

Tutoring the
ATHLETE

CASSI HART

Tutoring the Athlete

Sweetheart Campus

Cassi Hart

Published by: Cheeky Publishing LLC

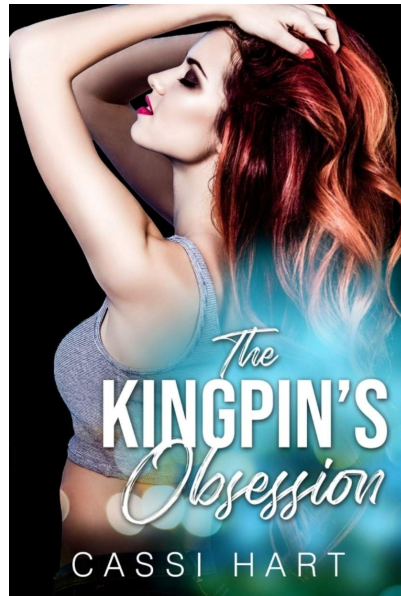
First Edition

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Free Book for You



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Dedicated to the sweet nerdy girl in all of us, may we continue to be our amazing selves. Thank you for your support, enjoy!



Cassi H   rt

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Chapter 1

Katherine

I watch the library doors from my seat at the furthest table in the back, waiting for Mr. Bigshot to show up, while trying to keep the dread at bay. Normally I like tutoring, but I don't want this particular job at all. I can't afford to turn it down, though, and since the last few tutors ended up "getting distracted" and were reassigned to other students, I'm what's left.

The doors swing open and finally, he enters, looking like he doesn't want to be here anymore than I do. I recognize him right away. Even someone like me, who rarely takes her nose out of her textbooks, knows who the school's star quarterback is. I can see how the other tutors got distracted. He's beautiful, with his tanned skin and broad shoulders. His light green eyes seem to paralyze everyone who meets them, and the bright smile he flashes people from time-to-time lights up the dim library. Apparently, he's crazy talented and is guaranteed to be famous all over the country one day, not just here at Walton College.

Heads turn as he makes his way through the room with an equally beautiful girl hanging on his arm. Surprisingly, he doesn't look too happy about that either; every once in a while, she seems to yank on his arm and his smile disappears, replaced by a stormy glare reserved just for her. She doesn't

seem to notice; she's eating up every morsel of attention thrown in their general direction. I shrink further back in my corner as he scans the place. I don't want any attention, least of all from someone so popular and social. I wish I could get out of this, but I have to do my job, so I hold up my hand in a curt wave.

"Hi, are you the tutor?" he asks, shaking the girl off his arm before sliding into the chair across the table from me. He's even flawless up close, and his smile seems genuine and kind.

The girl he's with? Not so much. She plops down next to him and sighs deeply. "I'm already bored. Can't she just take the test for you?" she asks.

"*She* can't," I answer, raising an eyebrow at Landon.

He turns to the girl, a sharp-faced blonde with perfectly applied makeup and expensive looking clothes. I smooth my own campus sweatshirt and open the chemistry book pointedly.

"You know I need to study," he says to her. "Professor Reynolds is being a hard-ass about my grade."

She takes out her phone and shrugs, then starts tapping away. Landon has to nudge her to get her attention again. "Tracy, can you leave?" he asks. He looks and sounds so uncomfortable that I actually feel a bit sorry for him.

She gives him a look so nasty that I recoil, but finally she rises from her seat and flounces out of the library. Landon watches her go with a distasteful twist to his full lips, then turns to me apologetically.

“I’m sorry about that,” he says, holding out his hand. “I’m Landon.”

“Katherine,” I say, feeling as awkward as usual as I reach forward to shake. His fingers are warm and smooth, and his grip is firm around my palm, leaving me oddly breathless.

“Um, you can call me Kat if you want.”

“Is that what you want?” he asks with a smile that keeps my breath from coming back. “You don’t sound so sure.”

I shrug. “Katherine sounds so uptight.” I want a fresh start here. I want to leave my miserable high school experience behind, but it’s been hard. A nickname might change things.

He sweeps me with his green eyes, leaving warmth behind as if he were actually touching me. “I think it suits you.”

Disappointed, I look down, turning pages until I get to the proper chapter. “I don’t mean because you’re uptight,” he hurries to clarify. I look up and he grins. “It sounds regal.”

Well, then, maybe I don’t need a nickname after all. Or is he teasing me?

He doesn’t look like he’s being cruel, but I’m wearing a sweatshirt and jeans, my pale red hair is scraped back into a ponytail. The opposite of regal. I sigh, wanting to get this session over with more than ever. I ask him to take notes while I explain this chapter’s concepts.

A minute later someone pauses at our table, making me stop mid-sentence when she giggles.

“Can I get your autograph?”

“Sure,” he says easily, used to this. He doesn’t smile, though. He just waits as the girl hands him a piece of paper.

“Really?” I ask, not used to it and hating it. His clearly uncomfortable demeanor makes it even worse.

Landon looks apologetic as he scrawls his name for her. “Sor —”

The floodgates seem to open after the first one is successful because suddenly three more girls hurry over, wanting selfies or an autograph. He should have said no.

“I don’t know how this is going to work,” I say, seeing a few more in the distance, working up the nerve to come over. “You need to learn this before the exam, right?”

He nods vigorously. “I’m screwed if I don’t pass that test.”

I have to put in a full hour with him and it’s a point of pride for me that the people I tutor *actually* learn something. It’s barely been ten minutes, all of it nonstop interruptions. “We could go to my dorm,” I suggest rashly. Anything to get this over with.

His smile reappears when he hears my suggestion. “That would be better, thanks.”

He’s very sweet and grateful as we hurry across the quad to my dorm. I feel a bit bad for thinking he has a huge ego; he clearly doesn’t like all of the attention he gets. The common room is too busy, so we head up to my room. Now I’m the one apologizing when we find it’s an absolute mess. My roommate is a theater major and is sewing most of the costumes for the spring play, so there’s a sewing machine on her desk and mine is piled high with fabric and sequins. Her bed is covered with pattern pieces and scissors, and I don’t dare disturb it. The

only place for us to sit is my bed, after I shove away more fabric back into her side of the room.

He's understanding about it and now that we're alone, he seems determined to study. He sits beside me with our legs hanging over the edge of the bed, our backs propped against the wall. I open the textbook and place it between us and he scoots closer so we can share it.

"I'll bring mine next time," he says sheepishly.

"Might be a good idea." My sarcasm makes him smile.

Crammed together like this, I now see why girls throw themselves at him. Up close he seems even bigger, his eyes more hypnotizing, that smile of his making me lean toward him every time he flashes it.

Landon's trying to understand the subject but it's clear he's behind. He's not unintelligent, something's just not clicking for him. When he starts to get frustrated, he makes jokes to distract me. I have to admit, it works half the time. It feels strange to be so comfortable around someone, especially someone I hardly know, but he has an easy way about him that's impossible to resist. Every time he laughs, my skin tingles and I want to keep him laughing, despite needing to work.

At some point, he offers to go to the vending machine to get us something, as if to distract me even more. I redirect him back to the text, but I can't help feeling his gaze on me. It's hard to stay focused when his warm body is crowded next to mine like this.

He tries following my explanation again, but this time he gets frustrated enough that he grabs my notes and holds them high so that I *have* to take a break. I find myself laughing as hard as he is. For once, I'm enjoying myself and really having fun.

When was the last time that happened? When was the last time I was relaxed?

A harsh rap at the door makes me jump and brings me back to earth.

"Landon, damn it, I know you're in there! Open the door right now!" a furious female voice yells.

He rolls his eyes. "It's Tracy." All the joy is gone from him as the pounding continues. "I'm really sorry about this."

About what? What's going to happen? I shrink into myself as he stands to pull the door open. Money or no money, fun or no fun, I wish I'd never accepted this job.

Chapter 2

Landon

When I see my new tutor, everything fades into the background. I forget that I don't get chemistry, that I'll never get chemistry, and the fact that a professor is finally threatening to fail me, in senior year, when I'm so close to being free. Why do I need chemistry anyway, when all I want to do is play football, the one thing I'm actually good at? I also forget that Tracy is almost pulling my arm out of the socket, her talons digging into my wrist. When everyone looks up, I barely notice, except for the jolt of embarrassment when everyone sees Tracy and starts whispering among themselves. They think she's my girlfriend, which is exactly what she wants them to think. She's not. She's a pain in the ass I can't seem to shake. She seems to think that one miserable date I cut out of early means we're getting matching tattoos and that her future as a pro footballer's wife is secured.

