



SACCO FAMILY  
BOOK ONE

the  
vip<sup>er</sup>

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER  
MARGARET MCHEYZER

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viper

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*NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER*

MARGARET MCHYZER

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## The Viper

**Rose:** I knew who he was the moment I saw him at my sister's wedding. My family has a notorious reputation for the way they run the East Coast. My sister might be marrying his brother, but I plan to stay far away from him. However, I find myself in a predicament which forces me to live in his house. At first, I fight his overprotective and controlling ways, but slowly I'm becoming attracted to his intense obsession.

**Dominic:** My brother wants them both, but over my dead body I'll have Rose. I've already claimed her, whether she likes it or not. My only mistake, that blue-eyed lioness will be mine. There's a war brewing with an unseen enemy, and I'll do everything in my power to keep her safe. *Whatever it takes.*

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**I dreamt of him. I hope you do too.**



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Epilogue

Book Two

## Prologue

**M**y breath catches when I walk into the room. My older sister is amazing, staring at herself in the mirror. The white dress hugs her body, showing off her beautiful curves. Her sheer veil falls softly over her face, somewhat concealing her bright blue eyes.

“Hey,” I say as I approach her.

Eliza lifts her chin to look at me in the reflection of the mirror. “Hello,” she replies and offers me a slight smile.

My gut churns with unease. “What’s going on?”

She dips her chin again for only a few seconds before she takes a breath and smiles wider. “I’m just nervous.”

I step closer and stand by her side, forcing Eliza to turn to me. I lift my hand and stare into her eyes. “There’s something else. What is it?” I skim my hand down her strapless white wedding dress, and I notice a small, fading bruise on her shoulder. “What’s this?” I brush the veil away and run my fingers over the fading bruise.

Eliza’s eyes widen as she intakes a sharp breath. “It’s nothing,” she dismisses easily.

“What is it?”

“I ran into a door,” she says with an added hand flick. “It’s nothing.”

I narrow my eyes at her, and shake my head. “If you don’t want to you don’t have to.” Eliza’s brows furrow together. “I’ll go out there. Adrian you’re not ready to marry him.”

“No!” She nearly leaps at me. “Don’t do that.” Eliza averts her eyes and sucks in a shallow breath. “I’m fine,” she finally says in a small voice. “I said, I’m nervous. And I guess I wish Mom and Dad were here. But

looks at me with tears in her eyes. There’s something more to her

r looks  
ugs her  
ver her  
“They’re not.” Eliza’s chin quivers as she attempts to hold back the tears. “I wish they were here to...” She catches herself before she continues.

“Here to what?”

Eliza lifts her chin and returns her gaze to the mirror. “I miss them,” she says with little conviction.

“I know this wedding happened fast, hell I’ve barely met any of his friends,” she says. “But I miss them too and I think they’d be proud of you.” I step forward and hug Eliza. We stand together for a long moment. Eliza’s body slowly relaxes as her arms tighten around me.

“Rose, can I let you in on a secret?”

her veil  
ny gaze  
What is it?” I step back and slide my arms down until we’re holding hands. “Of course.”

; bruise  
ngertips  
Eliza blinks several times to hold back her tears. “I’m not sure I’m ready to marry Adrian.” I pull away from her, and start heading toward the door.

“Where are you going?”

g,” she  
“To tell Adrian the wedding is off. You’re not ready for this.”

“No!” Eliza leaps forward, grabbing me by the upper arm and thrusting me back. “Don’t do that.”

“Why? If you’re not ready to marry him, then you don’t *have to* do it.”  
She releases my arm and walks over to the steeped window in the room in this ornate church. “You don’t get it.”

and tell “Get what?”

“These people don’t take ‘no’ for an answer.” She points toward the pews and of the church. “Besides, there are over three hundred people waiting for the ceremony. It’s not going to happen. Not to mention Adrian.”

“I don’t care about those people. I care about you. And only you. If you’re not ready, we can just leave. We don’t even need to return home. We can go anywhere we want.” She shakes my head as I try to think of a plan. “We’ll...”

“We’ll what? Our parents are dead, so they can’t help.” She snorts and rolls her eyes. “Not like they would. Plus, you’re just a barista in a cafe. That won’t work. Where do you think we can go where he won’t find me?”

“Why are you with him?” I ask.

Eliza turns to look out the window again. She slowly shrugs and lets out an audible sigh. “I have to, Rose,” she says in a small voice.

“No, you don’t. We can jump in the car and leave. You don’t have to do this.”

