells like fresh water with notes of citrus. "When you were fucking Enzo, I had my cock in my hand. No woman has interested me since my wife died."

My breath hitches at the mention of his wife dying. "I hope you survive this, because I would love to bury myself inside your warm pussy. Don't die on me."

"I won't, I promise," I whisper.

"Don't make promises you can't keep. He has shown an interest in you. Use it against him and play him at his own game. All you have to do is to survive the next few days."

He doesn't wait for my response. He storms out of the room, and it's a minute later that Killian comes back down the stairs. I watch him as he walks around the room and packs away the knives that he had out on the stainless-steel counter, except for one. He picks it up and comes to stand face to face with me.

"Let's see if you're as tough as I think you are, Poppet. It would be a genuine tragedy if I had to snuff out the fire in your eyes."

The knife slices down the front of my shirt with skilled precision. He strips me of my clothes, leaving me before him in nothing but my underwear. He takes a step back and runs his eyes over my skin without saying a word.

He finally blinks and turns, opening a large chest freezer and pulls out a large shard of ice. "Let's start this off nice and easy, Poppet. Tell me what Sarge said before I came downstairs."

I snort. "What are you going to do? Beat me to death with an ice dildo?"

“I could fuck you with it,” he says, running the solid lump of ice over my nipple that hardens instantly.

“You wouldn’t be the first man to fuck me without consent, Killian. I’m slightly disappointed that is where you want to start off this relationship.”

“That’s the thing. You consented to being here, to me doing what needs to be done, so don’t lie to yourself.”

He slides the ice down my stomach agonizingly slowly. Heat pools between my legs. I clamp them together the best that I can. What sort of person gets turned on by threats of violence? I’m so broken he may as well kill me and put me out of my misery.

“Do you want to tell me what he said?” I purse my lips and shake my head no. “Good, now we can get the party started. The ice dick was for my benefit. One day I will fuck you with it, right here chained to the ceiling while you’re naked before me.”

“Is that your kink, Killian, tying up girls and having your way with them?”

He laughs. It’s almost silent but creepily erotic. “I don’t fuck anyone and haven’t in a long time. The last one touched me, and I cut her head off. I’m a dangerous man, Poppet.”

“Your cock seems to like me,” I say, diverting my eyes to his crotch. It would be impossible to hide the monster in his pants. My mind wanders to how it would even fit.

“And that is why I’m in a conundrum. I don’t want to kill you, but if I had to, I would prefer to fuck you first. It’s a win-win for me that way.”

I raise a brow at him. “So what you’re saying is fucking you is a sure way to end up dead.”

“Yes.”

“Noted.”

He studies my body, his eyes tracing over every scar that’s visible to the eye. “I think we should open some old wounds.”

I close my eyes. I had a gut feeling he would start there, make me weak, and pull me into memories I would rather forget.

“How about we start here?” He runs the tip of his knife along a scar on my right thigh, slicing cleanly over the small puckered skin.

I hiss and welcome the pain. He is wrong about reminiscing. I have learned to live with the fucked-up memories. I would do it all again if I had to. They have all mistaken my niceness as a weakness. I’m far from it. I lived through way too much. Everything I do is for Pixie. She is the reason I fight to live daily. I would have given up a long time ago if it weren’t for her.

“Does that one have a story?” he asks, and I nod.

“Yep, I was fifteen, and Mom’s random fuck woke up in the middle of the night. He used his little pocketknife and pressed it to my throat and accidentally cut me when he tried to put his little pin dick inside me. The idiot didn’t keep it pressed against my throat; multitasking wasn’t his jam.”

A darkness flashes across his eyes, so fast I could have missed it if I blinked. The next few hours go much the same. He targets the small scars, the ones I could have forgotten about. The idiot thinks he can get me to talk over little knicks of the skin, but something tells me this is just the beginning. He is trying to wear me down first. Let me take the easy way out. Does he not realize that death has always been the easy way out? Huntersville does that to people.

Killian left me. It could have been an hour ago, or maybe more. Who has the concept of time when they are strung up and bleeding onto the floor? His loud footsteps alert me of his return. He comes down with a bottle in his hands.

“I have come to clean you up. Can’t have you die of an infection. What fun would that be?”

“Oh, hell no,” I say, and wiggle my body. That asshole has alcohol. Harper has helped clean me up so many times, and it stings like a bitch. Oh, he is better than I gave him credit for.

Would it be silly if I prefer getting cut and letting the wounds heal by themselves instead of cleaning them up?

“Hold still, this is going to sting like a son of a bitch, unless you want to tell me Sarge’s little secret.”

“Nice try,” I smile. “Stop taking it easy on me. Do you chain up all the new soldiers and pussyfoot around like a little bitch?”

“Fine,” he snaps, unscrewing the cap, and tips it over my head. Every cut it runs over burns. I grit my teeth together and close my eyes, imagining my sister is safe in her bed at my new apartment.

“What if I made you a deal? Tell me, and I will save your sister.”

My eyes fling open, and I breathe hard through my nose. It’s a trick. He won’t go against Enzo. He is nothing more than a shit kicker himself. If his usefulness ran out, he would be dead.

“And pray tell how you would do that behind the big man’s back. Nah, you’re loyal or you wouldn’t be his torture guy. He wouldn’t trust you with the kills. And something tells me that the men who have my sister are close to Enzo. It’s personal for him now, and it’s why I didn’t trust him to be truthful with me, so I followed him. I could give two shits about his crime crap. I’m not an idiot, I know who he is, but I don’t fucking care.”

He growls deep in his chest and throws the bottle. I jump at the sound and flinch when shards of glass fly back at me. *Good one Jordyn, now you have made him mad.*



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KILLIAN

Starting her slow was the stupidest fucking thing that I could have done. The girl is smart; she has been using the time to dissect me, figure out what makes me tick. I guess I should have known. A girl from the slums would know how to manipulate grown men. They have to, to survive. I never start slow on the men who come through my door. Every single one of our soldiers has scars from our time together, but I know they can withstand me. They have our loyalty.

I light a cigarette while I think; I don't want her stuck down here for days, but I need to up the pain. Her head hangs, and her hair covers her face. She must be starving by now. The first two nights, I gave her a sedative and unhooked her, hanging her back up just before she woke up. Tonight, she won't have the same luxury. She must need to use the bathroom, and that's where we will start for now. I will take away her dignity. No one likes to soil themselves.

I turn my back on her and turn the faucet on, just a small dribble, enough to spark the need to pee. Her eyes snap open once I turn around, and she sneers at me. I see the defiance in her eyes, and before I know it, she wets herself. Shit, I figured she would put up more of a fight.

“Come on, Kill, just do it already. FUCKING HURT ME!”

Three quick strides and I reach her, pressing the cigarette into her old burn scar. The skin melts beneath it, and her shrill

screams fill the air as she yanks against her chains. “You want more?”

“Yes, hurt me. Do what needs to be done. My arms are sore, I’m hungry, and I pissed myself. Let’s do this.”

I nod, heading over to my toolbox, and remove a plumber’s torch, placing it down on the bench. I reach up and pull down a box from the top shelf full of small branding letters I made just for this.

Grabbing the tools that I need, I circle her, lighting the torch. She doesn’t pull away, nor does she scream for help. I search her skin for the perfect spot. Maybe I could brand her ass, but what fun is that? No one would ever see it. I spot a puffy straight scar on her shoulder blade, perfect. I heat the brand until it glows and drop the torch, rounding her and pressing it to her skin. Her screams are like music to my ears, and it’s why I held back. I wouldn’t be able to stop now until she spills her guts or she dies.

“Do you have anything to tell me, Poppet?”

“Is that all you got? The seedy rapists do better than that.”

I smirk at her flare and unhook her from the ceiling, leaving the chains in place. I don’t have to drag her. She willingly follows me into the next room until we get to the barrel of water placed by the sink. I turn the water pump off and remove it. I would hate to drown someone in stagnant water.

She doesn’t fight me when I wrap my tattooed fingers around her hair, or when I yank her head back so my mouth rests against the shell of her ear. “Ready to talk yet? Just tell me what he said, and I will make your death painless.”

“Fuck you!”

“Yes, please,” I whisper. “All of this is foreplay for me: the blood, my name on your skin, and your screams of pain. The way my name sounds so sweet on your lips, but Killian died a long time ago, along with any chance of me feeling remorse for what I’m about to do.”

She fucking smirks. “Killian, drown me already and press your cock against my ass while you do it. You might as well kill two birds with one stone since I will probably die here.”

I run my tongue over her blistered skin where the word Kill is forever burned into her. With no warning, I push her head into the barrel and hold her under. Starting out small, I bring her up for air after a few seconds before plunging her head back under, each time longer and longer. Her gasps get louder every time I drag her up for air, making my cock rock hard behind my jeans. Her round ass pushes back, tempting me into taking her, but I can't give in. That's what she wants, to tempt me into either fucking her or killing her. Right now, I'm not exactly sure which one. She clearly isn't going to talk. Her sister means too much to her, but she also doesn't want special treatment.

Bored with the torture of her ass pressing against my cock, I pull her up, and she coughs, bringing up water. I let her fall to the floor, where she rolls on her side, her eyes closed as she catches her breath.

“Is that all you got?” she taunts. Her laughter echoes in the small room as I reach down and drag her body back into the main area. I need to recoup, and I know just how to get her to talk. The basement is massive in the house, and I really only use this room, but a door off to the side leads down a hallway to other rooms that hold some of my other toys. Ones I don't get to use nearly enough. Most of the men I bring here don't even make it out of the main room before I kill them. Given I can cut off body parts easier above the drain in the floor.

Jordyn slowly gets to her feet when I pull her up by her arm. She slowly follows behind me as I open the door, and we walk down the hall. The room at the end is one I build shit in—what can I say I'm good with my hands—and I just so happened to make her a casket while she slept last night. I flick on the light, and she looks at the wooden box. It's nothing special, made from materials I had lying around the yard.

“Awe, you made this for me,” she says when she reads her name scrawled across the lid in old English.

“I even dug the hole to bury you in. Normally, we have a clean-up crew to get rid of the bodies, but since I haven’t killed a woman in a very long time, I wanted it to be special.”

“And you said Killian was gone. I think you keep him locked up tight, so you don’t get hurt. Maybe it’s me who should ask what Killian’s trauma is and why he likes me.”

“Get in the box,” I snap, and she giggles.

Opening the lid, she looks inside. It’s bare besides a beach towel I had down here. Once I help her in and she closes her eyes, I shut the top and click the padlock in place so she can’t escape. I turn the sound machine on that I have programmed to sound like she is being buried alive and have the timer on for the room to get warm enough that it’s stuffy as fuck inside that box.

There are holes on the underside, enough that she won’t suffocate. Flicking off the light, I exit the room and head upstairs to my bedroom to take a much-needed shower.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

JORDYN

This is where I'm going to die. I know it, and so does Killian. I could see it in his eyes. Darkness blinds me as the sound of dirt being shovelled surrounds me. It should scare me, any normal person would be, but that's the thing. My worst fear has already come true. Someone got to my sister, and if I can't find her before they ship her off to God knows where, what's the point in living anymore? If Enzo finds her, what state would she even be in? What about the guilt that will eat at me day in and day out having to watch the pain she will be in? Can I even deal with that?

Sweat lines my brow. I can't reach up to wipe it away. All I can do right now is sleep and wait to see what he does to me next. The burn on my back aches along with my shoulders from holding up my weight for so long. The small cuts on my skin are a welcome sting. They help center my pain as tears well in my eyes while I have privacy, deathly afraid I won't ever see Pixie again.

The silence is painful and sleep evades me. Thoughts of the vile things that could be happening to my sister play over and over in my head. I wish I knew when Killian was coming back. The pain at least kept my mind at bay, but my thoughts are more dangerous than he could ever be.

The sound of boots gets a little closer, but they never come the full way down the hallway. "Killian! Get me out of here,

hurt me, you pussy little bitch, fuck me,” I lower my voice slightly, defeated. “Just need these thoughts to go away.”

The sound of the boots gets closer, and the light flicks on. The jingle of keys has me excited that it’s all about to end. I slam my eyes shut when the light streams into the coffin. I only blink them open when a shadow falls over me, and Killian’s face looks down at me.

“Ready to talk?”

“I’m ready for you to end me. I can’t live with these thoughts anymore. Imagining what they are doing to my baby sister. I need you to kill me.”

“Happily if you tell me what Sarge said before I came down here.”

I shake my head. “I can’t. I need Enzo to know he could have trusted me. He needs to save her. I’m not strong enough. I lived through the depravity of men. I know what they are capable of... Oh, shit.”

I dry retch, and Killian rips me from the coffin before I throw up at his feet again. “This is becoming a habit now, Poppet.”

I nod but don’t respond. I’m done. I need this to end. “Good news, though, boss man wants to talk to you.”

I follow him through the basement. My body hurts, and exhaustion seeps in. I just need to sleep, and if I’m lucky, I won’t wake up again.

Normally, I would chastise myself for those kinds of thoughts. I have fought way too hard in this life to just give up, but time is ticking down, and I’m no closer to finding my sister. I put my faith in a man to find her, something I normally would never do, and I fucked up enough to be tortured both physically and mentally for the last few days.

We make it upstairs. The natural light burns my eyes. Kill leads the way, pulling ahead because I just can’t keep up with his pace. My legs start to wobble and spots dance along my vision. Before everything went black, I hear someone shout my name before my legs give out, and my eyes fall closed.

“What the fuck did you do?”

Voices rise, but my eyes refuse to open.

“I went easier on her than I normally would on any other man. I have no doubt that she is a fortress. She wants Enzo to find her sister and would die before she spilled her guts.”

“Good, now fuck off and tell Enzo he can kiss my ass. I will bring her up to him when she is decent. He can at least give her that.”

A deep chuckle makes me force my eyes open, blinking a few times to adjust to the light. The room is unfamiliar, but the two faces staring down at me are not.

“So I guess I wasn’t lucky. Death didn’t take away this fucked up life.”

“Poppet, anytime you want to walk the line between life and death, you know where to find me.”

I smile at him before he turns and leaves the room. Sarge cautiously sits down beside me. “I have run you a bath and put some towels in there before you see Enzo.”

“I fucked up with him, didn’t I?”

Sarge nods. “He won’t be the same man you met. He won’t see you as an employee now. You will be his property. You’re in now, and the only way out is death. He will kill you before he lets you leave.”

“As long as he finds my sister, I don’t care. I will do whatever he wants.”

Sarge nods as if he understands, and maybe he does. He told me that his wife died, and it’s possible Enzo helped him with that, and he owes him.

“Let’s get you cleaned up. Enzo doesn’t like to be kept waiting.”

Sarge stands and holds out his hand for me. When his skin touches mine, it tingles, and butterflies swarm in my stomach. Looking up at him, his gaze locks with mine, and it’s almost as

if he can see deep into my soul. Snatching my hand back and diverting my eyes, I swing my legs around.

I push myself up, and my fucking legs buckle beneath me. Sarge catches me and pulls me in close to his side, taking the brunt of my weight. “Let me help you.”

“Okay,” I whisper.

He helps me into his ensuite, and a bath has been run. When he lets go of me, I still can't stand without my legs wobbling. “Lean against the counter, and I will help remove your clothes.”

I don't argue. What's the point? I have spent years hiding my scars away from others, not wanting their pitying looks, questions, or offers of help. He reaches around my back and unhooks my bra. Killian stripped me of all my clothes in his basement and left me in my underwear. Relief washes over me as my breasts spring free. My stomach dips when he hooks his fingers into the side of my briefs, the backside of his pointer fingers gliding along my skin as he pulls them down. Looking down, his eyes are on me.

He clears his throat and stands once my underwear hits the floor. “I'm going to lift you into the tub so you don't hurt yourself.”

I nod, giving him consent. He lifts me and cradles me into his chest, taking me to the massive freestanding bathtub and gently lowers me in. I hiss as the water covers my body, and Sarge winces at my pain. “Sorry, I put some antiseptic in. You have a lot of open wounds and a burn. Once you get out, I will put some cream and bandages on you.”

“Thank you. You didn't have to help me.”

“You're welcome, and I did. It's hard enough to sleep at night as it is.”

I let my eyes flutter closed and relax under the watchful eye of a man just as capable of taking my life as the others. But oddly, I feel safe. Some people would call me stupid, but the issue is you have to be scared of death to really feel fear. Death is not something I fear. I have made peace with

knowing the statistics of living past the age of thirty if I continue living in Huntersville.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ENZO

My mother screams down the phone. I have filled her in on my plans, and she isn't happy. I really don't need her permission. She walked away after my father died and no longer gets a say. Sometimes I think she still sees me as a child, not a man who runs this family.

My patience is already wearing thin. Sarge has gone and started forming an attachment to the hooker, even though she claims she wasn't working there. I didn't care enough to check her claims. It was her job description here until she stuck her nose into my business. I secretly hoped that she couldn't withstand Kill. It would make the problem go away and keep Sarge off my back. He is my conscience, the reason I need him around, and yet something feels different. The way he looked at the girl scared me. She has the potential to make him weak, just like his wife did. Falling in love is too complicated in my world. It's a weakness men can prey on. It's why I just called my mother and informed her she needs to get her ass on our private jet and be back here within a week. The entire family will gather for my engagement party.

My father had a way he liked things to run, as did his father and so on. Marriage before you're thirty was one of them. At least I had the luxury of picking my bride. If I hadn't, I would have been stuck with Catalina Mancini. I shudder at the thought. We dated on and off for years, but not so long ago, I ended it for good. She is beautiful and fits the part of a

'mafia' wife but is far from loyal; a better-suited bride for my brother since he wanted her so much. Her father and mine have known each other since they were children, so Cat and I grew up together. It was always joked about that one day we would get married, and not so joked about by my father that if I wasn't married by thirty, I would be a man and do what needed to be done. Which my mother kindly reminded me of last week, and again yesterday when I stupidly told her I had been seeing someone and I was going to ask her to marry me. She hung up on me while cursing me out and just called me back to see if there was any way for me to change my mind. I won't. Even if I'm in a loveless marriage, I refuse to marry the whore who fucked my brother.

It's the reason I told Kill to bring the girl to see me. Sarge had stormed in here after Killian told me that Sarge had taken Doll to get cleaned up. He told me I was an asshole and that she needed rest. I wasn't in the mood to argue yesterday, but right now, after talking to my mother, I'm in a mood. Storming out of my office, I go on the hunt for my future bride. Her bedroom door is wide open, and her room is empty. Laughter catches my attention, and I find her sitting on Sarge's bed, a smile on her face as he does push-ups while she counts.

"So, is that what I pay you both to do?" I snap. My mother has clearly put me in a foul mood.

I raise a brow, and Sarge jumps to his feet. He won't take my shit, even if I could end his life. Sarge hasn't cared about dying for eight years. After his wife died, so did a massive part of him. It makes him a very valuable asset, along with Killian. It's genius, really, building an army of men who don't care if they live or die.

"Do you even pay me anymore? Don't you own me? I'm your property," she snaps. I get it, she is pissed at me, but she brought this on herself. I didn't force her to follow me.