I even forget how hard I tried getting out of this when I see the tutor. Suddenly I can't wait to learn about constant proportions or conserving mass or whatever the hell I'm supposed to learn.

She isn't anything like the last few. I can tell that right off the bat when our eyes meet and she looks as miserable as I am.

Was. Now I'm intrigued.

She has strawberry blonde hair, which she's piled into a knot on the top of her head. I suddenly want to know how long it is, how soft it feels between my fingers, even more than I want a Heisman trophy. Her skin is pale, though her cheeks turn pink when Tracy refuses to get lost. She's wearing a campus

sweatshirt which makes me hope she likes football, hope that she's impressed by me. But why? That's what made the last three tutors so useless, with their staring and flirty giggles.

As I slide into the chair across from her, I can see that the baggy sweatshirt can't hide her lush curves underneath. My cock twitches to life and I hide a scowl. I don't have time to be interested in anyone right now, let alone this new tutor who currently looks like she wants to run and hide like a scared rabbit. It makes me want to reach across and stroke her arm, soothe her fear away. Instead, I try to introduce myself, but Tracy interrupts me to complain about being bored. As if I care. As if my being able to do the only thing that's important to me isn't on the line. When I tell her to leave, she thankfully marches off.

As soon as she's gone, I lean closer, drawn to my new, fresh-faced tutor. Her eyes are light blue and serious. Her name matches her perfectly and when I say it, *Katherine*. I imagine my hands on her, tugging that red hair free, pressing those curves close to me. I'm harder than ever now.

I try to concentrate. I need to learn this shit for the exam, and I kind of want to impress Katherine. But her soft voice and the way her small, pale hands dance across her open textbook keeps my cock pressing against my jeans. Is she the one I've been waiting for?

I deflate when the first attention seeker comes over, opening up the floodgates. We can't study when someone's asking me for a picture or autograph every other minute. I know it's important for Walton College to have a good football team, and that's at least partly thanks to me. We're winning big this

season. Normally, I don't mind boosting campus pride for the few minutes it takes to pose or sign, but every minute my attention is stolen from Katherine feels painful.

When she suggests leaving, I can't agree fast enough.

Her dorm is closest, but when we arrive, the common room is packed. She tugs on my sleeve for the barest second, leading me upstairs to her room. Just the brush of her skin against mine has me panting, dying to shove her up against the wall. That would really get people talking. I snicker to myself as I follow her, watching her tight little ass jiggle in her sweatpants. Doing something like that might get Tracy off my back, and that makes it even more tempting.

Katherine is horrified when we get in her room and almost every inch of space is covered with colorful fabric. She stands there, twisting her hands together, and takes a deep breath.

"My roommate is in theater," she explains simply, sinking onto her bed after pushing some sewing spill-over away. "I risk death if I move anything more than that."

"Well, we can't have that," I say, easing down beside her.

If this were any of the other tutors, or someone like Tracy, my senses would be screaming that this was a ploy. But Katherine's intentions are as clear as her blue eyes. Especially when she immediately opens her book and doesn't give me a second glance when our legs brush against each other in the tight space of her narrow dorm bed. Am I really the kind of guy who only wants what they can't have? Because I want her more than anyone who's tried to have me.

I lean closer so I can see the textbook. The scent of coconut fills my nose and makes me dangerously close to hard again. What is with this girl? I subtly pull one of her throw pillows onto my lap and she rolls her eyes. Okay, I can't have this. I need to walk this off.

"Do you want a drink?" I ask. "I can run to the vending machine."

Her mischievous smile nearly knocks me out. "If you can tell me if ions can be formed by changing the number of protons in an atom's nucleus, then we can take a break."

Well, fuck me. Jesus, is that what I actually want? A break? My rock-hard cock threatening to burst through her frilly throw pillow says yes. A resounding yes. I stare at her as she just looks expectantly up at me.

"I'm going to need something stronger than what's in the vending machine if those are the kind of questions you're asking," I say, slumping back against the wall. Pillow it is.

Her face softens and she leans close, letting me breathe in her scent again. She goes over the concept more slowly this time. Her patience makes my breath hitch and I realize it's been a while since someone actually showed any real care towards me. I wonder what would happen if I failed this test and couldn't play. How many of those fawning for time with me would still be around? Katherine doesn't seem like she'd up and disappear. She actually seems to give a shit about me. I concentrate on what she's saying, desperate to absorb it.

But I can't take it for long and finally snatch her notebook away, looking for more of her smiles. It's close to the end of the hour anyway, but I don't want to go. I want to ask her

questions about herself, not chemistry. She's something I could easily commit to memory. Her laughter is as sexy as the way her tits bounce as she reaches for her notes. God, I *want* this girl, but I want to get to know her, too. I want to make the cheesiest joke about chemistry, because we definitely have it. She has to feel it too. The pull that keeps me reaching for her, that's got my dick in a perpetual stiff state, has to be reciprocated. I'm sure I'm not alone in feeling like this.

I'm about to ask if she wants to go to the campus café with me, just for coffee, no big deal, when someone pounds on her door.

Not just someone. That shrill voice could only be Tracy, shouting for me to open the door like she owns me. Some of my friends have let me know she's been telling people there's more between us than the one sorry hour we spent together. It had only taken me that hour to figure out her conniving nature, so I'd made up an excuse to leave early. But now, we're apparently a couple. I turn to Katherine to roll my eyes and let her know that Tracy's a joke, but she's back to scared rabbit mode on her bed. It revs my irritation up to rage, and I fly into full protection mode.

Swinging open the door, I glare at Tracy like I would the linebackers in the line of scrimmage. She doesn't back down and squeezes past me into the small room.

"What the hell are you doing here, Lan?" she shrieks. No one calls me "Lan" and it makes my skin crawl. She rounds on Katherine. "You fucking slut," she yells. "Don't try to tell me you're just studying, either. On your bed, all alone in your room. Cheating bitch—"

“That’s enough.” My tone is menacing. I see red when the names she calls sweet, innocent Katherine fly out of her mouth. I get between them to shield Katherine from anymore abuse. “Nobody’s cheating.” Because we’re not a couple, but I won’t stoop to explaining the obvious to her. I only want her out. Her lip pushes forward and she crosses her arms over her chest, not budging. “Get out,” I roar. “It’s time to face reality and leave me alone.”

Cheeks blazing, Tracy finally turns and leaves in a huff. I gently close the door behind her and turn to see Katherine. She seems less frightened now, but is completely unimpressed by that little show. My heart turns over.

“She’s not—” I start, but the light in Katherine’s eyes is shuttered.

“Oh, I get it,” she says dismissively, even though she doesn’t. Where’s my laughing girl? I want her back.

“So do you want to—”

“No, it’s fine. The hour was pretty much up anyway,” she says, cutting off my attempt to ask her out to get things back on track. Whatever those things *might* have been, they’re over now.

She’s not interested in my drama, even though we’ve been having a great time. She’s going to see me the way Tracy and other girls over the years have tried to get everyone else to see me: an idiotic womanizer. A typical jock who only wants to get his dick wet. I never bothered to set anyone straight back when it would have been easier, in fact, I didn’t hate the popularity. My reputation never kept me from what I wanted until now. But now, I’m about to be done with college. I want

people to take me seriously. Hell, I want Katherine to take me seriously as much as I've been wanting to run my hands all over her body.

There's nothing I can do to salvage today, and I need to get to the gym anyway. "How about we set up the next session at my apartment?" I ask. "I don't have a costume designer roommate."

My attempt to keep things light has her lip barely turning upward again as she agrees. I know it's nothing more to her than her job, but I can still change her mind about me. I'm not about to give up on her. I'd even memorize the damn periodic table to impress her.

Chapter 3

Katherine

I don't know why I'm so disappointed when he leaves. I'm quickly distracted when my roommate rushes in as soon as he's gone, as if she's been waiting.

"You're so lucky," Shay gushes, shoving her pattern pieces aside to sit on her bed.

"If I'd known those weren't important, we would have had a lot more room to study," I say, realizing too late I opened myself up to that when she hones in on my rumpled bedspread. I also realize I'm not too upset about the fact Landon and I had to sit so close together. He smelled amazing, like leather and lemons in a bizarrely intoxicating mix. And it was easier to study, of course. Except for the fact I lost my train of thought every time his arm or leg brushed mine.