Eliza pulls her shoulders back and turns to look at me. “Could you please tell Adrian I’m ready?” she asks in a strong, confident voice. This is the complete opposite to how she was acting only a few seconds ago. “Please?”

“Eliza.” I advance toward her, attempting to plead with her to see reason. “Please?” she repeats and lifts her brows. “I’m ready now.”

“You don’t have to do this,” I beg. “You’re not happy; I can see it. It’s so damn obvious,” the tension in my voice is laced with frustration. “I don’t want you marrying a man you don’t love.”

it.” Eliza lifts her chin and arches a brow. “I love him,” she says in a bride’s tone. “I love Adrian very much.”

No, she doesn’t. But, what can I do? My shoulders slump forward and I shake my head. “Eliza,” I plead for one last time.

“Please let Adrian know I’m ready.”

The pain in my chest tells me I need to stop this wedding. But if I’m afraid Eliza will hate me forever, and I can’t live a life without my brother, we’ve already suffered enough at the murder-suicide of our parents, I’ll just want us to have to go through life without each other. The lump in my throat makes it hard to genuinely smile. “Sure,” I say as I head toward the double doors and I stand for a moment, watching Eliza, hoping she changes her mind. Instead, she stares out of the window and refuses to look at me. I don’t do this for her, but it’s her choice.

I walk out and head toward the front of the church, where I expect to find him. But I find Adrian, and two other men standing outside. They’re all smoking, but the older one isn’t.

One of the men sees me first and instantly stamps out his cigarette. He stands taller and smiles. “You must be Rose. You look beautiful,” he says as he advances toward me. He instantly causes my breath to hitch. His eyes are on me, making my pulse quicken. “I’m Dominic, Adrian’s younger brother.” Fuck, *he’s* Adrian’s brother? He’s probably one of the most beautiful men I’ve ever seen, with his dark tousled hair, square jawline, and intense auburn eyes.

Up until recently, I’d never met Adrian. But I’d heard rumors about the Sacco family and how notoriously dangerous they are. I take a step backward, stopping his advance. I can’t allow his presence to overtake my sanity. “Thank you,” I say through a clenched jaw. I look toward Adrian.



an even cast my gaze once over his body. “She’s ready.” My tone is short and clipped.

ard as I The older of the three walks around the two brothers. His bodyguard forms a protective barrier behind him. “Rose, you truly are breathtakingly beautiful,” he says as he gives me two small kisses on the cheeks.

do, I’m “Who are you?”

7 sister. The men all laugh. “My apologies. I’m Ruben, Adrian and Dominic. I don’t tuncle.” I thought that was him. “You’re quite striking.” I should be saying that to my throat out.

or. His face is hard, almost suspicious though his actions and words are a complete contradiction. I flick a look at Adrian from over Ruben’s shoulder. He gives me a slight, almost imperceptible sneer. “Thank you.” I’m no fool, I’d known the names, but now I

faces to the names. Ruben Sacco is high up in the underworld and his two nephews – the Sacco brothers – work for him. What their exact roles are, I have no idea. In truth, I don’t want to know either. I just wish my sisters never become involved with Adrian, although their relationship with him is a little different. He fast.

says as One day she was studying to work in childcare, and the next she was back home telling me she’d met a man she could see herself marrying. It was only a month forward, and here we are. Ridiculously fast.

e most Ruben turns and gestures for Adrian and Dominic to follow. Dominic is the first to move forward, and as he passes me he whispers, “You’re stunning.”

“Thank you,” I reply curtly. I haven’t really given Dominic a chance to say anything because I figure he and Adrian are cut from the same cloth. I mean, they’re all stepbrothers, right? I look to Adrian and let out a murmured groan. “I’ll see you there,” I say.

ian and “You know,” Adrian starts, stopping me from entering the church. I

port and him from over my shoulder and see he's quickly caught up to me. "You will be related in a few short minutes."

ards all "Only by marriage," I reply flatly while I try to turn back into the king." His hand lands on my ass, and I turn to look at him while moving away from him. "What the fuck do you think you're doing?"

He winks at me and slowly licks his lips while scanning my figure-hugger dress. "Don't I get a two for one deal?"

gossed "Fuck off," I say and quickly move away.

"My dick will be in your pussy, Rose. The only question is, do we stand in front of your sister, or behind her back? The choice is yours."

houlder I turn and poke my finger into his shoulder. "You're a fucking pig who can't ever touch me again." He smirks and sweeps his tongue over his lip, and his hand curls deep in my gut.

s are, I "I bet you taste better than your sister." He clicks his tongue to the side and sticks it in his mouth.

as very I back away from him while shaking my head. "You're marrying me and hitting on me. Are you for real?"

e came Adrian grabs onto his crotch and squeezes it once. "Come feel, and see how fast I can see how serious I am."