"I do, and my mother is coming into town for our engagement party." Her eyes go wide. "And you will make your first appearance as my fiancée. As for paying you, no, not anymore, you will have access to money when you need it. A prenup is being drawn up that you won't question. I told you I

would find your sister, and I'm a man of my word. So listen carefully when I tell you if you step out of line again, I will kill you. Fuck my brother, and I will kill you. If I can't find you, I will kill you. If you don't make our engagement look real..."

"Yeah, yeah, you will kill me. Stop throwing it around like it should scare me. We can clear this up now. I won't snitch about anything I see or hear, I will be the best fucking fiancée you will ever have, I have zero interest in fucking your brother, keep me in the loop about my sister, and I won't step out of line. And since I'm no longer your paid whore, don't expect me to keep your bed warm."

I move swiftly across the room, and her eyes widen when she realizes I'm moving toward her. She backs up on Sarge's bed, her back against the headboard. Crawling up the bed, I crowd her space.

"You belong to me. If I want you underneath me, you will do it. If I want to watch you suck Sarge's cock, you will do it. There is no room for negotiation anymore. I hold all the cards in my hands, along with what happens to your sister when I find her. You might not be afraid to die, Doll, but I can't imagine you would want the same fate for your sister."

"Please, just save her. I will do whatever you want, when you want it. I can't let her suffer the way I did, or it was all for nothing."

"Good, we have an understanding."

I push up onto my knees and slide off the bed, straightening my jacket. "Sarge, you take Doll shopping. I expect her closet to be full on your return. Kill will come with me in your place today."

Moving closer to him, I lean in and lower my voice. "You might have a soft spot for her, and that's fine. Fuck her if that's what works for you. But don't ever fucking undermine me around her. Remember your place."

"Sure thing, Boss."

Thankfully, he understands what he did. I find Kill in the basement sharpening an ax when I tell him he is with me today since Sarge is with Doll. He complains about having to come to a stupid poker game but quickly pulls it back when I remind him that someone is snatching little girls, and it's coming from within the family, which means I could have a target on my back. I only trust two people with my life, and he is one of them. So he heads up security. If Sarge can't, he can skulk back into the darkness in a few hours.

Following the car's GPS, it brings us to a run-down warehouse in Huntersville. Kill got out of Alek that the man he sold Pixie to played poker here. Fuck, I don't want to park my car here; knowing my luck, it will have no fucking wheels by the time we are done.

Kill lights a cigarette the second he gets out of the car. He doesn't wait for me to exit. I quickly get out and follow him with my eyes. He walks up to a group of kids loitering out the front.

“A thousand dollars if the car has all its parts when we return, or I will hunt you down and kill every single one of you.”

I snort. One of the kids' eyes widen at my presence. He clearly knows who I am. I wouldn't be surprised if someone close to him works for me.

Killian moves to the old metal door and knocks. “Password,” a gruff voice says from behind it.

“Open the door, or you're taking your last breath here tonight.”

I step into view. “Always with the violence.”

“Shit, Mr. D'Arco, come in. It's an honor to have you here.”

The man opens the door all the way and steps aside to let us in. Women dressed in nothing but a thong that leaves

nothing to the imagination walk around serving drinks, tables are set up around the room surrounded by men in suits, some in baggy clothes, and others who look like they need to slip back into their minivans and go back to their middle-class lives.

“Recognize anyone?” Kill asks, and I shake my head no. Maybe the man we are after isn’t here. “Is that?”

He spots Angelo at the same time as I do. I swipe a drink from a tray as a woman walks past. Kill side steps aside when she tries to reach out and touch his shoulder. We really don’t need a blood bath to clean up tonight.

Kill falls in step with me until we are standing over the table. Four men sit with my brother, and they all look up. A variety of expressions fill their faces. One man stupidly stares open-mouthed at Kill. He moves fast, striking the young man in the neck. The poor bastard gasps for air.

“Brother,” Angelo says haughtily, “Are you following me?”

I ignore his question. “You going to introduce me to your friends?”

I take an empty seat and wait. He sighs. “If I must. Kody, Garrett, Ace, and Tony, meet my older brother.”

They all mumble hellos, minus Kody, who is recovering from being hit in the neck. The Tony at this table is not one that I have ever met before, a real sketchy-looking fucker. The grease in his hair could deep fry a whole fucking meal.

I push back from my seat and stand. “It was nice to meet you all, but my business here is done.”

I take a step back, and Kill rounds the table, his hunting knife pulled from the back of his pants pressed to Tony’s throat. Whispers start around the room.

“Eyes down and play your fucking hand. There is nothing to see here.”

“Are you fucking kidding me?” Angelo snaps.

“Don’t worry your pretty little head. I promise to return him, whether or not it’s in pieces is entirely up to Tony.”

Kill gets the man from his seat and drags him from the building. I lean over my brother’s shoulder and whisper in his ear.

“I’ll see you at home, brother.”



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

JORDYN

Something is going on. Killian has been locked up in the basement for days. Enzo had me move all of my new clothes into his room. There is no trace of me in the room that he gave me. His mother is due in any second. He and Sarge went to pick her up.

Placing the last flower into a vase, I turn to move it into the main lounge room. If we want to make this fake engagement seem real, his house needs a feminine touch, and that is why I charged thousands of dollars of flowers to his credit card.

“You could have just called his assistant. She would have had a decorator come in and do it.”

Almost dropping the flowers, I turn to face Angelo. “Maybe, but it gave me something to do.”

“Other than my brother paying you to suck his cock?”

“Why do you care? I see the revolving door of women.”

He shrugs. “I didn’t say I cared, but if you’re going to fool my mother, you might want to stop looking at the bodyguard with hearts in your eyes. Whatever they have over you, run while you can.”

“I can’t do that.”

He moves into the room and takes the vase from my hands, sets it down, and starts to fix the flower arrangement.

“Mother will know you’re a newbie. This is terrible.”

I eye him suspiciously. Enzo seems to think his brother will try to sleep with me to get under his skin.

“Who am I kidding? She will know because you’re not his usual type.”

He turns and runs his eyes over my body. “You’re not tall enough, your legs are not long enough, your weight...”

“I get it. I’m not a supermodel. Is there a point to all this? I still need to make sure Killian eats.”

Angelo laughs. “You care that the murderer—who clearly roughed you up—eats?”

I shrug. “He was doing his job.”

I won’t mention that being stuck down there was far from fun, but it cemented me in Enzo’s life. I need him to find Pixie. He has the money so I can scour the earth for her if need be. Angelo doesn’t need to know that I have my own motives. Having Enzo, Killian, and Sarge on my side works in my favor, even if a little torture is involved.

“I wonder who he has down there. I haven’t seen him in days.”

I don’t know who is down there, and even if I did, I wouldn’t tell him. Am I curious, yes, but I also won’t risk being chained up again at his mercy so soon. I don’t think he would go easy on me next time. I have run out of chances with all three of them, so if they say jump, I will ask how high, at least until Pixie is found. Then I will find a way to run, to make sure that my sister is safe, away from the monsters of this world.

“How would I know who he has down there? It’s not my business. As enlightening as this conversation has been, I have shit to do.”

I turn on my heels to walk away when Angelo grabs me by the arm and pulls me back into him, my back flush with his

front. “You think that you can just walk in here and disrespect me? I’m Angelo fucking D’Arco. If I want to shove my cock down your throat, I will, and there is nothing you can do about it.”

Angelo kicks my legs out, and I fall to the floor. He walks around me, and when I look up at him, his smile sends chills down my spine. I should have expected it. I let my guard down and should have known better. Men can’t be trusted, ever.

Angelo undoes his zipper. “Take that out, and I will slice it off and feed it to you.”

Both our heads whip toward the entrance to the living room, and Kill leans against the door frame, a sharp knife in his hand and an apple in the other. He cuts a slice and places it into his mouth.

“Fuck off,” Angelo snaps at him.

“Tut tut, little D’Arco, I might not slit your throat while your mother is here, but it would be a real shame if her baby boy were to go missing, and his body washes up with copious amounts of alcohol and party drugs in his system.”

Killian pushes off the doorway and steps into the room. “Get up, Poppet, I will meet you in the kitchen.”

He offers me a hand, and I take it. I smile up at him and don’t bother looking back as I quickly run to the kitchen, my heart going crazy in my chest. I need to arm myself if Angelo is in the same place.

Once I’m in the kitchen, I pull out a plate and serve Killian the food I made. It’s nothing fancy, just some sandwiches that he can take back downstairs with him. He saunters into the kitchen a moment later. He really is the poster boy for nightmares. From his massive combat boots to the dark washed denim jeans that fit like a glove, if said glove was covered in blood. The white shirt he wears clings to his body and is miraculously clean. One side of his face is scarred, and his eye looks frosted over. He has tattoos that travel up his neck to his jaw, and some even go up onto his head, which are easily seen under the shaved sides of his hair.

“If you keep looking at me like that, Poppet, I might be inclined to drag you back downstairs and chain you up, just so I can have my way with you.”

My eyes widen in surprise, surprise that my nipples harden and heat pools between my legs. Is it possible this man turns me on? What the fuck is happening to me? I have gone my entire life not caring for sexual contact, and now my body has decided that killers do it for me.

“Is that your kink?” I ask, sliding the plate across the counter where he sits on the opposite side. He eyes me skeptically.

“Is that for me?”

I nod. “You have been down there a while. I didn’t know if you had food.”

He smirks at me, and I watch as he picks up half a sandwich and bites down on it. When he finishes chewing, he looks up at me. “To answer your question, no, it’s not a kink. Just a safety precaution.”

“From what?” I ask, leaning my elbows on the counter, waiting for an answer.

“Death, I can’t be touched.”

“Why?” I ask curiously.

“That’s a story for another time. I appreciate the sandwich.”

He winks at me with his good eye and gets back to eating. The sound of tires on gravel has sweat instantly form under my arms.

“Do I look fat in this dress?” I ask, and Killian looks up at me and frowns. I have never worn dresses in my life. Giving someone easy access was not at the top of my priority list.

“What would make you think you look fat?”

I sigh. “Just something Angelo said about me not being Enzo’s type and his mom would know.”

“Angelo is a dick. You’re beautiful.”

He stands from his chair and rounds the counter, putting his empty plate into the sink before he turns to face me and steps into my personal space. I take a step back until my back hits the breakfast bar, and my hands clamp around the edges; I don't need Enzo to find my lifeless body on the kitchen floor in front of his mother.

He eyes me warily like a feral animal, and he cages me in, his hands on either side of me. He leans in close; the heat from his face radiates against my skin, and the casual beat of my heart skyrockets.

“There is nothing fat about you, these legs,” he says, moving a hand between my thighs, “were made to be wrapped around a man's face while he eats that sweet pussy and gets trapped between them.”

A light gasp escapes me when his finger runs along the seam of my pussy. He takes a step back, putting some distance between us. “Mark my words, the next time you're chained up, I will eat you out until you pass out, whether you come down willingly or Enzo makes me kill you. That pussy is mine first.”

I swallow and nod like an idiot. The moment is ruined by the sound of heels clicking against the tiled floor.

“Oh my God, Enzo, please tell me you didn't leave your girl here with that serial unaliver.”

A woman around my age in a skintight dress, legs for days, and a mane of luscious curly brown hair comes barreling into the kitchen and is by my side.

“It's lovely to see you again, Charlie,” Killian says. She cuts a glare to him and flips him off.

“It's Charlotte, go back to your dungeon.” She turns to me and smiles.

“Hi, I'm Enzo's cousin, Charlotte. I'm so excited about the wedding, it's been the talk of the family for days now. Wow, I didn't expect you to be so pretty.”

I cough. “Did you expect Enzo to pull someone ugly?” Sarge asks, walking into the kitchen.

“Oh my God, Sergeant, it’s so good to see you,” she squeals and launches herself at him. “And no, I expected someone plastic. Like Catalina.”

Sarge snorts. “Jordyn is far from plastic.”

“Well, this must be the lucky girl,” an older woman’s voice says. I look over, and Enzo is standing beside a woman who is breathtakingly beautiful. She could easily pass as an older sister.

“Mom,” Enzo warns. “Be nice.”

I plaster on a smile, those I’m good at faking, and move around the kitchen island toward Enzo. He holds out a hand, and I take it. He pulls me into his side; I push up onto my tippy toes and my lips press against his. A small whimper escapes me. My lips part, allowing his tongue to slip inside.

“Okay, enough of that,” his mom snaps, clicking her long manicured nails at us. Enzo pulls back and smirks at me.

“I missed you,” he murmurs, and for a split second, I forget that it’s an act. It sounded so natural.

“I missed you too,” I say with a smile, placing a soft peck on his lips. “I hate to have to run out, but my best friend and I have an appointment to get our hair and makeup done.”

It’s not a complete lie, Mavis from the brothel is doing it for us. Then I will meet them at the club. I have missed my best friend, and I told Enzo I would need friends at the party, or it would look suspicious, so all the girls not on shift are coming. With trust issues the length of my arm, I really don’t have any other friends besides a few coworkers from the bar who I also invited.

“Oh, can I come? Please! I promise I won’t get in the way.”

I nod. Harper is the only one who knows the engagement is fake. I told her I can’t talk about details because I have signed an NDA to work here. She is all for a fake wedding. Her advice was to make sure the prenop included some serious cash for me. I didn’t argue with her because I hope that my sister is found long before a wedding has to take place.



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SARGE

Everyone gathers in the club's foyer, but I keep my distance. The D'Arco family women are a lot. Tonight, Enzo insisted I attend as his best friend. The club has its own security, and I'm not needed.

Kill comes to stand beside me, and I narrow my eyes at him. He isn't as dressed up as the rest of us, but for him, it's dressed up with a button-down shirt tucked neatly into his jeans. The sides of his head are cleanly shaven and the top gelled back.

"Since when do you go to events with Enzo?" I ask him.

"Since I don't trust Angelo, he had her on her knees while you were picking up his family."

My teeth grind together. "I vote we kill him, but *you know* his mom is here."

It's not a terrible idea. Angelo is a pain in everyone's ass, though Enzo could send him packing back to Italy with his mother.

The chatter dies down when the main doors open. Jordyn walks in laughing, surrounded by women, all tall and slender. Two men also join them, one in his forties and the other around her age. Kill takes a step forward, and I loop my finger in the back of his jeans and pull him back.

"You can't kill her friends."

“Watch me,” he spits. “The young one keeps touching her arm. At least let me cut his fingers off.”

I shake my head. “Enzo needs this to be believable.”

I focus on Jordyn. She wears a short, long-sleeved black dress that falls to her mid-thighs, and the material isn't tight. It's loose and flowy, and the V shape at the front dips low, showing off plenty of cleavage. But it's the knee-high boots that have my cock hardening, just imagining her stripped bare before me wearing them.

“Are you also picturing her naked?” Kill whispers out of the corner of his mouth, and I nod. What a fucking predicament we have both found ourselves in! I haven't touched a woman in eight years and Kill in over a year; he killed the last one and went celibate. The man loves killing, but under Enzo's reign, killing innocent women is not allowed. Mainly because Enzo knows I will walk if it becomes a regular thing. My wife was innocent, she didn't deserve to die. I wish the assholes took me instead. I may not have deserved it back then, but now, I have a kill list as long as my arm.

“Fuck,” I swear under my breath as Catalina struts through the doors. She looks like she belongs here. Club Pavilion is one of Enzo's classier venues. You won't find techno music and cheap Tuesdays here. It screams power and money, blacks and golds, and servers wearing suits.

Everyone has started to head up to the VIP lounge, where the engagement party will take place. “Go get Jordyn upstairs, and I will intercept the she-bitch.”

Kill nods and pushes off the wall. “And no killing her friends. Play nice.” Killian scowls at me, and I watch as Jordyn's face lights up with a smile as he approaches. One of her friends laughs at something he says and leans over, ready to place her hand on his arm, but Jordyn intercepts and links her arm with her friend, and the group follows Killian.

Catalina sneers at me when I step in front of her. She was beelining straight for Enzo, who is trapped in a conversation with one of his aunts. He nods away and hasn't yet seen his ex.

“Get out of my way.”

I shake my head at her. “Why are you here? I highly doubt that you were invited.”

She cackles at me, and I internally cringe. “Actually, I personally got an invitation from Enzo himself.”

“Well, go ahead. I’m looking forward to the day Kill gets you in the basement. I might actually watch.”

“Catalina, you came.” Enzo’s mother pushes past me and wraps her arms around the dreadful woman. “How is it possible you look more beautiful than the last time I saw you?”

I scoff, and both women narrow their eyes at me, making me shrug. Moving away from the women, I find Enzo. “Sorry to interrupt, but the bride-to-be is looking for you.”

Enzo excuses himself and thanks me for saving him. I don’t tell him that Catalina is here since he invited her until we get to the top of the stairs.

Jordyn is laughing at something the younger male with her is saying. I scan the room for Kill and find him leaning against a wall in the far corner of the room, his eyes trained on her.

“You realize if Catalina touches Jordyn, Kill might murder her in front of everyone?”

Enzo shrugs. “No actual loss. It would remove one headache from my life. My mother wanted her here, and what my mom wants, she gets. One of us is with Doll all night. Make sure Kill knows.”

“I don’t think he could take his eye off her if he wanted to.”

I nod in his direction, and Enzo glances over. “Let’s go and meet my new fiancée’s friends. They look delightful.”

“They’re all prostitutes, besides the two men. They’re from the bar she worked in.”

He nods, and we walk side by side until we reach the group. Enzo slides up behind his bride-to-be and wraps his

arms around her waist and whispers in her ear. She smiles up at him.

The night goes smoothly, and after a few hours, I'm exhausted from making sure that Catalina stays away from Jordyn. The woman is a fucking bitch and has always had her claws deep in the D'Arco men. Once Enzo is married, I wouldn't be surprised if she ends up engaged to Angelo, who has been on his best behavior tonight, mostly because he has followed his brother's ex around like a bad smell.

“Some things never change, huh?”

I turn and see Angelo's best friend, Leo, standing beside me. “You're back, thank God because Enzo is days away from murdering Angelo. Hours if Kill tells him what his brother was doing to his new fiancée.”

“The whole wedding thing. That was fast.”

I watch Jordyn drag Enzo onto the small makeshift dance floor where her friends are shaking their asses. “When you know, you know.”

Leo laughs. The man isn't stupid. It's why Enzo trusts him more than his own brother. “He is paying her, isn't he?”

“Something like that. You missed a lot while you were gone.”

Angelo joins the women on the dance floor, and he gets too close to one of Jordyn's friends for my liking. Leo excuses himself to go and defuse the situation. It gives me a chance to watch Jordyn dance, the way her body presses up tight to Enzo, his hands roaming her body. Jealousy rears its ugly head, not at my best friend, but just wishing I could get out of my own head. I want her, and I know he would share. He has made that clear.

I close my eyes and groan. I can't go there. I love my wife. How could I even think about dishonoring our vows?



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

JORDYN

Angelo gets close to Ange, and she asks him to back off. Even the man that has joined him tries to get him to walk away, but he just won't listen.

“Just leave her alone,” I snap. “She doesn't want you.”

“She is a whore,” he slurs. “How much for your time?”

Enzo steps between his brother and me. “You need to leave, now.”

“Why, isn't this a party? I'm just having fun, and that fat bitch wants to ruin it all.” He cackles at himself.

Before Enzo can even reply, Killian pushes his way into the middle of the dance floor and has Angelo by his throat.