"You were both in here? All alone on your bed?"

I sigh at her excitement. All this attention is exactly why I didn't want this job. I'm not even safe from it in my own dorm room. Shay is trying to get me to admit I find Landon hot, and of course I do. I'm a human. But he's more than just his thickly muscled body and soulful eyes, chiseled jaw and beautiful smile. He's a person, not a piece of meat. He may not be academic like me, but he's passionate about football and excels at it. He's trying to get his grade up so that he can keep playing. His dedication is even sexier than his body. And that's *extremely* sexy.

“You need to be careful of his crazy girlfriend, though,” Shay continues. “She’s the jealous type.”

“Yeah, I’m aware,” I say dryly. “Believe me, she has nothing to worry about.”

As if Landon would be interested in a plain mouse like me. He could have anyone he wants, so why would he want me?

Over the next few days, Landon stays in my mind no matter how I try to shake him. When it’s time for our next study session, I dress up a little in a swingy skirt and nice blouse. I walk faster than usual to his apartment, cutting through the quad to save a few minutes, despite the usual crowds of students hanging out there. If I stay to the edges, no one will pay me any mind. My anxiety pings when a few girls break from their group and start following me. I pick up my pace, telling myself I’m being silly. Old habits die hard, I guess.

But then I hear a familiar voice calling my name in a mocking tone. “Where do you think you’re going?”

Tracy rushes to walk beside me, her friends crowding me on the other side. I feel the urge to shrink in on myself, but keep my head up, ignoring her. Her friends think my silence is hilarious and one of them pokes my backpack, making me stumble. I try not to retreat to those awful high school years I came here to put behind me, but people like this refuse to let me. I thought college was for adults, but I’m not sure if Tracy got the memo.

“If you think you’re going to get him to fuck you, you’re obviously too stupid to be a paid tutor,” Tracy sneers.

I flinch at her words, because hadn't I maybe, just a little, thought about getting closer to Landon? Not in the crude way she said it, but I still get a tingle just thinking of his body pressed close to mine. My face gets hot and I look down, wishing I had the courage to fight back. Instead, I keep walking.

“Oh my God, look at her,” one of the friends pipes up. “She *does* think she can steal him away from you, Tracy.”

Tracy bursts out in bitter laughter, then grabs my backpack strap, yanking me to a stop. I look sadly at the apartment building, just yards away. I almost made it.

“Listen, I don't—”

Before I can squeak out anything else, a big, muscular whirlwind comes storming down the stairs. “Get the hell away from her,” Landon bellows.

Tracy drops my strap and bats her lashes at him. “Jeez, Lan, we're just chatting. Calm down.”

Landon holds out his hand and I take it, almost blind with humiliation. He pulls me close to his side and wraps his arm around my shoulder. “It's okay,” he says quietly, before looking back at Tracy. “There was never anything between us,” he says icily. “But since you need it spelled out, I do not want you coming near me or her. Period.”

She's pissed, face red and eyes glaring. “This isn't over, we're meant to be and I'll *make* you see it,” she spits, but then she turns and stomps away. Her friends throw me and Landon strange looks before, one by one, they hurry after her.

“I'm sorry,” Landon apologizes, his arm still around me.

I lean closer. I shouldn't act so frail around him, but he feels good and I welcome the warmth after the cold rush of memories Tracy brought back.

"I'm okay," I say, managing a smile.

The smile he gives back chases the last of the lingering bad feelings away, but I still let him guide me upstairs. His apartment is small, but squeaky clean. He even made a tray of snacks.

We settle on the tiny, cushy couch and melt toward each other until our bodies are squished together. "It's like quicksand in the middle," he laughs.

Neither one of us moves away, though, and I almost don't want to take out my books. I wish I was the type of girl he'd notice, because despite his facade, he's more than the player image he projects. I know this by his easy smiles and laughter, and the way he rushed to protect me.

From his ... whatever Tracy was, I remind myself. Sure, they might not have been dating in reality, but he still allowed her to use him like that. With a sigh, I move away.

He reaches for me, but stops himself, looking frustrated. "She had no right to do that," he says. "I could see you were scared. You should report her if you want."

I shake my head. "I don't want to cause you trouble. And it was mostly ... something else that made me so upset." With another sigh, I blurt out my history of being bullied. "It was so bad I finished senior year online. I almost didn't come here, but my parents convinced me not to let my anxiety win."

To my shock, he puts his arm around me again. “God, that’s awful.”

“You wouldn’t know a thing about it, though,” I say.

“Everyone loves you.”

He nods slowly, but his expression is pained. “But nobody really *knows* me, you know?”

“I feel like I do,” I tell him, snuggling under his arm. Just for a second.

“I feel like you do, too.”

His voice is still tense and when I look up at his face, his jaw muscle is working hard enough to grind glass. “What is it, Landon?” I ask. “Is there anything I can do?”

He looks down at me for so long I start to feel overly warm. My hand moves from my lap to his chest, hovering lightly, wanting to settle on his firm pecs.

“There is something you can do,” he says slowly.

“What is it?” I want to repay him for the way he jumped in to save me from a new set of bullies. I want to erase that pain in his eyes the way he eased mine.

“Will you be my girlfriend?”

Chapter 4

Landon

Based on Katherine's expression, blurting it out was not the way to go about this. I'm not thinking straight after seeing Tracy go after her like a rabid dog. Hearing about Katherine's past made it worse, and when she asked me so sweetly if there was anything she could do for me, I lost all reason. To think of me when she's the one in pain made my heart twist.

All I want to do is protect her, and keep her close. Her body fits perfectly in the crook of my arm and the way she nestles against me has me hiding another raging hard-on.

I hurry to explain before she runs. "If Tracy thinks I'm serious about someone else she might have enough pride to finally leave me alone." Did I just make things worse? Does she look disappointed? "Between trying to pass this class and practice, I don't actually have time for a relationship," I say, somehow wanting to *make* time the more I look at Katherine. I hope she doesn't think I'm a complete loser to propose such a thing.

When she finally breathes out a long sigh and agrees, I'm so grateful I drag her onto my lap. Her pale cheeks turn cherry red and I lean in to kiss her.

"Just to seal the deal."

She wriggles, her cheeks fully flushed when she realizes my cock can't stay down under the feel of her soft body over mine. She smiles shyly but with a hint of mischief that makes me even harder.

"Just to seal the deal," she agrees.

I only mean to peck her cheek, but she turns her face and our mouths collide. The softest whimper escapes her lips and my hands move to her hair. I tug at her ponytail, wanting more of those lush lips. They part and now I'm the one making noises.

I have to be inside her, even if it's just her wet mouth. As our tongues tangle, her body writhes on my lap, her hands clutching my shirt. The heat of her against my crotch makes me grip her waist to hold her still.

We pull away from the kiss, breathless, and I look down to see her skirt has hiked itself up her bare legs, exposing a tiny vee of lacy cotton at the top of her thighs.

"Did I tell you how good you look in that skirt?" I ask.

She shifts, her ass grinding against my stiff cock and it rises higher.

"I was hoping you'd notice." Her eyes raise and she licks her lips shyly, making my mind go blank as all the blood rushes south.

With a feral growl, I lift her, that patch of panties straining against her pussy as her legs spread to straddle me. I cup her ass and knead the soft flesh under the lacy fabric as I take her mouth again, pushing my tongue deep inside. In about three minutes I'm going to fuck this perfect girl or come in my jeans.

A clang sounds next to us, making her jump and scramble for her phone. She slides off my lap and looks sheepish as she silences the alarm.

"Um, our time's up," she says.

"And we didn't even study."

“Oh, that was chemistry all right,” she says with a laugh.

I don't want to let her go. “Come out with me tonight,” I say, already counting the minutes until we're together again.

“Better yet, let's go to the grill. Right now.”

Her eyes sparkle and my heart soars. She's going to say yes. “I guess we need to show everyone we're together.” She puts air quotes around together.

I forgot all about the damn deal and getting Tracy to back off, but I'll take what I can get. “It'll be perfect,” I agree.

The campus grill is where everyone hangs out between classes and sure enough, I see a few people who will likely talk about it to anyone who'll listen. It's guaranteed to make it back to Tracy somehow. I put my arm around Katherine and pull her close. When her body brushes against mine, I want to kiss her and then realize I can. In fact, I *should*, if we're going to make this look real. I lean down and take her by surprise, making her blush.