"Fucking pig," I repeat as I back away from him. I make my way down the hallway toward my sister. I have to tell her what he did. She *has to* cancel the wedding off. I burst into the room to find Eliza back in front of the door. She's staring at herself with the saddest look in her eyes. "Eliza."

, aren't "Is he ready?"

you in I slam the door shut and point out the front. "He grabbed my ass."

Eliza lifts a hand to place on her chest while she hesitantly turns to look at me. Her grimace morphs into a smile and she drops her hand and w

ou and I once. “He’s such a jokester.”

I feel my own eyes prickling with tears. How can she not believe in church. doesn’t matter what I say, does it?” I don’t understand how she can go through with this.

“Adrian loves me,” Eliza says flatly. She doesn’t believe her own words so why is she doing this? Is he holding something over her?

I can’t save her because my sister doesn’t want to be saved. “Okay, cut to the core. “He loves you.” There’s nothing I can say or do to stop her from marrying him if she truly believes that.

She moves past me and heads for the door. “Let’s do this,” she says with a resigned look. Don’t see an obvious level of resignation.

There’s “Sure.” I open the door and wait until she’s out before I close it and go up to her. Standing at the entrance of the church, I look out at the crowd of people, most of whom I don’t know. I’m not sure if Eliza knows who they are either. “Do you know any of the people here?” I whisper as she peeks. My sister, “Only a handful. But they’re all associates of Adrian’s, so it’s impossible for him to have them here.”

And you’ll “Who’s paying for all of this?”

“Ruben has been kind enough to do so. He looks after the people and does all the work for him.”

“What exactly do they do again?” I ask and squint my eyes, challenging her to speak the words.

She shrugs. “Doesn’t matter. I’m not involved.”

“Ladies, you both look perfect,” Dominic says as he heads toward me.

“Thank you,” Eliza says.

I give him a small smile. The quicker we can get this over with, the sooner I can be away from him and his captivating looks. The music starts and

to look at Eliza, silently begging her to stop this. “Maybe you should g  
me? “Itup next to your brother, and I can walk Eliza down the aisle,” I offer.  
can go “We’ve already been through this, Rose. I’m going to walk myself  
fine.”

words, “Miss Hopkins?” Dominic arches his arm so I can loop mine throug  
look once more at my sister, hoping she will come to her senses,  
” I say, doesn’t. I don’t even know why Dominic is doing this. It’s no  
p Elizatraditional, considering this is a conventional wedding. Dominic le  
down the long aisle. “You don’t like us very much, do you?”

ys with “I don’t know you,” I whisper as we walk toward Adrian who’s n  
looking to where Eliza will enter from.

d catch “We’re not bad guys.”

sea of “Huh,” I reply, emotionless.

hey are “We’re not. Maybe, you should come to one of our family dinners.”

“No, thanks.” Dominic’s aftershave drifts past me and I catch  
rtant to deeply inhaling the ocean breeze smell. I glance at him, and can’t h  
like the way he looks in his expensive, fitted black suit.

“I’d be honored if you came as my guest to our next dinner.”

le who “No, thanks,” I repeat.

He tightens his arm around mine as we approach the altar, wh  
lenging cardinal is standing in his crisp red and white gown. He’s clutching a l  
his hand and offers me a soft nod and smile. “I insist,” he whisper  
letting my arm go.

ie. I turn and smile at him. “How about, fuck off?” I snatch my arm ba  
give him a nod.

sooner Dominic smirks as he steps back to stand next to his brother. The  
d I turn changes and I look down the aisle, secretly hoping and praying that E

so standbolted from the church. Although I think Ruben's men guarding the probably wouldn't let her go. Alas, my wish is quashed when Eliza appears. I'll bethe entrance. Everyone in the church stands to their feet as she floats us.

gh his. I "Wow," I hear someone whisper from the front. I look to see but sheintently watching Eliza. His eyes are wide, his shoulders are pulled back ot veryhe's smiling at her. He can't drag his eyes away from my beautiful sister ads me She walks past Ruben and flicks a glance to him. Eliza's eyes light happiness when she sees Ruben staring at her. He's looking at her like ot eventhe sun, and he's completely mesmerized by her.

The glance is small and discreet, but I catch Adrian glaring at her something happened between Ruben and Eliza? Have they had a moment? Why isn't she with him? He's single and judging by the look they exchanged, they like one another.

myself A small smile tugs at my lips as I see Ruben out of my peripheral help butwatching Eliza. The cardinal begins the ceremony and a part of me Ruben stops this madness.