“What the fuck did you just call her?”

Angelo smirks. He isn't stupid. Killian wouldn't actually kill him right here, would he?

“What? That his bitch is fat. Want me to add ugly and whore into that sentence?”

“Want me to cut your larynx out right here on the dance floor?” Killian growls.

Angelo laughs. “My brother, the hero, rescuing girls off the streets, literally.”

The night had gone smoothly, and Angelo just has to ruin it. I back away from the scene. The mention of rescuing girls hits me hard. I know he meant it to be a blow at me and my friends, but thoughts of Pixie resurface, and I need a breather. Enzo doesn't notice me move away, too busy trying to get Killian to not kill his brother.

When I find the restroom, I push inside and splash my face with water. The sound of the toilet flushing has me looking up to see Enzo's ex step through the door. She smiles at me, but it's not very friendly.

“So you're the replacement.”

She looks me up and down, total disgust written all over her face.

“So you're the ex who fucked his brother. Can't say I understand the downgrade.”

“You stupid bitch, you don't know anything. You think you can just walk in and marry a D'Arco looking like that?” She cackles at herself. “No one will take you seriously. You don't command a room like Enzo does. He needs a bride like...”

“Like you, someone that he can't trust, who dicks down his own brother?” I scoff and shake my head. “You can call me fat and ugly all you like. I'm not that insecure. But do you know what I have over you?” I angle myself to the side and pull the sleeve on my dress to the side where the burn sits, with the word KILL. She gasps when she realizes what it is.

“That's right, I proved my worth by withstanding Killian. All of Enzo's secrets are safe with me. If you want to beat me, bitch, you need to try better than high school games. I don't know about you, but I graduated a long fucking time ago and I won't stoop to that level. I'm a grown ass woman, with way bigger problems than some plastic bitch trying to steal my fiancé, but go ahead and try, I dare you.”

I lean in closer to her, causing her to back up a step. “Can you say that you have his deadliest companion on your side,

because Killian right now is trying to slaughter Angelo on the dance floor for me?”

She starts to wash her hands. “The thing about letting Killian between your legs is you make this easier on me. He will kill you and that allows me to help Enzo mourn you.”

She finishes washing her hands and leaves the restroom. I close my eyes again and breathe deeply. *You better be alive, Pixie, because this world is fucked up, and the shit I have to deal with better be worth it.*

The door opens again, and my shoulders slump. Of course, she walked away and then thought of something else to have a dig at me about.

“Can you just go annoy someone else? Your voice is too high-pitched and has given me a headache.”

“Is that so?”

Opening my eyes, Sarge stands behind me, all-encompassing heat in his gaze. His hands come down on either side of mine, and his large body presses up against me.

“Enzo asked me to find you. He is helping his brother outside.” His breath against my skin feels so nice. Alcohol flows through my veins. I know my engagement is fake as fuck and so does Sarge.

“Did you tell Enzo what my secret was, or Killian?”

I shake my head. “I never will. I didn’t endure that pain to give it up that easily.”

“What if I told you that I want to fuck you right here, in this dress?”

“I would ask what my future husband has to say about it,” I snicker to myself.

“He would want to watch, pretty girl. If you haven’t figured it out yet, our man likes to be watched and to watch.”

He presses a kiss on my neck. I arch it further so he can get better access. “I can’t risk pissing him off.”

Sarge smirks and pulls his cell phone from his pocket and hits a button. Enzo's name flashes onto the screen.

"Is Doll okay?" he asks. I can hear the concern in his voice.

"More than fine. I have her pressed against me, and I want to slide into her. She thinks that you might have an issue with that."

"Fuck," Enzo whispers. "Make sure he comes into that tight cunt. I want to see it weeping from you."

I gasp at his filthy words. No one has ever spoken to me like that. My pussy throbs, needing it filled.

"Keep me on call. I want to hear when you cum." Sarge places his phone down on the counter.

"Fuck, you're so beautiful. Do you want me to touch you?"

I nod, but he wraps his hand around my neck. "Words, say you want me."

"I want you, Sarge, I have since the second time we met. The way you watch me sets my skin alight."

He lifts my dress up, his hands running over the globes of my ass, and hooks his fingers into the thin material, snapping it at the back. A finger finds my core and pushes inside me.

A soft whimper escapes me. "She is so wet and ready for me."

"You have ten minutes before I'm done."

Sarge takes that as a personal mission. His finger slips out of me, and he steps back, undoing his slacks, and his cock is quickly replacing it as he thrusts up. I push my ass into him. I should feel ashamed, but I don't. Enzo has opened my eyes that sex can be pleasurable, and I want to experience that. My body feels alive for the first time in my life.

"You need to come for me, so when I listen to Enzo fuck you tonight and I wrap my hand around my cock, I will have

your juices on me. That's a girl, bounce on my dick just like that."

He digs his nails into my hips as he grips me tight and sets the pace. One hand lets go and wraps around us as he flicks it over the new barbell I put in for tonight. His finger glides across it as he holds me tight to his body and thrusts into me.

"Don't stop," I beg. The rhythm of his cock pushing deep into me has me teetering on the edge of bliss. It sits low in my stomach and builds, threatening to tip me over the edge at any moment.

"Open your eyes and look at me," he demands. Opening my eyes, his blue and green eyes find mine in the mirror. The intimacy of it has me wanting to look away. But I know it's my own insecurities that I need to get over. I deserve to feel good. Everything this man is taking from me, I want him to have.

My pussy clamps around him, and my mouth falls open. He leans in closer, his mouth pressed against my ear. "Come for me, let your fiancé hear how beautiful you are when you let go."

His finger presses harder against my clit, and I scream out in pleasure. Sarge holds our bodies together, and his quick thrusts send him over the edge, my name whispered against his lips.

He leans over and ends the call with Enzo, slowly sliding out of me. He turns away quickly, and my brows furrow. Does he regret what we just did? It's the only thing I can think of, and then it hits me. I'm his first since his wife. I straighten up my dress. Reaching out for his arm, he refuses to turn around.

"Sarge, please look at me," I beg. He turns and blinks at me, his eyes watering. "It's okay. I know it doesn't feel like it, but I'm here for you. If you need me."

I step in closer and wrap my arms around his middle. I can't help him through the thoughts in his own head. It takes him a minute, but he embraces me and squeezes me tight.

“She would have loved you, and I don’t regret what we did. I just miss her.”

I nod against his chest. “It’s okay to miss her. I wish I could have met her. Will you tell me about her one day?”

“I would really enjoy that, and I think she brought you to us in a way. I haven’t felt anything since she died, and yet, every time you enter a room, my heart beats just a little faster. Killian is downstairs defending your honor and that is not like him at all. And Enzo, well, he doesn’t bring strangers into his home.”

“I’m not going anywhere. I literally can’t now, but after tonight, I need Angelo gone. I won’t risk a man taking from me in my own home, and if Enzo wants me to stay under that roof, I can’t be around him.”

Sarge runs a hand over my head, straightening my hair. “I don’t think that will be a problem. I’m expecting him to barge through this door any second now.”

As if it’s like clockwork, the door bangs open, and Enzo’s wild eyes scan the room. “Mine,” he growls as if he is possessed by a wild animal. A small squeal slips from my mouth as I turn to face him, and he lifts me and throws me over his shoulder.

“Enzo, everyone can see my ass,” I protest as he leaves the restroom with me over his shoulder, the cool breeze on my most intimate places.

“If anyone so much as looks your way, Poppet, they will lose their life,” Killian says loud enough that if anyone were close, they would hear.

“You sober?” Enzo asks, and Sarge replies.

“I don’t drink, you know that.”

I didn’t know that. “Good, you’re driving. My woman has a surprise for me, and I can’t wait until we get home.”

I keep my rag doll form as we exit the hall and into the VIP area. “Bye, Dolly,” Harper yells out behind us. I can’t see

her, but I wave anyway, and she giggles. Shit, I haven't said goodbye to anyone.

When we get to the SUV, Sarge opens the door, and Enzo flops me down onto the seat. Killian slides in beside me. Enzo adjusts the front seat so it's moved all the way forward, and he gets in and kneels in front of me. Sarge closes the door before he rounds the car and gets into the driver's side.

Enzo places soft kisses up my right leg, moving the material of my dress up. He laughs and snaps the already broken G-String from underneath.

He hands it to Killian. I glance over, and he presses the material to his face and inhales. Fuck if that doesn't send a signal to my lady business. Enzo wraps his hands around my ankles and lifts my legs up onto the seat and spreads me wide.

"I don't think I have seen anything so fucking hot in my life."

He runs a finger along my slit and pushes two fingers into my warmth, twisting them and pulling them back out.

"Open," he demands, bringing his fingers to my mouth. I do as he asks and open my mouth, leaning forward and taking his cum-soaked fingers into my mouth, humming my enjoyment.

The car swerves, and my body falls into Killian's. I right myself quickly.

"I'm sorry," I whisper, and he nods. He wasn't paying much attention, his hand grips his large cock, precum weeping at the tip, and I wish I could lean over and taste him. I won't because I really don't want to die tonight. Killian must know what I want. He runs his thumb over the tip and reaches out. I don't move as he wipes it over my mouth.

Enzo's head descends between my legs, and his tongue swipes between my pussy lips, making my head fall back against the leather seats. "Oh, fuck."

He eats me out, and there is something erotic about knowing Sarge came inside me, and he is cleaning me out. My hips buck when he sucks my clit into his mouth. "I need to

fuck you,” I pant. He doesn’t let up. His tongue works overtime, and he adds two fingers into me, slowly moving them inside me until he finds what he is looking for. My hand tangles into his hair, holding him close to my pussy, not caring if he can come up for breath. Harper once told me a real man wants you to grind on his face hard, and that’s what I do until another orgasm has me seeing stars and mumbling something about filling me with his cock. He chuckles, pulling his head away from between my legs and wiping his mouth with the back of his hand.

“Let’s save fucking me for last.”

My eyes widen at the realization he wants to watch me fuck Killian. I shake my head no quickly. “He’ll kill me Enzo.”

Enzo leans over me, his lips inches from mine. “Do you really think I will let him hurt what belongs to me? Unless I tell him to?”

I shake my head again. “Good,” he says, loosening his tie and sliding it off from around his neck. “Turn to the side.”

I turn, and he binds my wrists together behind my back. “Good girl, now I’m going to help you straddle his lap.” I nod and turn to Killian and watch the war he fights in his own head.

Are you okay? I mouth, because the last thing I want is to do this without his consent. He gives me a curt nod.

“You’re nice and wet. You should be able to take him.”

Enzo helps me move around in the backseat as Killian pulls my leg over his body. He rips my dress open at the front, and my tits fall out, then he leans forward and sucks a nipple into his mouth. “Please,” I beg, to who I don’t know. The tip of his cock lines up with me, and he swipes it over my pussy, making sure it’s nice and wet.

“Shit,” I curse when he pushes inside me. He stretches me in a way that no one else has before. Enzo is a good size and so is Sarge, but Killian... I have never seen anything as big as him before.

“Breathe, Poppet, and relax.”

He runs a finger along my jaw, the coarseness of his skin sends chills down my spine, and the excitement of being tied up, not being able to touch any part of him, has me wanting to sulk, but I don't. His trauma goes beyond anything I have endured. He has made it clear murder isn't off the table when he is touched.

Closing my eyes, I feel his touch. He thrusts slowly until he is fully sheathed and grips my hips, letting me pause to accommodate his size.

“Good girl,” Enzo praises, “I knew you could take his cock. Look how beautiful she looks, Sarge.”

“I need you to move, Poppet. It's been so long I'm not going to last.”

I buck my hips the best I can with my hands tied behind my back; he grips my waist hard and guides my movements. The burn becomes a welcomed pain as I listen to Enzo praise me until I come around Killian's cock, hard and fast, my screams echoing throughout the car. Totally spent, I lean my head back against the seat Sarge is in and close my eyes, enjoying the feeling of Killian coming inside me. His cock pulsates, matching my thudding heart, and knowing I did that drowns out the fear that I might not live to see tomorrow if it was all too much for him.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

ENZO

Killian keeps hold of Jordyn's waist until we pull into the driveway. He refuses to pull out of her and wake her up. I let him relish in this; it's been a long time for him, and I'm happy to share with my friends. After all, it's no secret to either of them that I like to watch and be watched. It's one of the things Catalina hated. She refused to fuck my friends for me, yet she had no issue jumping into bed with my brother. His best friend Leo is back finally, and I made him take my brother to one of our other properties where I will have his shit delivered and where I can watch him. It's too much of a coincidence that Tony was playing poker at the same table as Angelo. I will kill him if he is working against me. Sarge has one of his men following Angelo. I need solid proof before I end the fucker. My mother, aunties, uncles, and grandparents won't take kindly to his death, which is the only reason I put up with him.

Stepping out of the SUV, I go around to Killian's side and open the door. "Thank you," he says, tucking a strand of Jordyn's hair behind her ear.

"You don't need to thank me. I have been trying to share with you for years."

"I regret not sharing Catalina now. I would have loved to end her."

Sarge snorts. "You and me both, but there was no way I was touching that nasty cunt."

I shake my head. Both men made it very clear they would never touch her. I even tried to entice them with hookers. Neither would cave, so I at least had Leo, but the thought of him touching Jordyn makes my skin crawl.

I reach in and untie her, pulling her into my arms. She moans in complaint but snuggles into my chest. As much as I want to take her upstairs and fuck her until the sun comes up, I won't. Tonight, she made a few of my fantasies come true. So many times I have wanted to share with my best friends, yet no woman could make them change their mind, and when I got that call tonight, my brother was so lucky I didn't slit his throat. Leo dragged his drunk ass into his car. After Killian roughed him up a little, I couldn't let him get away with calling my future wife fat. It's a direct disrespect to me. I run this family, not him, and who I take as my bride is my business. It's time I stop letting my family walk all over me. Tomorrow, I will call a family meeting—men, women, and fucking children for all I care. They are about to find out what happens when you cross me or disrespect my woman. They don't know it's a marriage of convenience. They all think I'm head over heels for this girl.

Jordyn stirs in my arms when we get onto the first floor. I tighten my hold on her until she is safely in my bed. I undress her from her torn dress and pull her boots from her feet, along with the sheer socks, and I step back and look at her sprawled out on my sheets.

She rolls onto her side, and her arm moves over the empty spot, my spot. She blinks her eyes open, and I sit beside her. She runs her hand over my beard. "I like this on you, keep it."

Then she closes her eyes again, and her hand falls by her side.

Light filters into my room. It's been so long since I haven't had to wake up to an alarm. I roll over, and Doll isn't beside me, her discarded clothes from last night still on the floor.

Finding a pair of sweats, I pull them on, and when I head downstairs, I stop at her bedroom first, which is empty. Sarge's door opens, and he steps out also in a pair of gray sweats, and I smirk at him.

"You going to kill me today?" he asks. I shake my head no.

"I wouldn't have told you to fuck her if I didn't mean it. She is yours for as long as she is mine."

"Either of you hurt her, and I will kill you," Kill says, stepping out of his room. Both Sarge and I stare in confusion. Since when does he sleep in his room? "What?"

"Nothing," I say, turning on my heels in hunt of Doll. She clearly isn't in either of their rooms.

"Can you hear that?" Sarge asks. I nod, and we follow the sound. We find Doll in the kitchen, wearing my button-up shirt from last night, leaning over the cooktop. All three of our dogs sit around her feet waiting patiently, and she turns, not seeing the three of us standing there.

"Good boys," she coos at them, giving them each a slice of cheese.

"You'll spoil them," I say, and she squeals, throwing the spatula in our direction and removing the small earbuds from her ears.

"Jesus, fuck, Enzo, announce yourself next time. You scared the pants off me."

Sarge snorts from beside me. Killian moves into the kitchen and sits on a stool. Doll looks at him, and her cheeks go bright red.

"Sorry, Doll," I say, stepping up beside her and placing a kiss on her cheek. I freeze when I realize what I did. Do I trust her enough to be like this around her? She passed Kill's test, so I give myself a break. I'm always on fucking edge. Ever since my father died, I have had to question everything.

"I was cooking you all breakfast, but apparently, none of you sleep in."

“Last night was the first time I have slept more than a few hours. This is a sleep in for me,” Sarge says. “I would have normally been in the gym for hours by now.”

“Sit,” she demands, pointing her finger at us, “everything is almost ready.”

She loads our plates full of bacon, scrambled eggs, and pancakes and finishes it off with a jug of orange juice. Killian gets up and helps her carry everything to the dining table where Sarge and I sit. She takes a seat across from us. Her face is super serious and has me wondering if she regrets last night. I really fucking hope she doesn't.

“So we need to talk about last night,” she says, and we all freeze, forks midair.

“Do you regret it?” Sarge asks exactly what I was thinking, and she shakes her head no and laughs.

“I don't want to talk about that right now. Angelo, I can't be alone around him, not after he...”

“After he what?” I growl.

She looks down at her plate and moves her eggs around. “He forced me to my knees, and if Killian didn't step in... and then last night. I'm happy to keep up our arrangement, but it might be best when you're not here if I go back to my apartment.”

I bring my hand down hard on the table. She jumps at the noise. “You're not going anywhere,” I snap.

“Okay,” she whispers. “Sorry.”

Why the hell is she apologizing to me? “Doll, look at me.”

Her eyes slowly move until she is looking me in the eye. “This is your home now. I know the circumstances of you being here are less than favorable, but you belong to me. He will not be back here unless he is invited. If anyone makes you feel threatened that isn't in this room right now, tell us. You have proven your loyalty. Next, we train you to kill.”

Her eyes go round. “Isn't that Killian's job?”

Kill smiles at her, and fuck if it doesn't spark happiness in my heart. I won't say that shit out loud. I'm the fucking Don for fuck's sake; if anyone catches wind I have feelings, I'm done for.

"I don't want to train you to kill my enemies, Doll, but now that we have announced our engagement, those enemies might want to use you to get to me."

"Oh," she says.

"Kill, any updates on our problem downstairs?"

Kill looks at Doll and back to me. I nod, giving him permission to talk freely in front of her. This one matter of business concerns her, and I won't keep updates from her. I will keep my thoughts on my brother to myself for now, in case I'm wrong.

"He refused to talk, so I borrowed Poppet's coffin and made him believe I buried him alive, a little more believable than I did for her. Last I checked, he was crying like a little bitch. I will check on him after breakfast."

"Can I watch?" Doll asks, and we all whip our heads to her. "What if he knows anything about my sister? I would like to watch him suffer. I won't touch anything and will just sit quietly in the corner."

"It's up to Kill."

"Poppet, it would be my honor to slice and dice a man in front of you. Just wear something that can be ruined. It gets bloody down there."

She beams at him and nods. Where the hell did this woman come from, and why am I so glad her sister was taken? Mark my words, I plan to find her little sister. I gave her my word.

"I have a few matters that need to be taken care of today. Sarge, you're with me, and Kill, you're in charge of watching Doll."

"I don't need a babysitter. I'm not running away or snooping. I have learned my lesson. We might have to revisit the whole owning me stuff if you find my sister, though."

“It’s not *if* I find her. I will, and you belong to me. That is not something you revisit, Doll. I have plenty of rooms here for your sister.”