“I usually just order and go back to my dorm,” she says, eyes darting at everyone there.

My hand glides up and down her back. I'd honestly prefer that too, so we can get back to what we started at my apartment, but we're supposed to put on a show. When a few of my buddies greet us and slide into our booth, I can see she's going into panic mode over all the sudden attention.

“Don't worry about a thing,” I tell her, keeping my arm around her.

She relaxes, despite all the stares and people that constantly swarm us. I never let her go and after a while, she's laughing

along with my friends like she's always belonged. My heart soars. I love my friends. I love spending time with them, and I love that she's already warming up to them. Even though she thinks it's just part of the show, I enjoy the way she snuggles up to me, putting her hand on my arm or my chest. I can't keep my own hands off her. Right before the local band is about to set up for the evening show, someone bursts through the door.

"Prinley Dorm is on fire," she shouts, before running back out.

Katherine gasps and jumps up. "That's my dorm."

Her eyes are wide with fear and I take her hand. "I'll go with you," I tell her, clearing a path through the crowd that surges out the door. "Everything's going to be fine," I promise. I mean it. Nothing bad is going to happen to her while I'm around, even if it has nothing to do with our deal.

Chapter 5

Katherine

Panic surges through me, along with worry about Shay and everyone else who might still be in the building. I can see smoke as we race toward my dorm, and the only thing keeping me on my feet is Landon's strong hand locked around mine.

When we get there, smoke still billows from the second-floor windows, but everyone milling around outside seems calm. The firefighters are packing up and there are no ambulances, so I breathe a little easier, but still cling to Landon's hand.

Shay rushes up to me and I only drop it to hug her. "Some dummy had a bunch of candles burning to mask the smell from their hamster cage," she said.

I can't help but laugh, especially when Landon asks if the hamster is okay.

"It's fine, but we can't go back in until they clear the building for structural damage." Shay finally notices how close Landon is to me and raises a brow. "They're giving us a stipend to stay at a hotel, or we can go to my friend's house off campus."

She continues griping about how we can't get any of our stuff, so we're stuck with the clothes on our backs. I'm not thrilled about it, but I *am* just glad no one's hurt and we won't be permanently homeless. Now I'm more upset our date was cut short than anything else.

At first it had been a nightmare. All those eyes on me, the judgmental looks at my outfit and hair. But Landon had kept me close, making sure to include me in all his conversations

and introduce me to everyone he knew. After a while, it felt easy, and I'd started having fun. Most of all, I was grateful Landon made me realize that not everyone is out to get me. The band had been about to start and I was hoping he'd ask me to dance.

"So, what do you want to do?" Shay asks, pulling me from my wistful thoughts.

Before I can answer, Landon takes me aside. "Stay at my apartment," he says. I get a shiver, both from nerves and anticipation as he lowers his voice and leans in. "It'll work to make our arrangement look serious, and I promise to be on my best behavior."

I feel stupid for forgetting about our deal and almost laugh at how disappointed I am. Then I get a rush of nerves. Am I about to spend the night alone with Landon? Fake or not, my stomach flips nervously.

"Okay," I agree. For the deal, and definitely not whatever these feelings are growing into.

Shay nearly loses her mind when I tell her, which is perfect for our little show. "Oh my God, I can't believe it," she hisses when I hug her goodbye.

"It all happened so fast," I say, really laying it on thick.

Landon takes me to the pharmacy to get a toothbrush and a few other necessities, then we head back to his place. My nerves are in high gear, to the point I'm about to bail, but as Landon goes to the kitchen to make us coffee while chatting as if this is all normal, I feel at ease again. He's the only person

who can do that, make everything all right with just his voice and smile.

I join him in the tiny kitchen, so small our hips bump when he passes me. He puts his hands on my waist and smiles down at me before pulling open the fridge door to check for snacks. The rush of cold air does nothing to cool down the sudden heat I feel radiating from my core at his closeness. I should get out of the kitchen, but I stay. I can't move even when he needs to pass me again.

He gently pushes some hair behind my ear, his finger tracing down my cheek. "Are you okay?" Now I really can't move since his finger keeps moving down the side of my neck, the touch leaving a trail of sparks on my skin. "I can't believe there was a fire on campus."

He thinks I'm upset about the dorm when it's *him* that has me off kilter. I'm craving more of his touch, aching to get back to his lap on the couch, as if no time has passed since our failed study session hours ago. The memory of that hard bulge against my most tender spot makes me shift on my feet when I feel a gush between my thighs.

"I-I'm fine."

I'm not. I turn and flee the kitchen before I grab him and make a fool of myself. A moment later he joins me on the couch with two cups of coffee. I ignore my mug and keep my hands in my lap, eyes down.

"Thanks for doing this for me," he says, his voice once again putting me at ease. "I know it was tough being at the grill with all those people, and now they're going to talk even more once

word gets out that you're here. I really appreciate it, Katherine."

The way he says my name makes me lean closer and I look up. Our eyes lock, his full of the gratitude he just expressed. There's something else there, too. It pulls me in and I shift even closer.

"You made it easy," I say. "And I appreciate having a place to stay tonight."

He rolls his eyes. "Don't be polite. You had plenty of choices and you chose me." He clears his throat. "I mean, to stay here."

His hand nudges past the few inches between us to touch the hem of my skirt. My legs part slightly without any thought. My body is acting on its own in its desire for something from him. His finger edges underneath to slide the fabric up. I break my gaze from his searing eyes and look down at his lap. My breath catches when I see the massive bulge throbbing underneath his jeans. Does he really want me as much as I want him?

I shake my head. "No," I admit. "I chose *you*."

He lifts me onto his lap where I belong and I grip his hips tight with my knees as I grind my aching pussy against that stiff shaft. It feels so good that I whimper, and he tangles his fingers into my hair, pulling me close to command my mouth with his.

"Damn it, Katherine, how are you so sexy?" he asks as he runs his free hand up my side to cup my breast.

My nipples go taut at his probing touch, but it's not enough. With his tongue claiming my mouth, I can only ask wordlessly for what I want. I push my own hands under his shirt, the feel of his hot, smooth skin on my palms making me sigh against his lips. He reads my mind and a moment later, his hand is under my shirt, shoving aside my bra.

“Yes,” I breathe at the feel of his thumb stroking my tight nipple.

With a chuckle that sends goosebumps flaring all over my body, his hand slowly glides downward, pressing over my belly and down my skirt. With a flick of his wrist, he pushes the swingy fabric all the way up to expose my panties, wet with desire between my shaking thighs.

I drop my head to his shoulder, digging into his chest at the first brush of his fingers against the top band. He slowly works them under the elastic, down and down to cup my slick folds. He's so close to being inside me.

“Landon,” I say, my voice catching in my throat. I need to admit I'm a virgin, but I'm terrified he'll stop. Someone with his experience will surely lose interest in someone who doesn't have a clue how to please him. But I want his fingers to push inside my wet heat. I need it. “Landon, I'm—”

A sudden bang and a shriek in the hallway makes him freeze. His hands jerk away from me as the noises outside increase. There's a banshee about to break down the door. I feel untethered from the world without his touch.

“You fucking asshole!” It's Tracy, and she's making so much noise that Landon hurries to get her to stop before someone calls the police.

“Be quiet and get lost,” he hisses at her as he cracks open the door.

She shoves past him, grabbing an umbrella and waving it as she tries to get to me. “You disgusting bitch! I’ll kill you for this!”

Landon grabs the umbrella and jumps between us, his face a stormy mask. “Don’t talk to her that way. Nobody’s cheating, Tracy, because we were *never together*. Get out.”

Her eyes harden as he enunciates those words. “Ha,” she says, voice shaking with rage as she clutches her stomach. “Tell that to our *baby*.”

I’m trying to make myself small, but this makes me gasp and she glances at me triumphantly. “That’s right. I’m pregnant.” She turns back to Landon with a sneer. “You better figure things out because pretty soon everyone’s going to know.”

Landon looks furious as my heart shatters. How foolish to think I was anything more than another good time to him.

“Go ahead and tell everyone,” he says as he pushes her out the door. “Even if you are pregnant, we both know it’s not because of me.”

He slams the door as soon as she’s out, breathing hard, his face bleached of color. I can’t find my breath at all. As much as it hurts, I know I have to follow Tracy out that door.