But as the moments melt into one long ceremony, he doesn't. My hurts for my sister, because for some reason, she believes she has ere thethrough with this.

Bible in I drop my gaze to look at the floor as the ceremony nears its conclusion, notSomeone clears their throat and I look up to catch Dominic watching offers me a small smile with a slight nod. It's almost like he knows ack andshouldn't be getting married too.

Wait, is Dominic as opposed to this wedding as I am?

music Whatever. All I know is I'm going to be there for my sister, and if Eliza hasme she wants out, then I'll move heaven and hell to make that work.

church  
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toward

Ruben  
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vs they

he tells

# Chapter One

## Dominic



Rose is nothing short of stunning. I can't seem to drag my eye from her. I push up from the chair and walk over to her. "What groans as she looks at my extended hand.

"May I have this dance?"

She looks out to the dance floor where my brother and new sister are dancing along with a number of other people. "I'm not in the dance."

"It's a wedding, it's almost a rite of passage. You can't *not* dance at a wedding. Especially your sister's." She runs her tongue over her teeth, staring at me with a cold, hard expression. "We have to dance because you're the maid of honor and I'm the best man."

"Find someone else to dance with," she says with frosty coldness in her voice. I drop my hand and pull my shoulders back while looking around the room checking on my family. I see a couple of the guys catch our intentions and I grind my teeth with irritation at them. I walk around the table beside Rose. "What are you doing?" She looks at me and leans back.

I grab the seat of her chair and pull her toward me. “Whatever problem is, get over it. We’re going to dance. *Now.*”

Rose arches a brow and leans her elbow on the table. The deep V front of her dress gapes open showing me a hint of her breast. I can’t help but stare over and have the perfect view of her nipple. I close my eyes and shake my head, attempting to sear the memory of her into my brain. When I open my eyes and instantly regret that I’ve ogled her the way I have. Hopkins isn’t a woman you gawk at. She’s a woman you put on a pedestal and worship for hours, days, weeks...*an eternity.* But, she’s also a woman who doesn’t belong in our world. I shouldn’t want her... *But.*

“Do you make it a habit of objectifying women?”

“What? Of course not.”

“Then stop staring at my tits.”

*Jesus.* “The dress is beautiful.” I lift my hand and indicate to the server to bring me another scotch. “We’re going to dance.”

“No, sorry, we’re not,” she challenges. The waiter arrives with a good scotch and places it on the table in front of me. I shoo him away with a wave of my hand. “Are you kidding me?”

“What?”

“Do you even know how to say thank you?”

I lift the glass and throw the drink back in one movement. “What are you talking about?”

“And this is why I’m not going to dance with you.”

I’m truly lost. I grab her by the wrist and stand. “I have no idea what you’re talking about. And, we’re dancing.”

“No, we’re not.” She stubbornly pulls back.

“Do you really want to make a scene at your sister’s wedding?” Rose



er yourover at Eliza, who's carefully watching us. "I doubt Eliza wants to  
little sister acting like a spoiled brat."

7 of the "Fuck you," she spits, though she softens and allows me to lead her  
move itdance floor. We get to the dance floor and I pull her into me. "Be  
slightlyRomeo. You're not romancing me, buddy." The song slows and I p  
rever. Iinto me tighter. I place my hand to her lower back, enough that my pin  
e. Rosesrape across the top of her ass. "Move your hand."

pedestal I smirk at her, and just for that I move her closer to me. Our boc  
womanpushed together, and I'm sure she can feel what she's doing to my  
"You don't even know me, and you're already angry. Why?"

Rose scoffs and shakes her head. "You're kidding me, right?" I  
shoulders slowly while moving us around the dance floor. "You h  
idea? Really?"

erver to "What is it?"

"Your brother is a fucking jerk."

glass of Her words couldn't ring truer. He really is. "He's my brother," I s  
t a flickfinality.

"And he's a jerk," she repeats as if I'm supposed to agree with her. "  
his hands on my ass."

He did what? I clear my throat and look to find my brother. "I'm s  
are youwas unintended," I say, although I'll fucking kill him if he tries t  
again. I don't give a fuck that he's my older brother, and the underb  
lay him out.

ia what "You would think so, eh? Except he asked me if now that he's m  
my sister if he gets a two-for-one deal."