Her mouth falls open. She can’t really think that I would let her go. I allowed her to live after she put her nose where it didn’t belong. I like the woman, but I won’t change my mind. We will be wed very soon, she just doesn’t know it yet. I will buy as much time as I can after I talk to my mother today. But a date will be set, and once she has my last name, I don’t believe in divorce. Not one man in my family has ever been divorced, and I will not be the first.

We all sit and eat our late breakfast. I send a group message for the entire family to meet me at the family restaurant run by my uncle. It’s about time everyone is reminded of who the fuck I am.

Sarge pulls into the parking lot of the restaurant. I can see my family gathered inside. The key players anyway.

Sarge gets out and opens my door, keeping it professional in front of watching eyes. He walks behind me, guarding my back, until we get to the door. The closed sign jingles as he opens the door for me, and I step inside. The chatter immediately dies down, and all eyes are on me.

Every seat in the restaurant is filled. “Good to see you,” my uncle says, shaking my hand.

“It’s been way too long,” I reply, and he nods. He knows now is not the time for chitchat.

I scan the room, and it looks like everyone is here. No one would be game enough to be late.

“Thank you all for coming at such short notice. I know you’re all wondering why I called you all here.”

The bell for the door chimes, and I turn, seeing Catalina strut through the doors.

“Why the fuck is she here?” my cousin Gabe asks.

“Because my first order of business involves her, but I want you all to listen up. I’m marrying Jordyn.”

“Don’t be silly. You know you will come running back to me.”

I pull out my gun, grab Catalina by the wrist, and pull her in closer to me. She smiles, but it quickly falls when I place the barrel to her head.

“As I was saying, I will be marrying Jordyn. Not one single fucking person here gets a say in that. If I so much as hear any snide remarks about her, you’re done. If anyone touches what’s mine, I will end you. Do you fucking understand me?”

Everyone murmurs a yes. “I didn’t fucking hear you, Cat.”

“Fine,” she snaps.

“Good, now fuck off.”

I push her away from me, and she stumbles, taking a seat next to my mother. Next, I set my sights on my brother, who is seated across from our mother. “Angelo, stand up.”

He grits his teeth but does as he is asked. “You disrespect me or my fiancée again, I’ll fucking kill you.”

I bring the butt of the gun down against his skull, and he drops to the floor. “Now lastly, I know someone in the family is working against me; in what is not important, because if it’s you, you know. This is a warning. When I find out who, I will come for you and your family, and I will show no mercy. I have tried to run this family the way my father wanted, but none of you seem to want to show me any respect. I am the head of this family!!! New structure is coming, and no one is safe. Be prepared for me to be in touch soon.”

My mother stands. She is the only person in the room who could question me right now and not get a bullet through her skull, and she knows it.

“You still need to be married by the time you turn thirty.”

I nod. I have an idea. Nowhere did they say I had to have a wedding, I just have to be married. It looks like Jordyn and I are taking a quick trip to the courthouse. If she wants a real fancy wedding, she can have that at a later date, but something tells me she would prefer it this way.



CHAPTER TWENTY

SARGE

Sitting by my wife's headstone, I place the flowers down. "I wish things were different... I miss you so much... I did something, and I don't know how I feel about it. We never spoke about what would happen if one of us died. Would you be happy if I moved on? I know you would love Jordyn and the way she stands up to Enzo. You always said that one day he will meet his match. I really think under different circumstances she would give him hell. But Mis, I slept with her. I want to regret it, but I can't. For the first time since you were taken from me, I smile at little things, and I slept with no nightmares for the first time the other night. I'm scared that if I let her in too much, I will forget you. I already forget how you smelled and how your body felt against mine."

Tears run down my face. I don't want to tarnish Missy's memory or the love we shared, not for some woman and a one-night stand at that, but fuck if my heart doesn't skip a damn beat when I see Jordyn enter a room or hear her laugh. I also have to take into consideration Enzo and Kill. Would I want to share long-term? *Fuck*. I run my hand through my hair. "Give me a sign. Tell me it's okay to move on."

A throat clears behind me. I turn, expecting to get my brains blown out for being unaware of my surroundings. Thankfully, it's just a little old lady. The worse she could do is whack me with her walking stick. "I don't mean to intrude."

I'm here visiting my husband, and I couldn't help but overhear. Did you love your wife?"

I nod. "More than life itself."

"And she loved you."

"She did."

"Then she would have wanted you to be happy, even if that is moving on, or moving town, a new job. I was married to my John for almost sixty years, and you know, he always told me if he was ever the first to go that he didn't want me to have any regrets in my life or to be lonely."

"John sounds like he was a good man."

She laughs, "He was an absolute prick, but we loved each other, and he was the best husband a woman could have asked for. You get one life, child, and there is no guarantee we all go to the same place when we die, or if we even go anywhere. So sitting around here waiting on death to be reunited with her could just all be a waste of life. What if when it's lights out, it is just nothingness?"

"I guess you have a point."

"I know I do. I'm ancient and know things. Go get the girl, make memories, and have fun. You won't forget your wife and you can honor her in your actions, the way you treat your new girl, and make sure to find someone who doesn't want to erase your past."

"Thank you," I tell her, and she nods.

"I best be going. I have a date and us old gals like to eat early."

With that, she walks away. I watch and see a man get out of a small white car, and when she reaches him, he presses a kiss on her lips.

My phone vibrates, and I see Enzo's name on the screen. "Boss."

"Where the fuck are you? We leave for the courthouse in under an hour. Killian got blood on his fucking shirt. Bad news

is Tony is dead, so we are back to square one. I need you to send your team into the docks tonight and add more cameras. Someone is fucking with me.”

“Is Jordyn okay?”

“How the fuck should I know? Her and that hooker friend of hers are locked in her room. She insisted that she wouldn’t do it unless she came.”

I smirk. Enzo gets agitated when he feels out of control, and he might not admit it, but he always wanted to get married and have a solid relationship like his parents did. He has convinced himself otherwise, but I have known him a long time. When Missy and I were married, that prick paid for the entire thing and made us go all out. I know he wants that.

“I’m on my way now. I was just visiting Missy.”

“I will see you soon,” he says, ending the call. I make my way back to my car.

The drive home is peaceful. I reflect on what the old lady said to me, and maybe she is right. I have spent eight years hung up on honoring my vows, and making sure I don’t forget my wife, but she is gone, and no amount of wishing will bring her back to me. Jordyn is here, and I only get one life. Is sharing her conventional? No. But I need to talk to Enzo to see where his head is at. It’s one thing sharing a girl you found in a brothel, and it’s another sharing your wife, even if your marriage isn’t based on love. I don’t know if I have feelings for Jordyn. I haven’t known her long enough, but I do know she makes me feel things I haven’t felt in a long time, and I want to see what comes of it.

Enzo is in the foyer pacing when I walk through the front door. “Thank fuck you’re here. I can’t get this tie on.”

I silently chuckle and step up to him, motioning for him to give me the tie. Fuck, he smells good. I have known my entire life that I’m attracted to men as well as women. I have just never acted on it. I found my person, and I was happy with her. Over the years, Enzo has given me indicators that he is interested, but I never cross the line. Our friendship means too

much to me. What if shit goes south, and he throws me away? I don't think I could handle losing one of the most important people in my life, not after losing Missy.

“How was your visit with Missy?” Enzo asks. We're almost the same height, so when I look up, his light brown eyes bore into mine, and I have no place to hide.

“Good,” I say, taking a step back. “I actually think I got some clarity. I need to ask you something.”

“As your friend, I presume.”

I nod and bite down on my bottom lip and take a deep breath. “Does your marrying Jordyn change anything?”

The asshole smiles at me, closes the distance I put between us, and grips me on the back of the neck, pulling me closer so our foreheads are touching.

“I have been telling you for years that what's mine is yours, but I'm presuming you specifically mean my wife-to-be and if sharing is still on the table.”

I nod, not pulling away. “Nothing changes. She is yours as much as mine, but not in public right now. I need to have my family fall in line. You sure that you don't want Aldo's place? He wants to step down. I need you. You're the only fucker that can make me see sense.”

My heart beats erratically in my chest. I had never considered it before because Missy didn't want this life for me, but the old lady was right. I need to do what is right for me now. I will always love Missy and won't ever forget that.

“I'll do it.”

He pulls back, but his hands go to each side of my face, and his eyes widen. “Are you serious?”

It's my turn to smirk at him, and I nod. “It's about time I lived my life for me.”

Before I can even register what is happening, he smashes his lips to mine and pulls back. I stare at him in shock.

“Sorry,” he says, clearing his throat.

“Don’t be.”

Kill chooses this moment to step into the foyer, dressed in one of Enzo’s suits. He actually looks a little less frightening.

“Who would have thought you could scrub up well?” I tease, and he flips me off. Movement at the top of the stairs catches my attention.

“The future Mrs. D’Arco is ready to make her entrance,” Harper says, coming down the stairs dressed in a baby pink satin dress that clings to her thin frame like a second skin. It’s way too slutty for where we are going, but she pulls it off and owns it as her hips sway with each step. She chooses to stand next to me, the least of the three evils I suppose.

Jordyn comes into view next. And shit, I can’t take my eyes off her. She wears a white dress that cuts off before the knee, with mesh sleeves. Her gray hair is wavy down her back. I swallow hard as she gets closer.

“Is it just me, or does she get hotter every time I see her?” Kill whispers in my ear.

“Since when do you talk so fucking much? Can’t get a peep out of you, and she moves in, and all of a sudden, you have words.”

“Maybe she is worth talking for.”

“If you two don’t shut up, the only cock she gets tonight is mine.”

Harper gasps, and her eyes go wide. I lean into her side. “Yes, your bestie is getting railed by three men tonight. I’m going to need you to sign an NDA.”

“I will sign whatever you need. Jordyn deserves some good in her life. She has been used and abused by men for as long as I can remember.”

Enzo steps up to the bottom of the stairs and takes Jordyn’s hand. “You look exquisite.”

Her face goes a light shade of pink. “Thank you.”

Enzo leads us out to the SUV, Kill gets in, and Harper goes to slide in next, but Jordyn grabs her arm and whispers something in her ear. She looks at Killian and shudders; the girl just found out that she should never touch that man.

I slip into the driver's seat and Enzo in the passenger. He chose not to tell his mother or family what he was doing today; he doesn't trust anyone right now and for good reason. I have a guy following Angelo, and so far, nothing. He goes to the club, picks up women, and goes back to the house. We are upping our game and tapping his phone. If he had Tony working for him, he could just be communicating via phone. The issue with it being in the family, or thinking it's within the family, means we don't have the inside resources that we would normally use. Time is running out, we all know it. We have eyes everywhere, just waiting for the call. If anything abnormal comes in or out of the docks, we will know.



CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

JORDYN

This is not exactly how I imagined I would get married. Well, I would never have gotten married, so I suppose this is fitting. Enzo, forced into marriage because it's a family tradition, and me agreeing to be his bride to save my sister. Not that I had a choice; I was doing this even if I didn't want to. There are worse things in life than being married to him. Being under the same roof as my mother's boyfriends is one of them.

Harper hands me a pen with tears in her eyes. I shake my head at her. Who cries at a sham wedding? Her apparently. I give her a pointed look and snatch the pen, signing my name. This whole process has been very simple. Enzo promised that if I ever loved him one day, we could redo the entire wedding. I did laugh and tell him it's unlikely that I would ever want to do that. Marriage and children were never on my to do list.

"Now, all we need is for you to get pregnant on your honeymoon," Harper rattles on and slaps a hand over her mouth when she realizes who she is talking to.

"No honeymoon or babies, thank you very much. If Enzo wants a baby, he can find a different whore for that," I whisper in her ear, and she laughs.

"You're kind of wrong about the honeymoon," Killian says, stepping in close to my side. His hand brushes against the bare skin on my leg.

"Didn't anyone ever tell you it's rude to eavesdrop?"

“Nope,” he says, leaning in even closer. “They were too busy torturing me to teach me life lessons.”

My mouth falls open, and I snap it shut. I don’t want him to think I pity him, it’s just a shock he said it.

We leave the courthouse, newly married. Enzo’s position within his family is now safe from whatever he needed to be safe from. He links his hand in mine as we walk down the stairs. Harper and Sarge throw rice at us, and Killian scowls when Sarge throws a handful at him. Enzo insists on driving, and me sitting by his side, poor Sarge gets stuck in the middle seat between Harper and Killian. Harper is a very touchy-feely woman; she means nothing by the soft touches on your arm, but I don’t want Killian to hurt her. It didn’t take me all that long to understand him. He can openly touch me, but he has to initiate it. I cannot touch him at all, and he isn’t the right person to push his limits.

“Tonight, we are staying at the club.”

“What? I didn’t pack anything.”

Harper leans forward, using Sarge to brace herself. He groans at her elbow digging into his tree trunk of a thigh.

“You don’t need anything except your birthday suit and the three strapping men in the car. You lucky bitch. If I’m signing this NDA, then I need details, all the juicy details. I live through you now.”

I chuckle at my best friend. It’s always been me listening to her adventures of a mattress actress. I swear she could write a bestseller about it.

“We are going straight to the club. I have Leo waiting there to take you home, or you’re welcome to stay at the club and have a few drinks on me. Leo will be available all night.”

She leans in closer. “This Leo, is he hot?” She wiggles her brows and giggles.

Killian grunts. Clearly, his tolerance for my best friend is running thin. Sarge grabs Harper by the waist and pulls her back into her seat. She throws him a look, and he shrugs.

“What? Your elbows are boney, and you’re giving me a dead fucking leg.”

Thankfully, Enzo pulls up to the club, saving us from any arguing from Harper. The valet opens Enzo’s door. “Don’t ever open my door,” he snaps, handing the younger man his keys. “If my wife is with me, open hers.”

“Sorry, Mr. D’Arco, it won’t happen again.”

Killian exits the car like his ass is on fire, and he opens my door for me and holds out his hand. I cautiously take it. He pulls me closer to his body. “You can touch me, Poppet. I will warn you if it’s too much.”

I nod, and Killian pulls away as Enzo takes his place. Harper fills the silence, chatting away about how much she loves this club. Enzo offers her and my friends lifetime memberships for free. To which she shrieks. This is a high-end club, a place the likes of us would never be welcome. Wealth drips off the patrons.

“Leo,” Enzo says. I remember him from the engagement party. I wonder who he is exactly. Sarge must read my mind as he comes to stand directly behind me.

“He is Angelo’s best friend, but don’t let that fool you. He is nothing like him. He is going to take Angelo’s place one day as soon as Enzo can find a good enough reason to replace him.”

Enzo introduces Harper and Leo as Sarge fills me in on who Leo is. Harper giggles, and I already feel sorry for Leo. Unless he is down for a good time, then she will be the girl for him. Leo holds out his arm, and she links hers with his.

“Don’t worry, Mrs. D’Arco, your best friend is in excellent hands. I will have her home by midnight so she doesn’t turn into a pumpkin.”

I don’t correct him on the fact that it wasn’t Cinderella that turned into a pumpkin, but if Sarge trusts him, then I guess she will be fine.

Enzo leads the way into the foyer. I have never been to a club that has one as fancy as this. The club is back through a

double set of doors, or you can take a set of stairs up to the second level. The night of our engagement, I didn't even think to ask what was on the other levels.

"Mr. D'Arco, it's so nice to see you again," an older woman says from behind the reception desk.

"And you, Marg. This is my wife, Jordyn. How is Barry, hopefully doing better?"

She smiles warmly at Enzo. "Yes, he is resting up now, thanks to you. I'm so grateful for the paid time off."

"Don't mention it. I was happy to help. Did Mercedes get everything ready?"

I have yet to meet Mercedes, but from what I can gather, she is Enzo's personal assistant, and I find myself wondering how personal.

"She did. Everything is ready for you. She didn't mention you had other guests. Do we need to send someone up to check on the guest bedrooms?"

"That won't be necessary, but thank you. Have a nice night. I will be unavailable. If you need anything, Leo is here."

Marg nods, and Enzo takes my hand and leads me to an elevator tucked down a small hallway; he presses the button, and the doors open immediately. "This takes us straight to the penthouse."

The Elevator ascends once the doors are closed, and I hold the railing as my stomach coils. I hate the feeling of going up and down in these things. My sister used to jump and my heart would stop every time she did it.

"Where did your mind just go, sweetness?" Sarge asks, tucking a strand of hair behind my ear.

I turn and smile up at him. "Just thinking that if my sister were here, she would have jumped to try and scare me. I'm not a fan of elevators."

The doors open, and my mouth falls agape. Right in front of us is a large open plan area, and everything is black or black

marbled with gold. The windows, everything that surrounds us, gives us a view of the city. Holy shit.

I walk further into the area, the men all standing back. I slip my shoes off and leave them in the middle of the floor, continuing on. The large plush rug in the living area is soft under my feet.

Enzo's phone rings from behind me. "Sorry, I have to take this. It's my mom. I think she just caught wind that I was married."

"It's fine. I need a moment anyway."

Enzo lifts his phone to his ear and disappears out of sight. Killian takes a seat on one of the couches, and Sarge comes up behind me and wraps his large arms around my waist. "It's a lot to take in, isn't it?"

"When you come from nothing and have to fight to survive, then there are people who live here. It doesn't seem fair."

"I used to feel that same when I first met Enzo, but he is a very generous man. The lady downstairs, her husband had a stroke two months ago. Enzo paid for her to take time off, and he has hired a nurse to look after the husband so Marg can return to work. Enzo is big on loyalty, and those loyal to him are taken care of, no matter what side of his business you are on."

"It's why I stay in the basement, Poppet. Even after five years, it's hard to get used to it. Especially when you were brainwashed to believe rich people were not good people."

"How about we get you into the bath while we wait for Enzo? He might be awhile."

A girlish squeal slips from my lips when Sarge picks me up and cradles me to his chest. "You coming?" I ask Killian. He nods and stands from the black leather couch. Sarge takes us into a bathroom—the black theme applies in here as well; his and hers sinks on one side, and a freestanding bath sits against the massive glass windows that overlook the city

below. Candles are lit and flicker, illuminating the room in a romantic glow.

“No one can see in, Poppet,” Killian says as Sarge puts me down on my feet. The zipper on my dress is pulled down, and each man slides the material off my shoulders and down my arms until the dress falls to the floor.

“Sei propria bella, cara!”

“She isn’t just beautiful, she is fucking stunning,” Killian replies to Enzo who has just stepped into the bathroom. He loosens his tie and pulls it over his neck as I take a step toward him, just in the white bra and panties Harper bought for me.

“Happy wedding day, Mr. D’Arco. I know this isn’t the ideal wedding, but we might as well make the most of it.”

“We will be making the most of it, Mrs. D’Arco. Till death do us part.”

I smirk up at him. He has made it clear that even if we find Pixie, I’m not going anywhere. Maybe one day I could love him. He is handsome. He takes care of those around him, but he has a dark side. I’m confident that he has killed people. Drugs, guns, and money are all part of his world, mine too, but we are on opposite sides of the spectrum. I don’t know if I will be able to be what he needs. I’m not the type to sit by a man’s side and be quiet. If he wants me, then he will get it. He has the upper hand on me right now. I need to do whatever it takes to save my sister, but after that, it’s game on. Maybe once he gets to know the real me, he will discard me and let me go.