“I can’t deal with this,” I say, trying to edge past without touching him.

If he touches me, my resolve will crumble. But once Tracy’s news gets out, I’ll be bombarded with the worst kind of

attention if I stay. How could I let myself get mixed into this mess in the first place?

Chapter 6

Landon

I'm seething, then my heart crumbles when Katherine wants to leave. I know I can't blame her. Why *wouldn't* she believe Tracy? Even if Tracy's completely full of shit, I let my reputation run wild for so long that the lie is still believable.

"Katherine," I choke. "She's lying."

I can see in her tear-filled eyes that she doesn't believe me. And to think, I was about to admit to her that I'm a virgin, because there's no doubt in my mind that she's the one for me. The one I've been waiting for. I laugh harshly at the cruelty of it.

She stops with her hand on the doorknob. "You think it's funny?"

I roar with frustration. "Damn it, Katherine, I was about to tell you I'm a *virgin*. I wanted to keep going with you. Hell, I couldn't have stopped if that—if *Tracy* hadn't pounded down the door."

Now she laughs bitterly, shaking her head. "Yeah, right. Is it really worth it to lie to me, Landon? I'd say let's at least stay friends, but we were never even that, were we?"

She's about to open the door and leave me for good but I can't let her. I grab her hand and pull it to my heart.

"I'm not lying. Yes, I have a stupid reputation and I let it go too far. When I first got here, people treated me like a god, and yeah, I liked it. I thought I'd get all the women I could dream

of, but reality just fell short. They just wanted me for clout. I'm not a player. It felt cheap and I didn't want to risk my future for someone who wasn't the right one." I stop, thinking of my dad's warnings about girls like Tracy. "I got so busy with games and trying to keep up with both classes and maintaining my friendships that I stopped trying to live down the rumors. I stopped caring because it wasn't worth the energy to even really *try* dating. I care now because you're the one, Katherine. I don't know how I know it, but you're the one I've been waiting for."

A tear trickles down her cheek and I move to swipe it away. She leans into my touch, her eyes full of fear and hope when she looks up at me. "I really wanted to keep going. But—"

I yank her to my chest, holding on for dear life. "Believe me, please. Let me prove it to you."

After a moment her hands slowly meet around my back and she tips her chin up. "How can you prove it?"

"Because I'll probably suck even though I'll do my best to give you a good time."

She laughs, and my hope soars. Maybe I haven't lost her. "I-I wouldn't know because I'm a virgin, too. I guess we're both going to have to work at it."

My cock goes stiff at the trust in her eyes and she whimpers at the feel of it thrusting against her stomach. "God, Katherine," I say, tugging her hair and leaning to claim her parted lips.

Her fingers curl into my back and she grinds against me. Once again, we're wild beasts, as if we weren't interrupted at all. I cup her ass and lift her and her legs wrap around my hips. My

body is screaming to ram deep inside her as she writhes against me.

“I want ...” she whines as I drop her on the couch.

Her eyes are wide as her hands grasp for me. She doesn't know what she wants and I'm running on instinct alone. My eyes hone in on her legs and I drop to my knees, sweeping her skirt up around her waist. I smooth my hands up her soft flesh as I part her thighs, groaning at the sight of her panties. My fingers stroke over the damp fabric, dragging down over her slit and back up to her swollen nub. Her back arches as I play with her pussy through her panties, my cock sore and throbbing from the lack of attention. But it has to wait until I get my fill. I want so much from her, the one I've been waiting for, and I want to give so much, too.

I drag the fabric down her thighs to reveal what I've been waiting for. “So fucking gorgeous,” I say, pulling her to the edge of the couch and spreading her legs wide. “I want to lick your pussy up and down, baby. What do you think of that?”

Her answer is a cry and she buries her fingers in my hair, dragging my face down. “I want to feel your tongue there.”

I oblige her, lapping up her slit and circling her swollen clit and then back down to plunge inside her. My cock strains and I reach for it, wrapping my hand around my stiff bulge to keep it in line. With my tongue deep inside her wet pussy, and her soft moans as I fuck her with my mouth, I don't know how I'm holding on. Her hips arch as I suck her flushed nub, and I grin.

“Do you like that?”

“More than anything,” she gasps. “How does it feel so good?”

“That’s all I want, baby,” I say, spreading her folds with my tongue so I can delve deep inside her slick walls again. “Just to make your body feel good.” Joy washes over me as I realize something. “Am I the first guy to lick this delicious pussy of yours?”

She nods, biting her lip hard as she looks down at me, my tongue lazily stroking her clit. I grip her hips and take my hand off my ragingly hard cock to slide my fingers inside her. “How about fingered this tight little hole?”

And God, she’s tight. One finger, then two. They barely make it inside her slippery cunt.

“Landon,” she gasps.

“Do you want more?”

“I need more,” she begs. “But I’m scared.”

I ease my fingers in and out, slowly stretching her. “Don’t worry,” I say. “I’m going to make sure your little pussy is ready for my cock. But first I need you to come for me, baby. I need to hear you scream.”

Her body shakes as I push my fingers in deep and hard, circling her clit with my thumb. Her head rolls back and her hands drift from my hair to her stomach, before slowly rising to her chest.

“It feels so good.”

Her hands slide under her shirt. I want this show. Yanking her blouse open, I shove her bra up so her perky tits pop free. I roll my fingers over her nipples, my eyes glazing as they tighten.

“Play with your tits for me, baby,” I tell her, pushing deeper inside her. “Show me your beautiful body while I make you come.”

Her mouth drops open as she pinches her nipples, her back arching as I work her clit. I can't take it much longer, not with the sexy view of her enjoying her own tits while my fingers are deep inside her pussy. I pull my fingers out and sink my tongue inside her once more, eager for her taste.

“You're so wet, so open. Are you ready for my cock, baby?” My cock is more than ready for her. I suck her clit and she spasms beneath me, her hands once again gripping my hair.

Her scream as she comes is all I've wanted my whole life, and I push my fingers inside her to feel her tight channel pulse. I need that around my cock. A second later my pants are down and my dripping tip is pushing at her tight little opening.

“Landon,” she gasps, her eyes unfocused. “Let me touch you.”

Her pale hand wraps around my shaft and I make a feral noise, stopping her. “I need to come inside you, not all over your hand.”

With a nod, she holds onto my shoulders and wraps her legs around my hips. “I'm ready for you,” she says. “I'm ready for your cock.”

Her pussy is like a vice as I push my way deep, until my aching balls are pressed against her hot asshole. This is where I belong. Her fingernails dig into my arms and I kiss her, wanting every part of us to touch. She is my everything.

“I'm going to fuck you, now, baby,” I say.

“Yes,” she sighs, opening her mouth to my tongue while I begin to thrust my cock deep and hard, stretching out her virgin hole.

After only three swift pumps, I can't hold back anymore. She's too wet, too tight, and her soft moans drive me to the edge. With a shout, I shoot inside her, a lifetime of waiting spilling deep into her body.

We collapse against each other on the couch, breathless. Her pussy pulses around my cock as it shrinks, but I know I'll be ready again soon. The way she clings to me tells me she'll be just as ready. More than the sweet release of a lifetime, my heart feels full and satisfied. Despite my shaking legs, I carry her to my bed, ready for more sooner than I thought possible.

Chapter 7

Katherine

I wake up to the smell of coffee and a very achy, very satisfied body. I hear Landon humming in the next room and smile. I never imagined losing my virginity would be so perfect. He was so sweet. He wanted to try different things but always making sure I was enjoying it, until we finally passed out in each other's arms. The only thing that mars my giddy mood this morning is wondering what comes next. Coffee, I suppose, not wanting to get too into my head. I want to keep things perfect for as long as I can.

Landon is adorable in low slung sweats that leave nothing to the imagination and a tight gray t-shirt. My eyes roam his body, feasting on the biceps about to burst through his short sleeves, his hard pecs and flat abs, and oh God, his cock. When he sees me looking at him, it twitches against the fabric of his sweats.

My grin only gets bigger and I run to hug him. "Good morning," I say, shocked that I feel so at ease. Where's my anxiety? Who cares, good riddance. I push against his bulge. "Nice to see you again, sir."

He laughs, his hands roaming down my back to cup my ass. His hard shaft rubs against my tender clit and I gasp.

"You need to eat," he says, pushing me away.

He's made toast and bacon, as well as the coffee, and we sit close together at the breakfast bar, our hands and elbows

bumping but neither of us wanting to move apart. He shows me his phone, a big smile on his face.

“Look, there’s a farm with a petting zoo not far away. They have lambs right now,” he says excitedly. “Or we could rent bikes and ride around? Or just see a movie?”

My heart melts as he shows me the things he’s researched so we can spend the day together. I choose the petting zoo and he finds me a t-shirt I can wear with my skirt since he popped the buttons on my blouse yesterday. We hold hands or have our arms around each other the whole day, and take dozens of pictures of our first date. At least, I think it’s a date. I don’t want to assume, so I get back to enjoying myself before I can freak out.

It’s late afternoon when we get back to campus and when we drive past my dorm, we see they’re letting people back in. “Hey, that’s good news,” he says, pulling into the parking lot.

I don’t want to go back to my dorm. But once again I don’t want to assume anything. Maybe today wasn’t a date, maybe this isn’t the start of a relationship. Yesterday, Landon said I was the one he was waiting for, but maybe he only meant to lose his virginity with. Am I the idiot who falls in love with the guy she sleeps with? Maybe now he wants to expand his horizons and become the player everyone thinks he is. Maybe he wants to spend time with someone less—

I shut down the thoughts before they can spiral out of control. My anxiety is back and I’m overthinking. I need to feel this out with him, not panic about it before it’s even gotten a real start.

“Yeah, I guess I should get back,” I say slowly, still wanting him to invite me to his place.

He pulls me close for a hug and I hold my breath. “I need to get a good night’s sleep for an important practice tomorrow,” he says, dropping a kiss on my head. “But we should hang out again really soon.”

I slowly let my disappointed breath out and nod, keeping a smile plastered on my face. I can’t let him think I’m clingy, I’d hate to scare him away. I know from watching how he was with Tracy that he hates clingy people. I don’t want to be like that at all, so I have to let him come to me.

“Well, see you around,” I say awkwardly, hurrying out of his car.

When I turn back, he looks confused, maybe even disappointed. I want to lean in and kiss him thoroughly, make him remember our wild night. Instead, I wave and run toward the dorm, not looking back.

Shay is already settled back into our room and pounces as soon as I’m in the door. “Are you nuts?” she asks. “Or did you not know about Tracy?”

I roll my eyes. “You mean how she’s pregnant?”

Shay’s jaw drops. “You don’t care? You barely leave this room except for classes and your job and now you’re ready to jump into the biggest drama on campus? Are you sure he’s worth it?”

Yes, he’s worth it, I have no doubt in my mind about that.

“She’s lying,” is all I say. “Or maybe she’s really pregnant, but it’s not Landon’s.”

Shay snorts. “Is that what he told you? Oh, girl, you’ve got to come to your senses.”

My hackles go up. “It’s the truth,” I say, earning a look of pity.

I’m already having a hard time dealing with pulling back on spending more time with Landon because I don’t want to make him feel like I’m needy or clingy. I don’t want to get into an argument with my roommate, and her questioning of me makes me wonder if I’ve let myself get played. It stokes my frustration even more. I turn on my heel and storm back out, my fingers curling into the t-shirt Landon lent me. It swallows me up and the soft cotton makes me recall his arms around me all day, the passion we shared all night. There has to be something there. Deep down, I know it can’t just be me feeling these things, even if we started this all under the pretense of a fake relationship. I try to hold onto that to keep myself grounded.

I aimlessly wander the campus, sorting out my feelings, and find myself near Landon’s apartment without realizing it. I turn back toward the quad before I humiliate myself by going up to knock on his door. As I pass through the quad, something hard smacks into my back and I stumble forward. An apple rolls away at my feet and I hear laughter behind me. I turn to get another apple right in the chest. The hatred in their eyes hurts worse than the blow.

“Homewrecker,” a girl yells.

Tracy must have used the time between Landon kicking her out last night and now to control the narrative and spread her rumor. It’s clear who everyone believes as two other girls give

me dirty looks. I make it out of the quad with my head held high and then sink onto a bench, trying not to cry.

I wish I had turned down the tutoring job, wish I had never met Landon. I had a rhythm here that worked for me. Keep my head down, study, do my job. Nobody bothered me and I had a few friends, like Shay, who will probably hate me now, just like those strangers in the quad. Now it's all ruined. No man will ever be worth having to relive this nightmare all over again.

The tears finally start when I realize Landon and I never even studied. He'll probably fail his test and be off the team. I ruined even that, and now he'll hate me, just like everyone else.

Chapter 8

Landon

At practice the next day, all I can think about is when I'll see Katherine again. It took all my willpower to go home and get some sleep last night, and it's only because I want to do everything right with us. She's the real deal, and I want to make her proud by doing what I need to do and getting in the top draft pick. That means studying, too. I'm not sure I can keep my hands off her long enough to do that, but I'll try.

"Hey man, you need to get your situation under control," one of my teammates says, jogging up to me on the field.

We've started stretching before Coach arrives, so I stand up and look at him in confusion. "What situation?" My stomach turns, wondering if Tracy went through with her threat to spread her lies. By the time Ed fills me in, I feel sick.

"She's lying," I say.

He shrugs. "I believe you. It'll all come out eventually if she is. But she's gotten a bunch of people on her side, and they're out harassing everyone who ever looked twice at you.

Alejandro said he saw that cute tutor of yours get jumped last night."

Everything freezes and my vision goes dark. "What?" I ask.

"What do you mean?"

He doesn't seem to notice my looming rage. "Some chick threw some stuff at her and called her names and I guess she started crying?" He shrugs again as I take off. "Hey, what about practice?"

I don't answer because I don't care about practice. Not in a situation like this. I get to Katherine's dorm in minutes, but she's not there. I nearly scare her roommate half to death but she tells me her class schedule and I take off for her English Lit classroom. I see her through the tiny window in the door, and it's only when I'm sure she's all right that I can take a normal breath. I pace outside until the class is done, knowing she'd get embarrassed if I burst in. She's clearly not hurt. But she looks like she was crying, and recently too, and that makes my rage simmer again.

I snarl at anyone who passes until the class is finally over. When she comes out of the room, I put my arm around her and lead her away from the crowd. It probably looks really strange to other students; I'm still in my practice jersey and all of my padding because I didn't bother to take it off after leaving practice. I don't care if anyone gapes at us, and I know she hates the attention, but I won't risk anyone trying to hurt her again.

"Where do you need to go?" I ask. "I'll take you."

Her lower lip trembles as she looks up at me, her eyes wide and glassy with more potential tears. "What about your important practice?"

I pull her closer. "You're more important," I tell her. "Than anything. In fact ..." I guide her down the hall and outside, toward the grassy area where I know Tracy and her weird little cult often hang out. She stiffens against me as we get closer and see them there, clustered around a picnic table.

I lean down and kiss Katherine's soft cheek. "Trust me?" I ask.

After the briefest hesitation, she nods and gives me a slight smile. “I do, Landon.”

Hearing her say my name makes my heart swell with happiness. Keeping her close, I storm toward the women who’ve been making her miserable.

“Oh my *God*,” one of them says, tugging on Tracy’s arm to get her attention. “Look who has the nerve to show his face.”

“And with his tramp,” another one says. Tracy tries to look hurt but I can see the malice and deceit behind her fake pout. Hopefully I can get these poor girls to see it too.

Tracy’s hand goes to her stomach and she sniffles loudly.

“How can you treat me like this, Lan?”

“And in her condition,” her friend pipes up.

“Listen,” I bellow. “There is *nothing* between us. Tracy and I went on one shitty date, and she’s been stalking me ever since. We never had sex, so if she’s pregnant, the baby isn’t mine. I’ve only ever slept with one woman and she’s right here.” I pull Katherine close and kiss her full on the mouth, to shocked gasps from the peanut gallery. I round on Tracy and tell her to stop her lies, then give each friend a death glare. “This isn’t high school. You can’t make shit up like this and get away with it. I have a life and it does not involve you. Stay away from my girlfriend.”

They all start squawking in disbelief at once, asking her what the truth is, but I don’t care about them anymore. They believed her blatant attention-seeking in the first place, so they can figure out how to navigate the rest by themselves. I hurry away with Katherine by my side until we’re alone under some

leafy trees. The sun shines on her pale hair, highlighting the coppery red strands and I know I love her then.