“I guess so, till death.”

One by one, I undo his buttons on his button-up and slip his shirt over his broad shoulders. Every inch of skin under his shirt is covered in tattoos, all black and gray. I run my finger along the cross he has on his right shoulder blade and do the same as I work my way down to his chest.

“I want to get a tattoo one day.”

He looks down at me and follows my finger as I trace each work of art on his chest.

“Say the word and I can take you.”

“Do you always shave your chest?” I ask.

“I do.”

My hand travels down his abs to his belt. He watches as I unbuckle it and work the button on his slacks.

Once Enzo is naked, I step back and admire him. I’m not the only one either. Sarge steps up behind me. He must have taken his own clothes off because his hard cock presses against my back.

“It should be illegal to look that good,” he whispers in my ear.

“Okay, showoffs, get into the bath. I might have to put acid in my other eye if I have to continue staring at your dicks. Poppet, I need you to get naked to erase the trauma.”

“Would you like to undress me, Killian?”

He smirks at me. I know he doesn’t like to be called Killian, but I like the way his name sounds. He pushes off the counter and comes to stand in front of me. He puts his hand in his pocket and pulls a knife out. The blade flicks up from inside the handle.

“I brought this as a wedding gift for you. It’s small enough to put in the side of your boot but big enough to do damage.”

He hooks the blade under the front of the bra and swipes up; the bra busts in half, and my tits bounce free.

He drags the blade down my skin, goosebumps are left in its wake, and my thong is next. He slices the sides of the material until I am standing bare in front of him.

“Are you going to get naked?”

He shakes his head no. “I can’t. It’s a trigger for me. One day I will tell you about it, but not today.”

I shake my head. I don’t know what’s under his shirt, but I see the scars that disappear under his T-shirt.

“Plus, watching you come is my new favorite pastime. Get that cute ass in the tub.”

Enzo snatches me up without a word and lifts me into his arms. In two big strides, he puts me down into the water that is the perfect temperature, and he climbs in behind me and pulls me back against his chest. Sarge steps into the large bath that could easily fit one more large man, and Killian leans against the counter, staring at the three of us, but his good eye is locked onto me. Enzo kisses the side of my neck as Sarge leans up on his knees, with one hand on either side of the tub, and leans in, pressing his lips to mine. My head spins from the heat of two men so close to me. Slight panic has my heart beating erratically until I remind myself I want this. My fight-or-flight response is always on, since nothing good ever happens to me. Could this be my something good, even if something bad sent me here?



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

KILLIAN

My therapist seems to think I could work through my dislike of being touched with someone I trust. I don't have the same high hopes that he has. Not when my trauma stems from women. I have no desire to be touched by men, or women for that matter, until her. I want her hands to run over what skin I have that isn't destroyed.

My parents died when I was five. I was sent to a home for boys, and it's where I met Cal. We were roommates until the day I slaughtered every person within its walls. We were abused, tortured, and trained to kill if we wanted to eat. They were sent children and created merciless killers. Disobedience was not tolerated. Mary Katherine ran a tight ship, one step out of line, and there was no hope for you. I fought back at every turn. She liked to hurt me, but her hands on my body never felt right. The words whispered in my ear.

I shake the thoughts from my head. That bitch is dead. I showed her no mercy for her sins. The same as every other person who worked there. Cal runs the school now, but out with the old, he takes in anyone who needs the help, and they live off the land. A bunch of hippy crap, but at least some good comes from it. Cal could kill you before you had a chance to blink, just like me.

Jordyn's soft mewls fill the air. Both Enzo and Sarge touch her in places I wish that I could, but that would mean stripping

down, and as much as the therapist thinks I can, baby steps are required to save her life. I don't want to accidentally kill her. I never meant to cut the head off the last woman. Blind rage took over and everything goes black, and when I came around, I had her head in my hands.

"Don't stop," Jordyn begs. I can't see what's happening under the water, but my cock instantly goes hard at the thought of her pretty little cunt with the new barbell sitting above her clit. That was a surprise. Jordyn is an enigma; she has so many layers. On the outside, she looks so cute and innocent, with her big blue eyes and pouty lips, but as you peel them back, there is so much beneath the surface. She hides her demons well.

Jordyn trembles beneath their hands, and when she comes, her head falls back. Enzo gives her no time to recover. Sarge helps him turn her around to straddle his lap, and when she does, her eyes roll back into her head as she sinks down onto him, making their marriage complete.

It may not be a traditional marriage, but sometimes the best things that happen to us are thrown into our lives in the most unconventional ways.

Before Enzo, I was the infamous Cutthroat Killer. I needed to make money when I left my old life behind. I would cut the throat of the victims. A bullet was too impersonal. I wanted them to see me coming, to hear them beg for their lives. The last job where I met Enzo, I was sent to kill him. I didn't know who he was, and I didn't care. It was a setup, it turns out. I was ambushed by the men who hired me. Enzo was already tied up. They were hired to execute us both.

The reason we were both targets is still unknown to this day. We didn't exactly have time to ask them questions. When I came to, I was tied to a chair; amateurs. My hands being tied behind my back with chains was really inconvenient. When the first idiot came to check on us, he wasn't expecting me behind the door. He managed to stab me, and the darkness took over. I came to ripping a man's throat out with my teeth. Enzo was free of his binds. I had no memory of what happened, and even to this day, when Enzo tells the story, it's all locked away.

“Enzo!”

My attention is pulled back to the tub; Poppet’s second orgasm of the night has me done with waiting my turn. He wants to share a girl, then we all get to make her come.

Neither man stops me when I pull her from Enzo’s arms. She doesn’t try to touch me or hold on to me. I’m slightly taken back, but her faith in me not to drop her onto the hard tiles beneath us is mind-shattering.

I don’t bother with a towel. She will be dry soon enough. I stomp into the living area, my sight set on the view. The sun has fully set now, and the city lights look breathtaking.

“Hands against the window, Poppet. Can I trust you not to touch me?”

“Just fuck me, Killian, you don’t need to remind me every time. My hands won’t go near you unless you put them there. I respect your boundaries.”

Fuck, my heart does back flips in my chest. How does this woman know what to say to almost bring me to my knees? I have no memories of ever being shown respect by any woman.

Placing her down on her feet, she turns but gives me a cheeky smirk over her shoulder as she places her hands on the window, poking her ass out. She has an ass you just want to take a bite out of.

Stepping up behind her, I grab the globes of her ass cheeks and squeeze. Squatting down, I have to crane my neck to swipe my tongue up her ass, and she tries to suck her ass in. I don’t push her; if she isn’t comfortable, we will work up to it because, mark my words, she will need to learn to take two cocks at once. Mine will take work to fit, and she will need to be stretched out well before that can even happen.

I trail my fingers along her slit, finding her wet hole filled with Enzo’s come. I scissor my fingers, making sure she is wet and can take me.

When I withdraw my fingers, she sighs. I waste no time and unbuckle my slacks and pull my cock out, running it along

her pussy, spreading her juices along the head to get nice and wet.

My cock is ready and so is she. I push the head against her tight little hole, pushing slowly, giving her body time to adjust to my size. Her ass pushes back against me. Maybe I underestimated how ready she is. Without risking hurting her, I reach around to run a finger over her clit, but Enzo and Sarge join us, and Enzo slaps my hand out of the way. Moving his body between Jordyn and the window so he can lick her.

“Oh fuck!” she screams as I thrust deep inside her.

“Do you like that, Poppet, the way my cock fits perfectly in your tight cunt?”

“Yes,” she pants. “And...oh fuck...and his mouth.”

Gripping her hips tighter, I pull her back with each upward thrust, keeping her close and my cock snug inside her. Each time I pull her back, she grinds into me in a circle type motion. Sarge stands off to the side with his dick in his hand.

When my rhythm becomes punishing, Enzo slips out from underneath. I push Jordyn into the window, my front pressed tight to her back, my knees bent to help get down to her level.

She gasps, “Fuck, that’s hot.”

I see Enzo press his lips to Sarge’s. He hesitates for a moment before he grabs Enzo by the back of the neck and pulls him back in, licking Enzo’s lips. “Her juices taste so fucking good.”

It was only a matter of time before they acted on whatever was going on between them. Suits me just fine if they start fucking. More time for me to have myself buried in a tight, warm pussy.

Jordyn explodes around my cock, strangling me each time she pulsates around me. I chase the same euphoria she has on her face. When I feel myself close, I pull out and let my cum spill onto her ass, scooping some onto my fingers and rubbing it into her skin where I branded her, cementing the fact that she is mine. She might have Enzo’s last name, but she has mine forever etched into her skin. I will burn the world down

for this girl right now and kill every man, woman, and child in my way. I don't know what it is about her, but now that I have found her, I won't let her go. She would have to kill me first. I'm worse than a walking red flag; red flags are my good qualities, and yet she looks at me, and she can see me. Killian Masters, the man, not Kill, the killing machine with no off switch and no conscience. I can take a life and not think twice about it.



CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

JORDYN

My body aches, and my head feels like it's been hit by a truck. I groan as I roll over. The spot beside me is empty. Enzo has been MIA every day, taking Sarge with him. They have been tightlipped about what they are doing, but Enzo assures me they are so close to finding where the girls are. Tony might be dead, but they managed to get into his phone and have a lead that looks promising.

“What’s wrong, Poppet?” Killian asks, dropping to his knees beside me and sweeping the hair off my forehead. “Oh fuck, you’re running a fever. Let me go get you some medicine and a washcloth.”

I try to tell him that I’m fine, but he is gone before my muddled brain can link up with my mouth to tell him. My head falls back to the pillow, and my eyes fall closed in an attempt to stop the pressure from behind my eyes exploding.

“Poppet,” Killian whispers. “I need you to sit up.”

“No,” I moan. “Just kill me now. Everything hurts.”

Killian mumbles something under his breath and helps me to sit up. He hands me a bottle of water and some little pills. I swallow them down, and it feels like razor blades. When he removes the bottle from my hand, I fall back onto the pillows. Killian removes the covers from over me, and I growl at him. He lets me keep the sheet and helps tuck it around my body.

“Sleep. I will make you some soup for when you wake up.”

I don't know if I reply. I curl up into a ball and close my eyes, hoping that when I wake up this feeling has gone.

Luck was not on my side. If it was possible to feel worse, I do. The room is dark and empty this time. I throw back the sheet and use what little strength I have to sit up and get myself out of bed. My legs feel like lead as I walk out of my room and down the stairs. Hushed whispers have me moving down the hall at the end of the stairs instead of straight through to the kitchen to get a fresh bottle of water.

“We can't just barge in there. We need to be smart about this. If anyone gets wind they are under attack, innocent children could die.”

Sarge ever the man to think about the logistics.

“We don't even know if they're in there either. We need a better plan.”

“Fuck the children and fuck your plan. If her sister is there, I will be in and out.”

I push the door open, and it slams against the wall. All four men turn. Sarge has his gun pointed at me but puts it away when he realizes it's me.

“Fuck, Doll, you look like shit,” Enzo says, concern lacing his tone. I swat him away from me when he gets closer.

“Were you going to tell me about my sister?”

He stands up straight and takes a step back. “Of course I was, but Doll, you're sick, and Kill wouldn't let us wake you up until you were due for medicine.”

I cut a glare to Killian. No one has ever given a shit about me before to care. No one besides Harper anyway, and she would leave me soup and medicine by the door, not wanting to catch my germs.

“You can fill her in while she eats,” Killian demands.

He doesn't give anyone any time to respond. He leads me out of Enzo's office and into the kitchen. Killian makes me sit at the table. Enzo and Sarge join me.

“I think you broke him, Doll,” Enzo says. “My cold-blooded killer is making soup.”

My head rests against the table. The congestion in my head has me wanting to smash my head against the wooden tabletop.

I moan in response to Enzo's comment. Sarge reaches over and places his hand over mine. “Eat some soup so you have something in your stomach.”

Killian places some soup down in front of me. Steam rises from the bowl as I lift my head.

“You look like death, Poppet, let me help you.”

All I can do is nod. He takes the spoon and blows on the liquid before bringing it to my mouth.

Holy fuck, that is good soup.

“Doll, I know you're really sick, but we might have found where the girls are being held.”

That information perks me up instantly, and my puffy eyes lock with Enzo's.

“So why are you all sitting around here feeding me soup?” I rasp.

“It's not that simple,” Killian says, side-eyeing Enzo. “Normally, we would barge in and deal with the fallout, but that means casualties as Sarge pointed out. Your sister could very well die. I think we should watch who comes and goes and get the building's floor plans so we can find a way in. We can get your sister out undetected, and the cops can rescue the other girls.”

“I think I agree,” Sarge adds. “Enzo can't afford to draw attention to himself right now. The Feds are sniffing around, and we are expecting a raid on the club any day now.”

“Why are the Feds going to raid the club?” I ask.

Enzo chuckles. “You do know who my family is. The club is successful, but it’s a front, Doll.”

“Oh right, mafia boss.”

All three men laugh. “I do really like it when people call me the mafia boss. It sounds so official.”

“Shut up,” I mumble, my head becoming cloudy again. Killian pushes the soup aside and hands me my pills and a glass of water. I swallow them, and something doesn’t sit right in my stomach. “I think I agree. I don’t want my sister dead or mixed up with the cops. I don’t know why I trust you, but I do, and I don’t trust the cops. It’s not like they will care about some kid from Huntersville, anyway.”

“Killian, you take Doll back up to her room. I will call Leo, and we can come up with a plan, but I don’t want Angelo in the loop. It’s too much of a coincidence that he was at that poker game.”

“And you think that you can trust his best friend?”

I don’t understand it. If it were Harper and me, I would be calling her to fill her in the second that I could.

Sarge gets up from his chair and comes around, placing a kiss on my head. “Leo is not going to tell Angelo. He wants what Angelo has, and he would probably sell his grandmother to work under Enzo.”

My stomach lurches, and Sarge jumps back. I don’t blame him. Killian scoops me up from my seat and moves me across the room at lightning speed, and takes me to the closest bathroom.

The cold-blooded killer, as Enzo called him, pulls my hair back and holds it for me. Once I empty my stomach, he helps me up to my room and even finds me a bucket to sit beside my bed.

“Can you talk to me until I fall asleep?” I ask. I hate being alone when I don’t feel well, which is really ironic considering I never had anyone to care for me growing up. The poor guy

looks indecisive, but he walks around the bed and sits beside me. He pulls me closer, and I rest my head on his chest. He is wearing a hoodie, but I look up and make sure he is okay.

“Are you sure this is okay?”

“I’m sure. What do you want me to talk about?”

“Anything. I really like the sound of your voice.”

He must be trying to think about what to say as he’s silent for a few moments, but then he opens his mouth, and my eyes fall closed as he starts to talk.

“How about we talk about all the ways to kill a man?”

I chuckle as he continues to talk about the easiest ways to the messiest until I fall asleep.

When I wake up, Killian is no longer beside me, Sarge has taken his spot, and he spoons me, his arm wrapped around my waist, lightly snoring. I roll and turn to face him, taking in his features. He looks so peaceful. His jaw is covered in a light blond stubble, and reaching out, I trace the length of his jaw.

“If you keep doing that, you will make me hard.”

Snorting in the most unladylike way, I try to cover it with a cough, but he heard it and bellows out a laugh.

“Don’t laugh at me, I’m sick.”

Though I don’t actually feel that bad anymore. Sarge flips me onto my back, and his body covers mine.

“You have been out for three days,” he says, looking down at my arm. I gape at the contraption sticking out of my hand. “Kill put in a drip to keep your fluids up and ...”

“He drugged me?”

“He did, but in his defense, you looked like the grim reaper was going to pay you a visit, and he didn’t know what else to do.”

I push at his chest, and he moves off of me. “Shit, are there any updates on my sister?”

He shakes his head no. “We have a team gathering, and we should be good to move in soon.”

“What are you waiting for?”

“Something doesn’t sit right with the whole situation. One man comes and goes, yet the entire property is heavily guarded. And Angelo hasn’t been anywhere near the place.”

I cut a glare to Sarge and jump from the bed. “He is seriously holding off because he wants to pin this on his brother? What about the girls?”

I storm from the room to hunt him down; I head straight for his office, and when I fling the door open, I stop dead in my tracks. He sits in his chair, and a woman sits on the other side, and both of them turn to look at me. Enzo’s eyes roam over my body, and when I look down, it’s then I realize I’m in nothing but a pair of underwear and a see-through tank top, my nipples on full display.

Enzo stands gracefully from his chair. “Mercedes, meet my wife, Jordyn. She normally wears clothes when we have company.”

Mercedes stands and holds her hand out. I step forward to shake her hand. “It’s a pleasure. Enzo has told me all about you and don’t worry. If I had a body like yours, I wouldn’t wear clothes either,” she says and winks at me.

Killian comes barreling into the room, specs of blood on his face, but he zones in on me. Oh shit, that look isn’t one I want to find myself on the other side of.

“Why are you out of bed?”

I cock my head at him. Who the heck does he think he is? “Ex...whoop.”

He throws me over his shoulder, his hand firmly placed over my ass. Sarge walks in and smirks at me.

“I’m out of bed because I have a bone to pick with my husband.”

“You can play with his bone later,” Killian says matter-of-factly.

“Snitch,” I sneer at Sarge, and he just shrugs.

“Beats dying a slow, painful death because I didn’t tell him you were awake.”

I try and convince him that I’m feeling much better, but he won’t listen. He takes me upstairs and kicks open his bedroom door. The room is bare; just a bed is pushed up against the wall, a flat-screen tv mounted on the wall, and a washing basket in the corner.

“Killian, put me down.”

I should have been more specific. He throws me down onto his bed and I hit the hard mattress with a thump.

“You need to rest,” he growls, pulling his shirt from his body, using it to wipe his face. It’s then that I see his scars and burns for the first time. The one on his face goes down his neck and doesn’t stop until just under his ribs. A large scar runs across his chest and looks like an X right over his heart.

I swallow hard when he realizes what he has done. The entire time I have been here, he keeps himself covered as much as possible. I wish I could get up and close the distance between us and run my hand over his scars and tell him I’m glad he survived. He is the first person to ever take real care of me when they didn’t have to.

“Jordyn, I need you to get up and run, please.”

He squeezes his eyes shut and waits.

I slip from the bed. Any sane person would run, do as he asks, but I won’t abandon him right now because he feels weak.

I cross the room and stand in front of him. My heart frantically thumps inside my chest, and my hands shake. I might be trying to be brave, but inside, I’m fucking petrified.

“No, I won’t run from you, Killian. Look at me.”

His nostrils flare, but he opens his eyes. “I need to hurt you, Poppet. Please, just run before I can’t control it anymore.”

“Hurt me? You know I can take it. I want you to trust me. I don’t want you to hide from me. I’m glad you survive...”

“Shut up,” he snaps, shaking his head.

“No, I am glad you survived whatever bullshit you went through, because the man you are right now took care of me. No one has ever done that before.”

“Fuck!” A tattooed hand wraps around my neck and squeezes. “Are you sure you can handle me?”

I nod. “If I can’t and I die, I’m glad it was you and not some rapist who just takes what they want.”

His lips smash against mine, and he pulls back. “Go get in the shower. I will be in straight after you.”