“Will you stand by me?” I ask. “Even if Tracy’s friends don’t back down?”

She throws her arms around me. “How could they not? You were terrifying.” She pulls away, her smile all I need. Well, not really. I *want* everything from her. “But we still need to study. I was worrying about it all night. I can’t let you fail that test. Football is too important to you.”

“Oh, baby,” I sigh, kissing her forehead. “You’re the only thing that’s important to me.” Before she can scowl, I tell her I studied on my own last night. “I think I’ve almost got it.”

“Well, let’s go find out,” she says, tugging me toward her dorm.

I hurry beside her, knowing we won’t be studying for long.

Chapter 9

Katherine

I can't believe he stood up for me. I know those girls won't dare bully me again, and I also can't wait for Tracy's lies to fall apart just as quickly as they spread. But as soon as we get in my dorm room, all of that falls to the wayside as I grab Landon's football jersey and pull him close. He still has his practice padding on and it makes me feel utterly feral, having him look even bigger under his jersey like that. The feeling of his hard body against mine is what I've been craving. He's taken all my focus and I have to get my fill of him.

"I—" I stop because I was about to say I love him. "I want you so much, Landon."

"Baby, I more than want you," he says, lifting me off the floor. "I need you."

I wrap my legs around him and grind against the stiff length I'm so eager to have him inside me again. But there are so many wonderful things he does to my body beforehand that I want him to do them again too.

"Touch me, Landon. Lick me. Make me come." I'm so eager I'm panting and he laughs as he carries me to my small bed.

When I'm on my back, he spreads my legs and presses his hand between them, right where I want him. My clit pulses and I writhe to get him to move his fingers the way I need.

"Beg me for it, baby," he says, eyes locked on mine. "I like hearing how much you want it."

“Pull my jeans down,” I say shakily. “Feel how wet I am through my panties.”

His eyes widen and he does what I demand. The feel of his hot palm against my pussy makes me arch into his touch. His finger strokes up and down my slit through the soaked fabric.

“I love how wet you get for me, baby,” he says, pressing harder.

“Take my panties off,” I gasp. With a ripping sound, they’re gone, tossed across the room. His fingers find my swollen nub and caress until I’m jerking against his hand. “Inside me,” I plead. “Hard and deep.”

“God, I love your tight little pussy,” he says as he plunges his fingers into my wet heat. His fingers still suddenly, making my eyes fly open. He’s looking down at my body with wonder.

“I’m the only man who’ll ever have your body,” he says. “The only one to touch you, lick you, put my cock deep inside you.” He pushes hard, stretching me, pushing my legs wider apart.

“Is that what you want, baby?”

“My pussy belongs to you,” I tell him, crying out as the orgasm rocks my entire body.

“Good,” he says, yanking down his tight football pants.

His huge cock springs out and I reach for it, wrapping my hand around the hot length. “And your cock is mine,” I say, still shaky with pleasure.

I want to show him how much I want him, and this is something we haven’t done yet. I sit up and lean forward to drag my lips along his smooth shaft, smiling as his cock bobs against my mouth.

“Let me suck you off, Landon,” I say, swirling my tongue around the tip and slurping up his juices.

“Suck all you want, baby.”

I take him in my mouth, deep into my throat. He thrusts even deeper and I gently bite down, making him freeze. I giggle around his thick cock as I curl my palm around his balls, loving the control I have over my big man. I suck hard, then soft, experimenting with all the ways I can make him feel as good as he makes me.

“Do you like this better than my tight little pussy?” I say, pulling away when I sense he’s about to tip over the edge. My hand slips between my thighs and presses against my swollen, aching clit as I moan. “I can make myself come while I suck you dry.”

His eyes go wild and with a deep groan, he picks me up and presses me onto the bed on my belly. Dragging my knees up, he rams his cock inside me from behind as he grips my raised hips. He reaches around and finds my clit with his fingertips.

“That’s naughty, teasing me like that,” he says, lightly smacking my ass as he pounds my pussy and kneads my clit all at the same time. It’s sensation overload and I buck against him as a scream rises from my throat. I can’t believe how much I love being spanked by him.

“I need you to show me how to be good,” I say, pushing back against him.

He does it again and again, all while circling my tender nub, his thick cock so deep inside me it’s like we’re really one and the same.

“Good little girls come when they’re told,” he growls. “Come for me, baby.”

His palm presses against my clit and he drives harder, shouting as he shoots his seed inside my body. Ecstasy washes over me at the same moment, my pussy clenching tight to take all of him. I lose all sense of time and place, but the next thing I know, I’m pressed against Landon’s chest, his warm breath at my neck as he whispers soft words of endearment to me.

I shiver and turn to wrap my arms around him. “What was that?” I ask. “And can you do it again?”

He chuckles and kisses my neck. “In a little bit, baby. You really wear me out.”

I’m fine with waiting and begin to doze off until my alarm sounds. I perk up, smiling. “That’s okay. It’s actually tutoring time,” I say, giggling uncontrollably. “We should actually study, you know?”

He agrees with a mock groan and tugs his padded football pants back on, finding my discarded jeans and handing them to me. As I get dressed, he shucks his jersey and tugs his shoulder pads off so he can be more comfortable. The few minutes apart lets my brain start working and I wonder what’s really going on with us. He came and found me, protected me against those bullies, then we fell all over each other. Now we’re supposed to just study? I want so much more from him, but I can’t go crazy just because he did something kind. Once I’m dressed, I clear my throat.

“I understand you can’t commit much because of your practice schedule,” I say, trying to be mature, even as I doubt myself and what we have. “I’m fine with taking things slow. I mean,

if you want to take things somewhere past the whole fake dating thing, that is.”

His mouth drops open and he grabs my waist. “What? Didn’t that scene I made outside show you how much I’m committed to this? To you? Didn’t what we just did show that this is *definitely* going somewhere? Unless *you* want to take things slow?” His brow furrows as he shakes his head. “I’m not sure I can pump the brakes. I’m all in, baby.” He lets go of me and takes off his championship ring, a wide silver band with the school insignia and a green stone. “As soon as I’m signed with a team, I’ll replace this with a diamond so big you won’t be able to lift your hand.”

He slips it on my finger and of course it’s huge, so I close my hand around it, feeling its warmth in my palm. “I’d hate that. I’ll wear this ring with pride.”

He takes my hand and kisses it. “As long as you know what it means,” he says.

“We’re a couple,” I breathe with a shiver of anticipation. I can’t hardly believe that there was some anxious part of my gut that was right. This is real.

“You know, for a genius tutor, you’re pretty dense,” he says with a laugh.

“You weren’t exactly being clear,” I argue. My breath catches when he drops to one knee.

“Is this clear enough?” His smile fades to a serious look and he reaches for my hand. “Marry me, Katherine? When we’re ready, I mean. But say you’re really, truly mine?”

Happy tears spring to my eyes. “I am really and truly yours. Yes,” I say, pulling him up and into a hug.

He kisses me deeply, squeezing the hand of mine with his ring on it. Then he grins down at me. “Should we go outside and make some more scenes?” he asks. “Let everyone know what’s going on?”

I fake a groan, too happy to care that I’m about to be bombarded with more attention than I’ve ever gotten in my life. Somehow, it’s not scary with Landon by my side. I feel like I can stand up to anything, even my own anxiety, for the first time in my life.

“Later,” I say, pulling him back toward the bed. “Right now, I want you all to myself.”

He falls beside me and gathers me close. “That’s fine with me, baby.”

Epilogue

Katherine

Ten years later ...

I sit at the table, listening to the voices honoring Landon. He's about to retire from his celebrated career in professional football. I look down at my huge, sparkling engagement ring and touch his college ring at my neck. I still wear it on a chain, keeping it close to my heart. I've had to learn to live in the spotlight a little, but he always did whatever he could to keep our private life our own. Now, I'll finally have him all to myself. I don't even mind sharing him with our three kids.

After all the accolades are done and we finish the bland catered dinner, we head home to start our new, quiet life.

"You sure about retiring?" I ask on the way home. "Everyone says you've got a few more years in you." I worry he'll miss playing, worry that I won't be enough excitement for him.

He snickers, smiling at me in the darkened limo. "My knees and back beg to differ with those people." He reaches for me and strokes my cheek. "It's *our* time now, baby."

His eyes shine with adoration, as bright as it was when we were college sweethearts, each other's one and only. It's as if he can read my mind, because he pulls me close for a kiss to ease my worries.