He drops his hand, and I do as he asks. I cross his room and step into his private bathroom and start the shower. When the temperature is right, I strip out of my underwear and shirt. Excitement washes over me. He hasn’t killed me yet, which is a good sign that he really doesn’t want to.

Stepping into the shower, I let the warm water wash over my body. I still feel weak from being sick, and it’s nice to wash away the dried sweat covering my skin.

Killian steps into the bathroom, all hard lines and a menacing scowl on his face. But I’m not scared. I anxiously wait to see what he is going to do. The anticipation has my pussy wet.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

JORDYN

Killian steps into the shower. Fully naked. I let my eyes take him in, every inch of him. He may think I'm repulsed by his body, but I'm not, far from it. I wish I could touch him, run my hands down his chest before I fall to my knees and take his cock in my mouth.

He sits a set of handcuffs next to his shampoo, but I don't miss the slight tremble in his hand. Is it possible that he is nervous?

"I don't want to kill you, Poppet," he whispers, stepping closer to me.

"If you were going to kill me, you would have already."

He plasters his back against the tiles, his breathing heavy. "Touch me. There is only one way we will find out, and if I kill you, just know I will be following right behind you."

I smile up at him. "Awe, that might be the most romantic thing anyone has said to me."

He shakes his head at me, and the sad thing is, I wasn't lying. Killian's good eye watches me, the way I lift my hand to cup his jaw and the step closer I take. He freezes, his breathing heavy. I keep my body an inch from his, and I go slow, moving my hand down his neck and over the rose tattoo he has on the opposite side to his burn. If I didn't know any better, I would think rigor mortis has set in, he is that stiff. I move my

hand ever so slowly to the base of his neck toward the X over his heart. When my finger traces the puckered skin, everything happens so fast.

He grabs my wrist and spins my body around, my arms pinned behind my back, and the side of my face is smooshed against the tiles.

The handcuffs are quickly locked in place. “I’m going to destroy you,” he whispers in my ear, goosebumps lining my entire body.

He keeps me pressed against the wall and angles the shower head so it’s directly over my face. If I keep my head facing slightly down, I won’t take in too much water.

I shouldn’t want to push him any further, but what fun would that be? Pushing my ass out, his hard cock is easily felt. He uses one hand to keep me firmly pressed to the tiles, and the other takes a handful of my ass and squeezes, his nails breaking the skin easily.

“I’m going to mark you, Poppet, sink my teeth so deep into your skin the water will run red. I need you to bleed for me.”

“Take from me.”

A growl rips from his chest. He steps in closer to me. “Don’t ever tell me to take from you like the dead men walking who hurt you. I want to worship you and connect with your trauma. The pain welcomed, not unwanted. Is that what you want from me?”

The tip of his cock presses firmly between my legs. “Yes, I want you to thrust your cock in me with no warning while I bleed for you.”

Killian kisses my neck, and I arch it for him, but he doesn’t bite me like I think he would. His kisses move to where he branded me with his name, and as his tongue runs over the letters, he pushes his cock up ever so slightly. It doesn’t go in further than a tease, just sitting at the opening. My pussy pulsates, needing him to move, to do anything because feeling him like this is torture in itself.

He bites down on my shoulder blade just beside his name and thrusts inside me in one movement. A scream peals from my lips. The blinding pain wracking my body caused from the size of his cock entering me, along with the burn of his bite.

He doesn't let up; he grips my hips and fucks me hard. My feet don't touch the ground, my face pressed against the tiles and his hold on my waist keeps me up. One slip from him and I will have a cracked skull.

“Oh fuck!”

The burn starts to ease between my legs, my body finally adjusting to his size. The slow ache builds into a mind-blowing orgasm. All types of fucks and oh god yes's comes from me while I ride out the wave. Killian pulls back and bends enough that he can put me over his shoulder, but he doesn't bother to turn off the water or get a towel. He moves out of the bathroom and into his room, placing me face down on his bed, my ass in the air, and my arms firmly handcuffed behind my back. He gets on the bed behind me and palms my ass cheeks, spreading them wide.

“You have a pretty pussy, Poppet,” he says, running his cock along my slit. “And it's bleeding. Do you hear that? It's your come and blood mixing together and making a beautiful mess.”

“Kill...fuck...me!” I shout when he thrusts inside me, my eyes rolling in the back of my head. A guy Killian's size fills you to the brim, and you can feel him in your stomach. It's painful but welcomed. I can't imagine this feeling is for everyone, but for me, I relish in it, want him to fuck me hard into his mattress and show me no mercy. I want to feel him between my legs for the rest of the day.

With each roll of his hips, he stretches me out, then he flips me onto my back, and the metal of the cuffs bites into my skin as he moves between my thighs and throws one of my legs over his shoulder. I don't miss that it's the side of his body with no scars. My breath hitches when he enters me again, my breasts bouncing with each forward motion, and his finger runs across my clit.

“Come for me, Poppet.”

After a few more circles on my clit, I come for a second time, screaming his name, and he comes right alongside me. He rolls off me and lies on his back to catch his breath.

Once he gets off the bed, he quickly gets his clothes on. Leaving me naked on the bed, he goes into the bathroom and comes back out with a washcloth and a first aid kit. The key to the cuffs is on his bedside table. He unlocks them and leaves them where they fall and helps me sit up. He carefully cleans the bite on my shoulder, takes the cannula out and puts a bandage over it. He does this in silence, and I let him.

“Lay down and spread your legs for me. I need to check the damage.”

I do as he asks, lying flat on my back. I’m not sure if he realizes how vulnerable I am right now, but he wipes me down carefully. It hurts as the cool cloth goes over my most sensitive areas, and I hiss out when he presses down on me.

“Sorry, I split you a little.”

“Don’t be, I like how it feels.”

He smirks at me, throwing the cloth, and it lands in the basket in the corner of the room. “You’re going to be sore for a while.”

Killian helps me into one of his shirts, and he takes me downstairs. The house smells amazing, and when we walk into the kitchen, an unknown man is cooking. He doesn’t turn around or acknowledge us, he just stirs the pot on the cooktop.

“Is he a robot?” I whisper to Killian, and he laughs.

“No, the staff just know to come in and do their jobs. They will talk if you address them or if you’re Enzo.”

Speaking of the devil, he walks in with Sarge at his side, and both men have intense looks on their faces.

“Feel better?” Enzo asks, and my face goes bright red as heat spreads up my neck. He steps up beside me on the stool, placing a hand on my leg. He leans in and kisses me, and said hand slides up to my pussy lips, and I whimper.

“Show me,” he demands. I glance over my shoulder at the cook. “I said show me!”

I slowly spread my legs, wincing. Enzo’s brows dip, and he pulls my stool away from the counter.

“Hold her legs open,” he demands, and both Killian and Sarge step in closer, each taking one of my legs, spreading them wide.

He lowers his head between my legs. “But there is someone here,” I hiss, trying to fight off their hold to close my legs.

“He won’t look or he dies,” Killian snaps.

My head falls back when Enzo sucks my clit into his mouth. He isn’t rough, he takes his time kissing my pussy, running his tongue along the graze, before he goes back and flicks my clit with his tongue. My cries of pleasure echo throughout the kitchen. All cares of a stranger in the room are forgotten.

The closer I get to an orgasm, Enzo sucks harder, and when he spears me with his tongue, I cum, biting down on my lips hard to muffle any noise.

When Enzo steps back, Sarge pulls me from the stool and cradles me in his arms at the table like nothing happened. The cook serves up food into containers while Killian gets me a coffee. I side-eye the cook to see if he looks our way, but he doesn’t.

“Don’t worry, Doll, you’re mine...”

“Ours,” Killian snaps at Enzo.

Enzo shakes his head with a smile. “You’re ours, and we will fuck you whenever and wherever we please, and if anyone so much as glances in your direction, I’ll kill them.”

My eyes widen at his admission even though it shouldn’t surprise me. It’s so easy to forget what kind of men they are.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

ENZO

Everything needs to run perfectly tonight. Mercedes has made sure that the press is in place to capture photos of the night, and Killian and Sarge will be here and then slip out the back. All the while, one of the soldiers will be ordered to blow up a small gas station outside of town, drawing all the cops in the area.

Killian is confident he has found a way into the building where the girls are being held. We haven't seen any evidence of anyone I know going in or out, but that doesn't mean they are not connected. Just in case they are, we need my whole family in one place, everyone accounted for.

Jordyn and Harper disappeared to the bathroom to freshen up while Killian, Sarge, and I order drinks from the bar. Mercedes is on a need-to-know basis. She isn't stupid, but the less she knows, the better. She hired a singer for the evening who just took the stage. Angelo sits front and center, watching the woman. I was so sure that he is the one behind the trafficking shit, but so far, there are zero connections, and I highly doubt my brother is that good. Leo takes a seat beside him. So far everything is going as planned. As Leo keeps Angelo busy, Killian and Sarge show their faces. I have sent out enough invites that the club will be at max capacity, and it's unlikely anyone will miss them once we move up to the VIP room.

Jordyn's laughter catches our attention, and all three of us stare in her direction. The tight black dress she wears hugs all of her curves. I can't wait to get home and rip it off her with my teeth. I had my doubts about her after Killian found her at the docks, but the more I get to know her, the more I realize she wasn't there to snoop on me. She just wants her sister back. And as pussy whipped as it sounds, I won't stop until I find her because, fuck, if a smile from her lights up a damn room, and I'm not the only one that feels that shit.

Killian and Sarge have both fallen for her. That's obvious. For fuck's sake, Killian made her soup and then fucked her alone. Sarge and I stood outside the door just waiting for the screams to start. Sarge wanted to barge in a few times, but I held him back, and I'm thankful I did now as she pushed him to try. Clearly, the previous women he hurt he didn't have feelings for. She came out bruised, sore, and alive. I call that a win.

Harper whispers something in Jordyn's ear and she looks our way, a smile spreading across her face. I stand straighter and feel like a fucking peacock spreading its tail feathers.

"I can't kill every man in here for looking at our girl... Right?"

Sarge shakes his head at Killian. "Fuck no, we want them to look and know she is ours. If they touch her, it's game on. Even I could get behind that."

I tune out of their conversation, watching as Mercedes stops the girls, and her hand touches Jordyn's shoulder. I watch it as she moves it down my wife's arm. The fucking pussy licker isn't stealing my woman. Mercedes and I have shared women in the past, which I think has given her the idea that I would share Jordyn with her. She is wrong. Killian would end her if he knew.

Standing from my stool, leaving my drink, I cross the room. Jordyn slips beside me and links our hands, leaning into my side.

"Hello, husband," she gushes.

“Hello, wife, I have been waiting for you. We need to head upstairs.”

Mercedes chuckles at me and winks, but I adamantly shake my head no, and the bitch pouts at me. I turn my head to look at Kill, and her eyes go wide when he runs a finger across his throat. I guess the cat is out of the bag, or he isn't stupid and knows what went on between Mercedes and me in the past.

“Do we have to go up there? Your mom hates me, and Catalina is lingering around like a bitch in heat.”

I nod. “We do, and you sound a little jealous.”

Harper snorts, “What gave you that idea, big man...Oh, Leo is here, I need to go.”

She fixes her cleavage and struts toward the stage leaving Jordyn and I alone. I start to pull her toward the VIP stairs, giving Killian and Sarge a nod. It's their time to slip out the emergency exit; the alarms have been disabled for two hours.

Two of my men are dressed exactly the same as them and are ready to mingle down here and keep their faces away from the cameras. All we have to do is pretend to be in love the way newlyweds are.

When we reach the top of the stairs, I pull Jordyn into a kiss. Her body is too stiff to be believable until she lets go and slips her tongue into my mouth, my hands falling to her ass. *Fuck, I love her ass.*

She is the first to pull back when one of my cousins whistles. The moment I turn to walk into the room, my mother stands there with her arms crossed. She is still pissed off at me that I went behind her back and got married.

The rest of my family is crazy. Someone actually set up a table where gifts have been placed. Uncles, aunts, and cousins greet us.

Jordyn gets pulled away by the women, throwing me a worrying look, and I shrug. My aunts are vicious. She is on her own. My uncle, Gee, congratulates me and claps on my shoulder.

“My boy, I had my doubts when your father died, but you have proven me wrong. I am honored to have you as the head of our family.”

“Thank you, Uncle Gee. My father’s shoes were hard to fill, and I do try my best.” I lean in for a hug and whisper. “But doubt me again and it will be the last mistake you ever make. Capisci?”

He nods. “Understood.”

I smile at the man and clap his shoulder, leaving him standing there to go and save my bride. If I don’t, my aunts will be planning how many children she needs to have and what schools she needs to enroll in now to get on a waitlist.

“Look at all the beautiful ladies. I’m a lucky man.”

Jordyn rolls her eyes as my aunts all come in for hugs and giggle like schoolgirls. Family gatherings are a lot, especially for someone like her who has never had much in the way of family.

We spend the next hour and a half mingling, and I start to get nervous. Killian and Sarge should have been back. I gave them an hour tops.

Sarge appears like magic at the top of the stairs and motions for me to come closer to him. I excuse myself and casually walk over to Sarge. Killian is coming up the stairs at the same time and hands Sarge a drink.

“What is going on?”

“We snuck in, but the fucking feds showed up and surrounded the place. They hadn’t moved in yet, but we couldn’t call in case the assholes try to link us to it.”

I nod when the lights in the whole place come on. “Fuck, let’s see what’s going on... Jordyn!”

She runs to my side, and the four of us casually go down the stairs. It’s obvious halfway down that the Feds have made an appearance. “Do not talk. Do you understand me? I have a team of lawyers.”

Jordyn nods, and I grip her hand harder. “This is not a coincidence,” Killian says, and I agree with him.

I scan the club. Angelo and Leo stand side by side. Leo’s gaze locks on mine. There is no way.

“Enzo D’Arco.”

“I would say it’s a pleasure, but we both know it’s not. What can I do for you?”

The older man hands me papers. “We have a search warrant.”

I don’t argue with them. This isn’t my first rodeo. It’s easier to just let them do their job. They won’t find shit here. My books are done to perfection; I wouldn’t settle for less. But what do they expect to find? Bags of dirty cash just sitting in my office along with drugs and firearms? This was rushed, but why?

A commotion catches my attention, and Angelo throws a punch at Leo. “You fucking rat,” he snarls.

Ah, it all makes sense. My brother was on to him. Isn’t that some shit? “I’m going to skin that mother fucker alive!” Kill shouts, causing two officers to wrestle to get cuffs on him.

How the fuck is this even possible? Leo has been around for most of my life. He went away for a few years after college to travel. He was right under my nose this whole fucking time.

Once the club is searched, Sarge, Jordyn, Killian, Angelo, and a few of my uncles and cousins are arrested. All the key players in the family.

I don’t resist; I let them cuff me and take me away. Mercedes nods from the doors. I know she will have this place cleaned up by the time my lawyers get me out. It could be a long day ahead.



CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

KILLIAN

Sitting in a fucking bare room with nothing but a table in front of me that my hands are cuffed to isn't ideal. I have refused to talk until my lawyer gets here. Their lame attempts at bribery are pathetic.

The door opens, and Leo steps inside. I smirk at him. He hid his true identity well; I'll give him that. Family friend turned pig. Good move, and a sure way to move his way up the ranks when he has an in with a crime family. I just wonder why he was really put in. It wouldn't have been for Enzo. When Leo came back, from what I have been told, Enzo would have been in his mid-twenties, and his father was still alive.

“To what do I owe the pleasure of a visit from you?”

“Cut the shit, Killian, you know why I'm here.”

I laugh just to get under his skin. “I mean, I have theories, of course.”

Leo takes a seat opposite me. “Let's hear them then.”

“Are you sure?” I ask, raising a brow at him and glancing at the two-way glass. He nods, so I shrug.

“My guess is you were put undercover because of your connection to the D'Arco family, more specifically Mario. Whatever you were trying to pin on him was screwed up when he died, but you think more people are involved, so you

refused orders to leave, and now for the last year, you have been doing shit with no immunity. But now you need a bargaining chip, and as to the why, Angelo was on to you, wasn't he?"

Leo launches himself across the table, his hands wrapping around my neck. My laughter fills the room.

"You really shouldn't have done that," I whisper, and he freezes. He knows exactly how he just fucked up.

A second man comes running into the room and pulls Leo off me. "What do you want with me?" I ask, out of curiosity. Wondering what angle he is going to spin.

"A signed statement that Enzo took over the trafficking business after his father died."

I school my features. Any reaction could tip them off that I didn't know Mario was trafficking people. He was always so against it.

"Why would Enzo or his father be involved with that? You wouldn't want me to lie for you?"

"We could cut you a deal, the handful of murders..."

Laughter bellows out of me. "Murders, me? I think you have the wrong man. Profiling someone because of the way they look is beneath you, Leo. For a murder charge, you would need evidence."

Leo composes himself. I guess that tactic didn't work. He sits, but his partner stands in the corner of the room.

"You have a weak link in your chain, Killian," he gloats, sliding a typed-up confession toward me. My eyes scan the document, my brows rising higher in disbelief with every word.

"Did you really think she liked you? She wants her sister back, and we happen to have twenty teenage girls waiting to be reunited with their families. Incentive to talk, don't you think?"

I push the paper back across the table. "I want to talk to my lawyer."

Both men know the drill; neither waste any more time with me. There is no way she told them anything. Fuck. She hates the cops as much as we do, for different reasons, but the end result is the same. She also would do anything for her sister. I know for a fact they don't have Pixie.



CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

SARGE

I demanded a lawyer the second my ass was thrown in this tiny room, knowing how the drill goes, well. They only have so long that they can hold me unless they are going to press charges, and to them, I'm just Enzo's bodyguard.

The door opens, and Leo steps inside. My jaw hardens. He might be smug now, but he has just painted a target on his own back. I hope for his sake that he plans to vanish before Enzo and Killian are set free. I have zero authority to order a hit, and Killian would skin him alive himself. No authority needed.

The damn cuffs bite into my skin. The assholes made sure of that.

"My lawyer here yet?"

Leo ignores me and pulls out a chair. "I wanted to give you a chance to do what's right. Enzo is facing some serious charges. Racketeering alone will put him away for a long time."

I scoff, "An upstanding business owner like Enzo? I'm sure you have seen his books by now, and they're peachy clean. Am I right?"

His hands ball into fists. What do they take us for, newbies? "Maybe so, but every chain has a weak link."

He slides a folder across the table. It has a confession on the top of the pile, Jordyn's statement, Enzo forcing her into

marriage, murder, the works.

“What does this have to do with me? My name isn’t mentioned.”

“You don’t think I can link you to one of the murders?”

I shake my head. Does he really believe I would fall for that? “What I do know is you’re all useless cunts. Did you ever find my wife’s murderer, the one I watched slit her throat?”

The asshole knew about her. He came to the fucking funeral with Enzo. I have been sitting here for hours, waiting. I know the lawyers would have been called straight away, however, whatever is keeping them away must be good. I just have to wait it out and see if they arrest me. My hands are far from clean, but so are his. I can’t say anything about it without incriminating myself.

“You know that he turned up dead. I’m trying to help you, Sergeant, and I think you should help me.”

I lean forward. “How long have you been undercover, you rat? You know as well as I do that I ain’t seen or heard nothing.”