Once we're home, Landon makes sure the nanny gets in the limo, which we may as well make use of to get her home. I go to check in on our boys. Despite having ample bedrooms in our mansion, they all wanted to stay together in the same

room. Jackson, our oldest, at seven, is fast asleep on his single bed. Daniel and Harrison, our five-year-old twins, are lightly snoring in their bunk beds. I give them all a kiss and pull Jackson's flashlight out from under his covers and turn it off, putting his book on the bedside table. He's a reader like me, but all three of them are as athletic as their dad. Even then, they all have their own little personalities as well. They'll be quite the challenge as they grow older. I can't wait.

I back out of the room and into a hard body. Landon's arms circle my waist as he kisses my neck. "All good?"

"Fast asleep," I say, leaning back against my solid husband.

"Do you need to get any work done before bed?" he asks, his hands moving lower.

My mind shifts reluctantly to my online business. The company matches tutors to students. I've been doing it since graduation and it practically runs itself at this point. With the way Landon's hands are moving on my hips, even if there were an emergency, it could go on the backburner.

Even after ten years, three babies, a few fights, plus keeping up with his hectic pro schedule along with my business, I *still* can't get enough of him. I press back into his hard bulge and sigh. Taking his hands, I move them to my breasts, and my nipples tighten under my satin evening dress.

"There's only one thing I want right now," I murmur.

We hurry down the hall to our own room, where he presses me against the door as soon as it's closed behind us. His mouth claims mine and his hand slides up my thigh, dragging the

slippery fabric with it until his fingers brush my tender clit, already swollen and aching for his touch.

He pushes my lacy thong aside, smiling against my mouth. “How long have you been thinking about this?” he asks as he pushes his fingers inside me. “You’re already so wet for me, baby.”

“Since you accepted your award,” I admit. “You looked so handsome up there. I’m so proud of you.”

He pulls away to smile at me tenderly. “I love you so much, Katherine.”

I grip his backside and pull his hard length tight to my needy core. “Then show me how much,” I say. “Don’t make me wait any longer.”

With a grin, he slides down my body, nuzzling at my breasts, my stomach, and pausing at the top of my thighs. I run my fingers through his hair and push him lower, parting my legs until his lips graze my clit. Electricity races through me as he begins to work his magic with his tongue. I cling to the door handle to keep from collapsing under the delicious torment while he brings me close to the edge.

I want to make it last forever, but I know Landon has plenty more in store. When his tongue plunges deep inside me, I let go and accept the waves of pleasure that wash over me. Once I collapse into his arms, he carries me to our bed and lies beside me, gently stroking my arm.

“How come you’re not fucking me?” I ask, reaching into his tuxedo pants for his cock. It’s hard as steel in my hand and pulses as I wrap my hand around it. “I need this, Landon.”

He smiles and closes his eyes. “I want to savor you, baby,” he says, pinching my nipples into taut peaks. “I’m retired now. No more quickies.”

“I like your quickies,” I say with a mock pout. “I like when you pound my pussy hard and fast until I scream.”

He still only smiles, teasing me. “Yes, I know you do, baby. And I love shoving my big cock into you and watching your eyes roll back.” He pushes his fingers inside me and I moan, so ready for him. “And those sounds you make when I’m in your pussy,” he continues. “Let me hear you make those sounds.”

I gasp when he pushes his fingers deeper, giving him what he wants when he slides them over my clit. His deep, rumbling laugh makes me moan some more and I tighten my grasp around his cock.

“That feels so good, Landon. But—”

He cuts off my pleas with a deep kiss as he fucks me with his fingers. “How many years have we been together, baby?” he says, trailing kisses down my throat as I arch against his expert touch.

“Ten,” I gasp.

“That’s how many times I’m going to make you come,” he tells me, leaning down to lick my nipple as he touches my clit just the way I need him to. I jolt and scream, grabbing a pillow to stifle the sound. I can hear his smug laughter from underneath it and when my strength finally returns, I toss it aside.

“You’re going to get a taste of your own medicine,” I say, pushing him onto his back and straddling him. “Now it’s your turn.”

He holds my hips firmly so I can’t lower myself onto his cock. I struggle against his strong hands while he gives me an infuriating smile. I finally go limp and drape myself across his chest, his cock trapped between us and pulsing against my stomach. I rub my body up and down, watching his eyes roll back.

“Don’t you want to come inside my tight little hole?” I whisper in his ear. “I’ll be good and come again when your big cock is stretching my pussy.”

With a shout of laughter, he gives up, and grabbing my hips, he drives his cock up into me. As I feel his stiff shaft fill my pussy, I’m true to my word, shuddering with another orgasm. I don’t know how I’ll manage seven more, but I know Landon will succeed in giving them to me. I feel him tighten against me moments later, and I have my revenge as he shoots his seed inside me.

“That’s not fair,” he says, snuggling up beside me. “You know I can’t resist you.”

“We can just take a little break, then you can give me orgasm number four,” I promise.

He rolls over and pulls an envelope out of his bedside table drawer and hands it to me. I can see it’s plane tickets and start to protest, since it’s so hard to travel with the kids, but he stops me. “I’ve already got the nanny lined up, and there are plenty of family friendly things to do near the villa. We can go for the whole summer.”

I take the packet and look at the resort in Italy he booked and I have to admit it looks amazing. “I can’t wait to get on that beach with you,” I say. “I think I’m going to like you being retired even more than I thought.”

His face grows serious and he rests his head on the pillow. “You’ve never had *any* regrets being only with me?”

I’m stunned he’d even ask, but turn the question back on him. “You tell me first,” I say.

He’s attractive as hell and has had a wildly successful career as a professional athlete. I know women constantly throw themselves at him, but I’ve always trusted him. He’s never let me down.

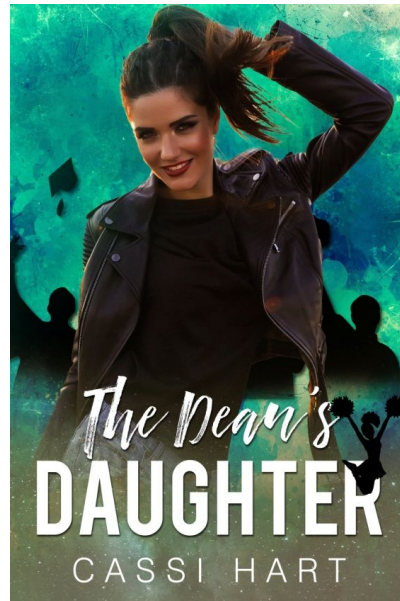
“Oh, baby, you’re still the only one for me, and you always will be,” he says as he reaches for me.

I roll into his arms, happy and secure. “I’ve never regretted only being with you and never will,” I swear fiercely.

With a laugh, he moves in to start on number four.

~The End

Up Next...



At first glance, people think I'm stuck up. My father is the school's dean, so other students they think that professors are going easy on me. They think I don't have to work hard to get what I want, but that's not true. In fact, I work so hard on what my father wants from me that I barely get any time to do things I love, not that he would let me do them anyway. When I finally take a risk and try out for the cheerleading squad, I find that I'm so nervous I can barely do my routine. To make matters worse, this guy keeps heckling me from the stands. Why won't he just leave me alone?

This poor girl is so nervous, standing there in the middle of the gym, trying not to freak out for her squad audition. I can't help but shout and cheer her on. I just wanted to give her a confidence boost, so I'm not sure why she's giving me such angry looks. To be honest, I kind of like the way she looks at me when she's angry, which happens to be most of the time. Is she going to be mad at me forever, or can I get her to warm up to me?

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The Kingpin's Obsession

Alice

I saw something I shouldn't have, and my life is in danger.

The police won't listen, and I have no choice but to seek help at Benedetti's, a bar known for its criminal clientele. But I'm barely inside the door before a dark eyed devil drags me back out and demands to know why I'm there. I shouldn't trust him, but I don't have a choice when he's the only one willing to help me.

Too late, I learn who he really is, and now I'm left to wonder... when this is all over, will he save my life only to break my heart?

About the Author

Cassi lives to write brazen OTT, insta-love, short stories, about possessive alphas and the women they love. Stories that will leave you satisfied, and maybe blushing a little. Cassie loves pedicures, being pampered in any way possible, her darling golden Princess, amazing coffee, and traveling to anywhere warm.



Cassi H   nt