I slump back in my chair, smirking as sweat lines Leo’s brow. It doesn’t take a genius to realize his ass is on the line here. He needs Enzo to go away. I’m honestly surprised that Angelo wasn’t the weakest link.

“With him out of the way, you would have the girl all to yourself. She will need all the support she can get. Those young girls were in pretty bad shape.”

I lift my eyes to meet his, and he knows he hit a nerve. “I’m sure Enzo will pay for the best therapists money can buy. He does love to spoil his wife.”

“It seems that you also like to spoil her.”

He slides a picture of me standing close to Jordyn, my hand on her back as she smiles up at me. “There is no law against fucking your best friend’s wife. Enzo is into cuckolding. You’re not kink shaming, are you? Because I

know for a fact that you yourself have shared many women with the very same man.”

Leo pushes his seat back and stands. “Fuck you, Sarge.”

“No thanks, one man in my life is enough.”

I smirk at the fucker, and he turns his back on me. “I think it’s time you let my lawyer in.”



CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

ENZO

“Where the fuck is my wife?” I snap. I know those slimy fucks are watching me from behind the glass. Leo walks in through the door like he doesn’t have a care in the world. If I wasn’t cuffed to the table, I would have tried to kill him myself. The traitor. He might think he is safe, but he isn’t, not even remotely close. We all know what happens to rats. I just hope Sylvester can work his magic and get me released.

“Hello, Enzo.”

“Tell me why. Your father would be so damn ashamed of you for this.”

He shakes his head. “My father was a good man, unlike you and your father. Trafficking children,” he clucks his tongue.

I shrug. My father never had anything to do with that shit. He should know that. “Maybe so, but both men are dead, so it’s really a nonissue.”

He leans his hands down on the table and looks at me. The man I thought I knew was gone.

“I have enough evidence to send you away.”

I scoff, “You have nothing, or I would already be charged and not sitting here wasting time. I also know you found nothing on me today at all. And as soon as my attorney finishes with my wife, he will be in here with me.”

Leo sits across from me. “That’s where you’re wrong. We have a statement, we have murders, and all of the evidence I have collected.”

I roll my eyes at him. “What statement?” I ask, falling for his damn trap. He slides a manilla folder across the table. I read the document and slide it back across the table.

“Sylvester will have that thrown out of court. My wife can’t testify against me.”

He leans back in his chair. “She could if she wasn’t your wife anymore. Especially if I help her get a divorce, since she was clearly forced into a marriage by blackmail.”

“There is just one hole in your entire plan to take me down.”

“And what’s that?” he asks, leaning forward.

“I’m not involved in trafficking anyone, so getting yourself immunity is going to be really fucking hard. I’m surprised they even let you in to talk to me. You were in deep, right? Who kept you in? Did you even care about Angelo? Someone kept you in and someone knew who you were. They were going to tell me, and you acted on impulse. Did my father teach you nothing?”

The vein in his neck pulsates. I have pissed him off. If they don’t convict me of something, he could face criminal charges.

“You will rot in a cell for a while. My wife and I will live happily ever after.”

“Are you positive she will stick around? Her sister wasn’t found amongst the girls. If she has no need for you...”

“Get my fucking attorney, now. I need to see my wife.”

The asshole fucking smirks at me. “I have all my ducks in a row, Enzo. You are going down, and your whore is going to help me. She is being sent home to pack as we speak. I will be picking her up as soon as I’m done here.”

I try and stand from the chair, but I’m cuffed to the table. Fuck this guy. He looks me in the eye, and I send him a message, one he receives loud and clear. Knowing he is a dead

man walking. He needs to go into hiding along with my wife if he gets to her, because as the old saying goes, snitches get stitches and end up in... well, a ditch is way too good of a death unless they're alive when thrown in.



CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

JORDYN

Sitting alone in a room, my heart beats wildly in my chest. I have never been arrested before. I'm no angel, but I couldn't afford to be caught. Pixie relied on me. Tears roll down my face. I need my sister.

The door swings open, and Leo waltzes in. "Leo?"

My mind swarms with confusion, just for a few seconds. I swear Killian told me that Leo and Angelo have been friends forever. How the hell would they not know he is police? This makes no sense.

"Am I allowed to go yet?" I ask when he doesn't answer my first question because clearly it's him.

"Unfortunately not, you married into one of the biggest crime families, Jordyn. Serious charges are being pressed right now, murder..."

"I didn't murder anyone," I snap.

Leo looks at me, and the smugness rolls off him in waves. "You don't have to kill someone to be an accessory to murder."

"I want a lawyer," I reply, making eye contact with the dead man sitting across from me.

"I'm sure one is on their way, unless your new husband doesn't actually care about you. But I know you care about

your sister.”

He slides a picture of Pixie across the table. I pick it up and stare at her latest school photo. A smile forms on my lips.

“Did you find her?” I ask, hopeful. Killian and Sarge were going to rescue the girls, but they came back to the club. I know they would have told me if they had her.

“I can’t tell you that information until the girls are identified and their next of kin called.”

Fuck, my mother is still MIA. They will try to contact her.

“What do you want?” I ask.

“A statement.”

I pfft him. “You’re an idiot if you think I know anything. I’m just a whore from Huntersville and was lucky enough to get with a rich man.”

He leans forward. “Cut the shit. I know you have witnessed a murder. They forced you into a marriage to save your sister from the very man who took her. Don’t you want to get revenge?”

“Of course I do. But unless I see my sister alive and well, I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Fine, have it your way.”

Leo gets up and leaves me alone again, with nothing but a clock on the wall. As the hands tick over, dread swirls in my gut. Would I talk if they let me leave with my sister? She is the reason that I married Enzo, but I’m no idiot. You don’t just get to walk away.

When the door finally opens again, I’m busting for a wee. It’s not Leo this time. It’s a man in a very expensive suit.

“Jordyn D’Arco, I’m Sylvester Slone, your attorney. You’re free to go.”

A police officer steps around him and undoes my handcuffs. “Wait, I need to find my sister, and are Enzo, Killian, and Sarge still here?”

“Let’s talk about this outside,” he says matter-of-factly, and I nod. He leads me out into the car park, where Harper is waiting for me.

“I don’t have a lot of information for you regarding your sister. I have one of my associates finding out what they can. If they have the girls, it’s likely they would be getting treated by medical professionals. As for your husband, he is still being questioned, and I expect it to be a little harder to get him out. Please go home and wait for his call.”

“Fine,” I snap, even though I know it’s not his fault. Harper pulls me into her arms when Sylvester heads back into the building.

“Are you okay? What the hell happened?”

I fill her in on what I can. She pulls up out the front of Enzo’s house. I ask her to not come in, I just need to shower and process what happened. She reluctantly agrees, as long as I call her the second I know more.

I walk up the long ass driveway, punching in the code for the door. I push it open and step into the foyer. The house has been torn to shreds. The further I walk into the house, the more I can see. The sitting room has all the furniture upturned, but I walk straight past it and don’t even bother going to look at the rest. I get a bottle of water from the refrigerator and go upstairs to mine and Enzo’s bedroom, finding that it too has been turned upside down. I bypass the mess and strip out of my skimpy black dress, and take a long hot shower, letting the water fall over me. My muscles ache from sitting in the plastic chair for hours on end. I’m tired as hell from not having any sleep.

When I get out of the shower, I wrap myself in a towel and wipe the steam from the mirror. I need to wait for Enzo. The cops will try and trick me into believing anything they want. Surely, if they have my sister, Enzo will use his lawyers to help me get her back.

I stare at myself in the mirror for a long time. What have I gotten myself into? Too disgusted to look anymore, I get dressed in a pair of sweats and one of Enzo’s shirts that’s on

the floor. It still smells like him. I remember he took it off before we left for the club. The knife that Killian gave me sits on the floor and I pick it up, realizing these men have my back. I really should have theirs.

A phone starts to ring from somewhere in the house. I have no idea where mine is, so I follow the sound downstairs and into Enzo's office.

"Hello?"

"Mrs. D'Arco, it's Sylvester. I have some information from Enzo and had my associate ask around. All of the girls have been processed, and your sister wasn't there."

I don't know if I ended the call or if I just dropped the handset to the floor. I absentmindedly walk out of the office. If she wasn't with them, they must have already sold her. I was too late.

"So you are here." I turn and come face to face with Enzo's mother. "What my son sees in you I don't know."

"He isn't here, so please leave."

She cackles at me. "You can't kick me out of my own house. If I were you, I would start walking toward the basement."

Her arm reaches behind her back, and my heart hammers in my chest at the clear threat. My hand clutches around the knife in my pocket, and I flick it open as we walk down the hall and out the foyer, which you have to cut across to get to Killian's space.

"He won't like you down there," I say. I don't even know why.

"Who gives a shit. Once I'm done here, Enzo will be grieving your loss, and his blond friend won't be able to handle another girl murdered, so he will run away like he did the last time. The other one, though, he is going to be pinned with a few murders, and life in prison gets him out of my way."

"Out of your way for what?"

She smiles at me ever so lovingly, and my brows furrow. “To marry Catalina, of course. You ruined all my plans. First, you start making my son sniff around my business, and then you ruin Cat’s plans. This is all your fault.”

I run for her. I need to go back to the police station and see if there was a mistake. My sister has to be there. Maybe she gave them a fake name. It wouldn’t be something she hasn’t seen done by our own mother a handful of times, that’s it. It has to be.

I rush the woman as the knife in my hand expands. It’s one of those ones where the blade shoots out from inside the handle.

My eyes go round as the knife imbeds inside her neck. “Oh fuck, no, no, no, no.”

I drop to the floor beside her. She gurgles and blood comes out of her mouth. I just fucked up big time.

“Well, I wasn’t expecting this when I decided to come here, but this is even better.” I look up at the voice, blood covering my shaky hands. I flick the knife back down, shoving it into my pocket. He isn’t paying me much attention; the smile on his face is as if he just won the fucking lottery.

“It was an accident. She had a gun.”

Leo squats down beside me, “It doesn’t look like she has a gun to me. I think you might need to re-evaluate that statement, Mrs. D’Arco.”

I wouldn’t say shit. What’s the point? The second Enzo finds out I killed his mother by accident or not, I’m as good as dead. If it were Angelo, I don’t think he would have cared all that much, but now I’m screwed.

Leo helps me up and wraps an arm around me, holding most of my body weight, and leads me out to his car. I get into the passenger seat and wait until he gets into the driver’s side.

“You won’t regret this, Jordyn, I will keep you safe. We have safe houses where Enzo won’t find you.”

I laugh maniacally. “You’re an idiot if you think he won’t find me. I’m not safe anywhere. I just killed his mother. Wait, you didn’t call an ambulance. Why?”

Now it’s his turn to laugh. “You think that bitch didn’t know about the trafficking? It’s the whole reason I was put undercover. Enzo might have thought the sun shone out of his father’s ass, but he was a very bad man, and his wife was no better. But the bitch never so much as dipped a finger in anything illegal, so why wouldn’t her son have taken over for his father?”



CHAPTER THIRTY

LEO

Everything is going to shit. I needed this bust and Enzo's head on a platter. I was in too deep. I knew it, my boss knew it, and the only way out was in my sights, but Angelo had to fuck everything up. The asshole was pissed that his brother wanted to make me his underboss. That level would have secured my freedom.

He wouldn't tell me how he figured it out, but I needed to act fast. I gathered all the evidence I could. My entire plan relied on finding Jordyn's sister, but we fucked that up; she wasn't there. I know that she knows about the ordered hits, the torture chamber downstairs, being forced into a marriage, and all I need is a witness.

I taunted them all with a false statement, planting the seed of doubt, until the fucking slimeball Sylvester turned up, and Jordyn was free to go. I made one more visit with Enzo and that got me nowhere, so I figured since I'm more than likely going to jail, I will go to his house and try to work on her.

I pull up into the driveway. I will tell her there was a mistake, that her sister was found and that if she signs a statement, I will have her sister released into her custody and moved to witness protection. I doubt she even means that much to him. If she is relocated out of the country, he would give up, eventually. I already know that I have to go into

hiding, but I also know that he will hunt me down until the day I die. I just wanted revenge for my family.

I take the steps two at a time, freezing as a scream echoes from inside. I run into the house, and Jordyn is beside Enzo's mother. Blood gushes out of her neck.

"It was an accident. She had a gun."

I look at the small woman lying on the ground. There doesn't appear to be a gun, and I tell her as much. I smile with happiness. I no longer need to lie. If she doesn't want to go to prison for murder, she will need my help. Once we get to my car, she realizes that I didn't call an ambulance, and for good reason. That woman deserves to die.

Jordyn tries the handle. "Leo, let me go."

"I can't do that. My ass is also on the line. Fuck the D'Arco family, they run the human trafficking ring." Her face loses all of its color. "You really thought they were helping you? No, they were using you, keeping you quiet and away from the cops until they got rid of the evidence. What do you think Killian and Sarge were doing tonight? If we didn't act, they were moving the girls to the docks and shipping them out."

She shakes her head as if she can't believe it. Half of it is true, our source said that the girls were due to be moved tonight. We have one of the men on guard about to flip, and with her, their entire empire will come crumbling down.

Pressing the button for my window, I throw my cell out. "Give me your phone."

"I didn't bring it. It's still in the house."

"Good, we will stop, and I will buy a burner phone. I need to make a deal with my boss to keep us safe. I have somewhere off the grid that we can go for now."

She just nods her head, staring absentmindedly out the window. My father will get his vengeance. He didn't need to die at their hands. He spent so many years being loyal to them. After one arrest, they labeled him a rat, even though he swore black and blue he didn't talk. Mario pulled the trigger himself.

Maybe out of guilt they kept me around. I didn't know any better back then, but over the years, I started to see them for what they really are. Monsters.



CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

JORDYN

Leo takes us to a small, remote cabin. I think the trip took about five hours, but I couldn't be sure. My mind just keeps going back to Enzo's mother. I swear she was going to pull a gun on me, and how unlucky was it that the damn knife ejected as I pounced on her? There will be no forgiveness for that. I'm just a whore he hired and married for his own agenda, which I was fine with because I needed him to find my sister.

Is it true Enzo was involved with trafficking children? He seemed so sincere. My head hurts trying to find a logical reason that he would pretend like that. It doesn't make any sense. The fact of the matter is Pixie is gone, so there is no reason for me to walk this earth. My only reason for living was to protect her, and I did a shit job.

Narking on Enzo isn't the answer, though. I know that. His sins are his alone, and I would wind up dead in prison. Everybody knows men like him have connections. No, I want Killian to take my life, to end it all. That's why I agreed to go with Leo. He will hunt us down, and show no mercy. Fuck knows Leo deserves it. Who turns their back on family? He can spout being undercover all he likes, but he has been friends with Angelo since childhood.

Where I grew up, no one talks to the cops to give someone up. I went to the police about Pixie and a lot of good that did

me.

The cabin is so secluded that I couldn't walk out of here if I wanted to. Now, all I can do is wait. Leo doesn't seem like he wants to hurt me, and it would fucking suck if he took my life. I doubt he will if he thinks that I will work with him.

Leo is outside on his burner phone he picked up on our way here. I can hear his argument, making arrangements to get us taken somewhere under police protection. He is safer here if there are no traces of him owning this property. As soon as we are moved, we are dead. Plain and simple. I have watched enough mob movies to know how it works.

Curling up on the bed, I switch on the TV and flick through the channels. A news report comes on, and I listen as they drone on about Enzo, his handsome face on the screen. They are making him out to be a ruthless killer, but they forget to mention the good he does, like paying for his receptionist at the club's husband's medical needs. I refuse to believe that man would traffic innocent children. Enzo might be all the things they are saying and more, but child trafficker isn't one of them.

I should have stayed and explained myself, maybe he would have understood what happened. I would have had to be the bearer of bad news that his mother is one of the ones in charge of running the trafficking, but who is she working with if not Enzo? Leo said she doesn't get her hands dirty, so she needs to have someone else running the show.

The least I can do while I wait on Killian is use Leo and gather the information for Enzo. I have nothing else to live for so I may as well make myself useful.

Leo is coming inside as I leave the one bedroom. "Do you have any clothes here? I could use a shower."

I hadn't thought to ask him to stop for any. I was in shock that I killed someone. I still am, if I'm honest.

"I should have a spare shirt and sweats in the car. I will leave them on the bed for you."

I nod. "How was your call?"

He looks disheveled, his hair is a mess, and he has sweat stains on his shirt. “My boss is pissed. Enzo has been released, and my entire plan is not going the way I wanted.”

“You know, I don’t think Enzo is behind it. You said his mom was, but she wasn’t the ringleader. If you actually figured it out, you get a free pass from the cops, but Enzo might not hunt you down because we both know he will.”

“It has to be him,” he snaps. “He took over for Mario. He is a smart man, always keeping everyone except Killian and Sarge at arm’s length.”

“I still don’t think it was him. Do you have any other suspects? At least think it over. Look back over what you have.”

I don’t wait for him to respond, heading back into the room and using the adjoining bathroom. Peeling off the blood-stained clothes, I throw them onto the floor to be burned. I don’t need to leave any evidence that Leo can use against me.

Keeping my underwear on, I step into the shower, along with the knife Killian gave me. I wash the dried blood from the blade and watch as it disappears down the drain as I slide down the tiled wall.

So much of my hope was placed in Enzo to find Pixie. My thoughts wander to where she is, and if she is okay. She can’t be; girls are sold for unspeakable acts. If she is still alive, she won’t ever be the same again. It’s not the life I wanted for her. I don’t know if I could live with the what-if’s.

When the water runs cold, I strip out of my underwear and use a bar of soap to wash the material and hang it over the shower screen to dry.

Once I’m wrapped in a towel, I peek out the door, and Leo has left a set of clothes on the bed. He is a lot taller than me, so the clothes should fit, and they do.

Leaving the room, Leo is at the table with a box, files spread all over as he picks them up and looks them over. He turns to face me when he notices me lingering and gathers up the papers and throws them back into the box.

“I think you might be right,” he sighs. “I was so set on nailing Enzo for his father’s crimes that I have missed something.”

I close the distance between us. “Who was closest to Mario, besides his wife?”

“The list would be long.”

“My advice, which is worth nothing, look into it. It could buy you your freedom to disappear.”

“And what about you? It’s my fault you were alone with that woman.”

I shrug. “I can help. I have a vested interest in finding out if Enzo was behind my sister going missing.”

I don’t say that I want to see the man behind it murdered. It’s what he deserves. Prison would be the easy way out.

“Okay, I’m going into town to get some supplies. Don’t try to run; there is nowhere to go. I will get us to a safe location tomorrow. Until then, we sit tight.”

I don’t plan on running. Who wants to starve to death or die of dehydration if the wild animals don’t eat me first? I can’t imagine that is a nice way to go. No, I will wait and see how long it takes Killian to find me. Enzo will order it. He told me I was never getting out unless it was by death. I just hope I can buy enough time for Leo to find out who is responsible for selling my sister, so I can tell my husband before he kills me for the murder of his mother.



CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

ENZO

Five hours earlier

Sylvester walks into the interrogation room, followed by a female cop. “You’re free to go.”

The cop undoes my cuffs, and I stand, stretching out my arms.

“Where is my wife and my men?” I ask as we exit the room.

“Jordyn was released over an hour ago, and Killian and Sergeant are waiting out the front for you. Don’t do anything stupid. Keep your nose clean and don’t leave town. They might want to bring you back in, but right now, they have nothing to hold you on.”

I knew there was no way that Jordyn would talk to the cops. It was one of the deciding factors in marrying her. She is from Huntersville. They live by a code there when it comes to cops. She also wouldn’t have been so willing to withstand Kill’s torture just to spill her guts the first chance that she gets.

Shaking Sylvester’s hand, I tell him to send me his bill. He laughs and tells me he will once he gets some sleep. Killian and Sarge are waiting outside, and both men look exhausted.

“How the fuck are we getting home? I want to see Jordyn,” Sarge says.

“Do we think they got her to talk?” Kill asks, and I shake my head no.

“I think Leo was grasping at straws.”

Kill nods. “I can hot-wire a car.”

Sarge claps him on the back. “Not a wise idea after we have just been released.”

Sylvester pulls up beside the curb in his half a million-dollar car. Flashy fuck earns enough just from me to have paid for this outright.

“Need a lift?”

All three of us get into his car, and he drives us back to my house, letting us out and driving away. The front door is cracked, and immediately I know something isn't right. None of us have our weapons, they were confiscated to run ballistics on them to pin us to any murders that they can. Fucking morons believe we would carry with a weapon used in a murder. Sarge notices at the same time I do and takes the lead. We quietly walk up the stairs, and he pushes the door open.

“Mamma!”

Racing to her side, I drop to my knees and check for a pulse. “Poppet!” Kill yells, and Sarge reaches under the entryway table and pulls out a gun. He has them hidden all around the house.

“I will do a sweep of the house. Kill, take Enzo's wing and make sure she isn't here. I will take ours. Check to see if any staff were here as well. Enzo, call 911 and check the camera feed.”

I blink up at him. “911?”

“If we don't call them, you won't be able to have a funeral for her. They need to process her body.”

I nod. Whoever killed my mother will die a very slow and painful death. I push up off the floor and head toward my

office. Pushing the door open, everything is thrown around the room. The fucking cops took my damn computer. Lucky for me, it isn't where the cameras are located. Under an ugly ass paperweight is a slide compartment with a button. Pressing it, the mahogany bookcase slides forward and to the side, showing off the security system. I rewind the feed to a few hours ago when Jordyn gets home, and I follow her steps as she moves around the house. My mom appears on the screen, her and Jordyn move out of my room and out into the foyer. My mom's back is to the camera, but Jordyn's face drops, and she rushes her, my eyes widening when she pulls a knife, and my mom falls to the floor. Blood pools around her lifeless body. Jordyn drops down beside her and shakes her head. She pulls her knife from her neck and retracts the blade.

Her attention is pulled away from the body, and my hands ball into fists when Leo walks into the frame. She says something to him; I don't have audio on my system; I refuse to have any evidence to incriminate myself in any way.

"The house is clear," Sarge says, coming to stand behind me, Kill joining him a second later. I move the footage back and let them watch.

"I want her found," I demand. "Get every fucking soldier we have. Call anyone connected with us and find her. She comes back here alive."

"What about Leo?" Sarge asks.

"He can be taken to my father's underground bunker."

I pull out my phone and dial 911. I should have done it first, but I needed to know who did this. I send the video to my private email and loop the footage from yesterday. I don't need the cops to know who did this. I will take matters into my own hands.

Watching your mother's body get taken out in a body bag is not something I would wish on my worst enemy. My family has all started to arrive, but I have better shit to do than deal

with them. Sarge called our tech guy, and a trusted hacker is sent here, not that I can trust anyone anymore. I sure as shit didn't think Jordyn gave a statement, but it's hard to not believe it when I watched her kill my mother and leave with Leo.

Killian brings the guy into my office. He is young, but most good hackers are.

"We need you to find a car for us, check traffic cameras. I will double your fee if you can get me a location within an hour."

"Easily done," he says. I leave him in Kill's hands. I know he will want to find her as much as I do. If anyone kills her, it will be him. He won't let anyone else do it. I don't blame him. I will let him have this one.

My aunts all surround me with tears running down their faces as my uncles throw out questions about my cameras, but I lie and tell them the feed was cut hours ago. They all curse out Leo; they know that he is a rat. He won't be shown mercy if they find him first, though none will hunt him down personally unless I order it. Right now, I leave my mother's funeral arrangements in the hands of her older sister.

I zone out and sit in the living room. How the fuck did my life get to this point? I don't know how my father did it. He would still be head of the family to this day if he didn't have a heart attack and die.

"Are you okay?"

Turning, I see Cat sit beside me with fresh tears in her eyes. I nod. Even if the woman pisses me off, she has been a family friend for a long time.

"Would you be okay if your mother was murdered?"

"I guess not. Angelo isn't doing well either. You should talk to him."

I nod. I forgot to even talk to my own brother. I stand and find him in the kitchen making coffee. I don't know exactly when things became so distant between us. We were always

close growing up, but our father's death affected us both differently.

"Do you know who did it?" he asks, and I nod.

"Are you trafficking children?" I ask him. His brows dip, and he starts filling up styrofoam cups.

"You think I fucking sell kids?" he snaps, and for the first time, I see my brother's disappointment in me.

"Who else could it be? If not you or me, it's someone close to us."

He shrugs. "I knew Leo was a fed," he says. Looking up at him, I see the way he is cautiously looking at me.

"For how long?"

"A few days. I tried to give him a chance to run. He told me he was leaving the night of the raid. I should have told you."

He slides a coffee across to me. "Yeah, you should have, but there is no point dwelling on it now."

He nods, and I turn to leave. That's the most honest conversation we have had in a long time.

"And Angelo," I say when I reach the entryway, turning back to face him. He looks over at me. "You need to decide if you want to keep your position in the family. After Mom's funeral, I'm fixing this family."

He nods, and this time I leave, going back into my office to see what progress our little hacker is making.



CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

KILLIAN

Three Months later

All the best things come to those who wait. Enzo wanted to storm in, guns blazing, which is stupid. We are being watched by the Feds. Someone is tailing us every time we leave the house. We want this kill. If anyone touches a hair on Jordyn's head, they will have to deal with me.

I know where they are. I have men watching them to make sure that they have not moved locations. It seems weird they are hiding her if she isn't going to squeal. I want to know what they're up to.

Sarge also backed me up. He doesn't want Jordyn dead. He firmly believes she would have a good reason for killing his mother, but Enzo doesn't want to hear it. He has been grieving hard, searching his family for the rat. Angelo was sent to rehab after his mother's funeral. Enzo even attended family day therapy. I wish I could have been a fly on the wall, but I can guarantee someone would have died if I stepped foot in that place.

I'm itching to kill, and being put on a ban because we are living under a microscope fucking sucks, but I just need to get more inventive.

“Killian!” The shrill sound of her voice calling me sends shivers down my spine.

Her small form comes into view. “You promised me she would be back by now, and she isn’t. You’re a liar liar, pants on fire.”

Fuck, she reminds me of her sister. “I did, but the thing is, Enzo wants her dead. I’m stalling so she doesn’t fucking die.”

The small girl gasps at the harshness of my tone. “I know, but if he wants her dead, why am I still here?”

“Guilt,” I answer honestly. He blames himself for bringing Jordyn into his life, for not finding who was responsible sooner, and for a handful of other shit.

The night of the raid, I found Jordyn’s sister, Pixie, on my way to the club. Sarge and I made a pit stop at an old friend’s place, asking her to watch the girl until I got back. I didn’t expect to take so long.

Then getting back to the house and dealing with a dead body, Enzo was fucking livid when I told him. He thinks everything would be different had Jordyn known her sister was alive; the issue was, I didn’t want the Feds to know. They would have taken her, questioned her, and even tried to track down their mother, who is doing well where she is.

Right now, I’m buying my time, figuring out a way to dig the woman who makes me feel a little spark every time she walks into a room out of a shit situation. It’s not like me to be reasonable. Kill would have stormed into that safe house and dragged her ass back here, but then what? The Feds storm in here and take her back, and charges would be laid. No, we need to wait. Be smart about it. Pixie is safe now. Sarge forced Enzo into taking the girl to speak to someone about what she went through.

“I miss her,” she whispers.

“You would miss her more if she were dead. We have a pissed off man with the need for revenge. I need to watch, and if he tells me to kill her, do you know what I’m going to do?”

She rolls her eyes. “I think you’re all talk. If you wanted her dead, you would have done it by now.”

“Is that so, little worm? I took an oath. It’s my family above all else.”

“But isn’t she family? You told me she married Enzo. Doesn’t that mean something?”

“Not if Enzo wants her dead.”

I can see the frustration on her face. It’s the exact same I see with Sarge. I haven’t even told him what I’m doing. I can’t. I don’t want to give him false hope. Enzo is willing to let it go for now as long as we have eyes on them, but the second the Feds back off, it’s going to be interesting.

Enzo walks into the room, and Pixie screws her face up at him. “I hate you!” she screams and runs up the stairs to Angelo’s wing that has now been transformed into hers.

“What did I do today? You’d think she would be grateful I have given her a life she could have only dreamed of.”

“For a smart man, sometimes you’re dumb,” Sarge says, walking into the room.

“What do you want me to do? Welcome the woman who murdered my mother and left with my enemy back into my life with open arms? You know I can’t do that.”

“Let me leave with the girl,” Sarge says, and hurt washes over Enzo’s face.

“No!”

Enzo won’t allow that either; he knows if he kills Jordyn, he will lose Sarge. He is here to make sure nothing happens to Pixie, he feels responsible for her.

“Fuck you,” Sarge spits before storming up the stairs to follow Pixie.

Enzo scratches his head. He won’t admit it, but losing Sarge would kill him, so he keeps the girl around.

I just know that I’m running out of time before he orders the hit, and then I’m powerless.



CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

SARGE

Five months later.

As the days go by, the Feds start following us less and less. I should just take Pix, go get Jordyn myself, and the three of us can run. I have thought about it every single day, and every day, the Feds sit outside. I sigh in relief that she lives another day. Enzo's mother was a wolf in sheep's clothing. I don't believe for one second that Jordyn wasn't defending herself.

Pulling my SUV to the curb, Pixie jumps in, followed by Cat. The store owners stand a little further back, their arms loaded with bags. I exit the car and open the trunk and help them load everything in. I hate that this bitch is still sniffing around, acting like she cares when I know she doesn't. And what better way to make Enzo think she is good for him than to take the girl under her wing? Jordyn would become a savage if she found out.

“He asked me out. I really think I should go.”

Looking at her through the rear vision mirror from behind my sunglasses, I ask, “Who asked you out?”

“Finn O'Brien from school.”

I bellow out a laugh, and Cat is encouraging this. “You want to date a kid from the O'Brien family? You do know who

that is, right, Cat?”

Pixie looks between the both of us. “Will one of you fill me in?”

“Enzo and Ronan go way back, and I’m presuming Ronan is an uncle to this Finn kid. I really need to teach you some shit, kid. Off the table for the dating pool, the Russians, the Irish, the Aces crew, and the Pythons.”

The kid scoffs and rolls her eyes. “I can date whoever I like.”

“Not unless you want to start a war, you can’t. Look, part of this life comes with some restrictions, and since you have nowhere else to go and your sister would kill me if I don’t take care of you, please just let it go. I’m sure he is a nice boy.”

“Agh, I want Jordyn back.”

“Me too, kid, me too.”

She lets the conversation with me die off. Cat stays awfully quiet, and I just don’t trust the bitch and driving her around really grinds my gears. Enzo has removed me as his personal security.

The tension between us sucks. He told me I have a month to decide if I want to be his consigliere, but I don’t know if I can anymore, not when I would run as far away from here as I could if it were not for the miniature version of Jordyn in the back seat, and Enzo knows it. We barely talk at the moment. He is making stupid choices without me by his side. Getting him to listen to reason is not happening, especially when he should be keeping his nose clean.

Once I drop the girls back at the house, I decide to do something I haven’t in a long time. I go and visit Missy’s grave. I should visit more, but I felt wrong coming here with a Fed following me. But today, I need some clarity. Am I holding onto Jordyn because of some underlying guilt?

Stopping along the way, I buy some flowers, place them on her grave, and sit down, staring at the headstone.

“I fucked up again,” I laugh. “I fell for the first girl I screwed since you. How can I keep holding onto that? She has been gone longer than she was around. Enzo won’t see reason, Kill will do whatever Enzo asks of him, and I have a teenage girl to watch over. Why can’t my life be simple?”

“Because life never is.” The hairs on the back of my neck bristle at that voice. “Don’t kill me. I have something that could save Jordyn.”

I raise my hands in the air as I stand so he can see I have no weapon. Leo holds an envelope and hands it to me.

“Why would you do this? Help her, I mean.”

“I’m a dead man walking, Sarge. I fucked up a lot, and I shouldn’t have turned on family, but they killed my father. I wanted revenge. Spending time with Jordyn has made me realize that maybe I got it wrong, and if I can at least help clear her name, I will. She doesn’t deserve to die over the shit storm I created. I should have let the family handle this themselves in the first place.”

Opening the envelope, I pull out the first sheet of paper and look up at Leo. He nods. Holy fucking shit. This changes everything.



CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

JORDYN

Leo has been acting weird the last few days. He says he has gathered all the information he needs to buy his freedom, but yet, he hasn't called his boss. He left last night and hasn't come back. I have started to wonder if he has gotten himself killed until I hear a car pull into the driveway.

When he walks through the door, he hands me a bag from the bakery in town. I haven't left the house in months. I sit here and wait for Killian, but he hasn't come. Maybe they didn't care enough about me after all.

"I need you to sit down," Leo says, all somber. I nod and take my bag containing the world's best donut I have ever tasted and take a seat on the small couch. The Feds never moved us; they agreed with what I suspected that if we were moved, it would be more dangerous.

"I delivered some important information."

"Okay, and now what?" I ask, looking at him. Under different circumstances, we could have been friends. Leo is actually a really good man. He might have fucked up, but haven't we all?

"Now I run," he says, and I narrow my eyes at him. Why the hell would he run if he handed in everything he needs for a conviction?

"I don't understand."

He sighs. “I did what I should have done from the start and gave the information to Enzo.”

I cough on a crumb. I inhale. Did I hear him correctly? “You what?”

He shifts uncomfortably. “Enzo can deal with it in-house. I’m a dead man if he comes for me, and if I go to prison, I’m dead. I figure if you go back and I run, he might let me go and start a new life.”

“And what about me? The cops will arrest me for murder.”

“I lied about that. Enzo never told them it was you, and I knew he had security cameras. I wanted him to see me leaving with you. Plus, I told Sarge I would give you all the proof of every person behind the trafficking and who really rolled on you.”

Dread fills my stomach. I can’t go back now. He will kill me on the spot, and things have changed. “And you want to send me back to the lion’s den?”

He fills me in on how he followed Sarge to the cemetery, and he spoke with him and gave him the evidence that would be by me some time. I just don’t know if it will be enough—my betrayal, leaving with Leo, even if he believes me about his mother—but one small piece of information has me packing my bags. I guess it’s time to face reality.

Dropping Leo off in town leaves me to drive the rest of the four hours by myself. I fill the time by running scenarios through my head at what I will be walking in on. Worst-case scenario, I’m counting down the days to my death. A few months ago, I was happy to die. I waited and waited, but that day just hadn’t come, and Leo made me realize that I should live my life. Pixie would have wanted that. He truly made me believe him. Leo said Killian has known our location since the day after we left, and yet none of them came, not even once. The sad reality is I shouldn’t have fallen for them so quickly

when clearly none of them felt the same way, all of them loyal to a family name.

Now I'm going back, and I'm going to throw a spanner in the works. I hold a major playing card, and hopefully, it's enough to buy me immunity from them, but this time, I won't make the mistake of letting my feelings get in the way.

Driving back into town has a weird sense of relief washing over me, and when I pull into the driveway, the gates are open. I was expecting security to be tighter now. I stop right in front of the front stairs, sliding out.

Even the code on the door is the same. I stand in the foyer and look around. I only lived here for a short amount of time, but I felt more at home here than I ever did.

Leo gave me a folder full of information, and I have it securely in my hand. "Honey, I'm home!" I shout. Footsteps come from all directions.

"Jordyn!" Pixie screams, running into my arms. Tears run down my face at the sight of her. I never allowed myself to believe that she was okay. These men knew how much finding her meant to me, and they knew she was alive, and they didn't even bother to tell me. I won't forgive them for that, but now it's time they know my secret.

Sarge is the first to reach the foyer, and he stops dead in his tracks, Killian close behind, and Enzo comes down the stairs, pausing halfway.

All three men stare at me. I wait for one to pull a weapon, but they don't. Why would they? I'm no threat to them.

"You're game coming back here," Enzo says, breaking the silence.

"Did you really think that I would stay away when I found out my sister was alive?"

He shrugs when he reaches the bottom step. "And what is stopping me from killing you right now?"

I step back from Pixie's embrace. "Can you give us a minute? They won't hurt me."

She hesitates but nods and runs back up the stairs to Angelo's wing. We will be having words about that, but first, I throw the envelope toward Enzo, and it lands at his feet, and then I lift the hoodie over my head.

"Poppet," Killian says, having moved closer while I took off the hoodie, and pulls my arms behind my back. Sarge moves like lightning and rips Killian off me and shoves him so hard he hits the wall. Enzo freezes and takes me in.

His eyes travel over my body, and he swallows hard, his eyes pausing on my stomach.

"You think that will save you?" Enzo asks.

"No, but the information and proof to back it up is in that envelope. Your mother bought my sister. She took her away from me. I want my sister back and my life, but I'm not going anywhere. I have the heir to the D'Arco family inside me, and a little birdie has told me that gives me immunity."

His eyes narrow on me. I know he will want to know if the baby is his, and he is. Leo had his friend run a DNA test against Enzo's mother's DNA, and it was a perfect match as the paternal grandmother.

"She is right, son."

We all turn at the sound of an older man's voice.

"Papà?" Enzo whispers, so childlike.

How is that possible? They told me he died of a heart attack. "The one and only. Is anyone going to give me a hand?"

The older man steps aside, and a body is laying behind him. "This son of a bitch needs the Killian special."

Killian moves to help Enzo's father drag the body inside. Sarge and Enzo stand in shock, unmoving. "So I hear you're the woman to thank for killing my wife."

All I can do is nod like a bobblehead. What the fuck is happening right now?

Thank you for reading Liar Liar Part One. I hope you loved Jordyn and her men as much as I do.

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Website: www.jayeprattauthor.com

Acknowledgements

My husband, I love you.

My children, thank you for being hungry all of the time and forcing me to keep working.

To my best friend Amber, thank you for being a huge support for me both professionally and personally.

My alpha readers, Patricia, Cheria, Rachel, Lena, Isha, Kristin, without you ladies, I would be lost. You always jump straight in and get shit done, and I will be forever grateful.

Brandi, your proofreads always go above and beyond. Thank you for being a valuable part of my team.

My ARC readers, reviews are one of the most important parts of being an author and each and every one of you leaving reviews means so much more than you could ever know.

My street team girls, thank you so much for taking a chance on me and sharing my work.

And last but not least my readers, for giving my stories a chance and investing your time into loving my characters as much as I do. If it wasn't for you I wouldn't have a career doing something that I love.