I tighten my grip on Rose, angry. Adrian said what? He and I need  
e looks"My brother is such a joker."

see her “Funny that, because my sister said the same thing when I told her  
shakes her head and clicks her tongue. “Talk about enabling.”

r to the “I’ll speak to him.” I move my hand lower and drag Rose in close  
ack up, for now, I want to enjoy my time with the most beautiful woman  
ull her room.”

kie can Rose snickers. “Do lines like that actually work on women?”

“I don’t have problems. I can have any woman I want,” I sa  
lies are irritation. She’s getting under my skin, and I hate that I’m allowing  
y body happen. “But what would you know about that?”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I cock a brow arrogantly. Rea  
lift my slowly crosses her face, and she throws her head back with a deep, g  
ave no laugh. “Oh, my God. You think I’m a virgin.”

“You’re not?” My neck stiffens as I find myself mentally destroyi  
man who’s ever touched my girl. Rose can barely hold in the la  
“You’re not?” I repeat as I stare at her.

ay with Rose’s smile falls as she clicks her tongue again and scoffs while  
away. “Just like the rest of them,” she murmurs. “How dare  
‘He put judgmental of *me*? You’re the self-confessed man whore having any  
you want.” She steps back, creating a gap between us. “And I thoug  
ure that brother was a jerk.” Eliza walks past us toward the bridal table, an  
hat shit Adrian walking out the front of the reception hall. Rose steps back an  
oss. I’ll me a small nod. “Excuse me.” She doesn’t even wait for my reply  
already heading toward her sister.

arrying I turn to look at her one more time before heading out to find Adria  
talking with a few guys from our crew and boisterously laughing. “H  
words says and claps a hand to my shoulder. “I was just telling the boys t

.” Rosesweet ass in there is in for a good night.” He waggles his brows at r  
returns his attention to the others.

r. “But I don’t laugh. I don’t think he’s funny. “Give us a minute,” I say.

t in the The crew all walk away, leaving Adrian and myself alone. “You al

Adrian takes his cigarettes out of his pocket and offers me one. I tak

place it between my lips. Adrian flicks his lighter and offers it to r

y withbefore lighting his own. “My woman looks hot, doesn’t she?”

this to “Did you put your hands on Rose?” I ask as I puff on my smoke.

“Fuck yeah. I’m gonna bend her over and fuck her ass.”

lization I look around to see who’s out here and who can hear him. I si

gutturalweight so I’m facing Adrian. “Look.” I take the smoke out of my mo

flick the ash forming. “You don’t touch Rose.”

ing any “What the fuck?” Adrian growls. “I’ll fuck her if I want to.”

ughter. “You don’t touch her,” I warn slower.

“What? My little brother wants her?” He half shrugs. “You can h

lookingafter I’m done with her. She’s got a sweet ass, and I’m claiming it.”

you be “No, you’re not. You don’t touch her ever again.”

woman “Did that whore come running to you? Fucking slut. She needs to l

ht yourshut her fucking mouth.” Adrian scowls as he looks toward the recepti

d I see “Calm the fuck down. She didn’t come running. I forced it out of he

id gives “She’s mine.” Adrian attempts to throw the weight of his authority

, she’sme. “Eliza will have my children, but Rose *will* be my whore.”

“No, she won’t. You won’t fucking touch her,” I find my voice is

n. He’smatching Adrian’s tone.

ey,” he “Rose is mine, you get it?” He shoves my shoulder causing me to

hat mystep backward. His anger is also attracting stares from the crew.

I square up to Adrian, and get in his face. “You don’t fucking touch

ne then “Big tough man...”

“What’s going on?” Ruben asks from behind us both.

*Fuck.* “Nothing,” I say as I step back from my brother.

lright?” “Pencil dick over here told me to leave Eliza’s sister alone,”  
e it and happily says and smirks at me.

ne first I wanted to keep this between us, but now Adrian has involved ou  
and boss. Ruben approaches us and shoves his hands in his pockets. “  
like the girl?” he asks me. *Shit.* “If you don’t then she’s whoever clai  
But if you do, no one touches her.” He lifts his brows and stares wai  
hft my answer.

uth and If I say I don’t, then she’ll never be mine. “She’s mine,” I say.

Ruben gives me a small, confirming nod. “You heard the man.” H  
to Adrian and looks at him. “You have a wife now, Adrian. You dor  
the sister too. Pick someone else. Leave the sister alone.” Adrian shoo  
ave hersideways glance before pursing his lips together. “Good.” Ruben  
back into the reception, leaving Adrian and me to finish having this ou

“You can have the dirty whore.” Adrian skims his gaze down my l  
learn to his mouth twists. “When her snatch gives you a fucking disease, don  
on hall. running to me when your dick shrivels up, *little bro.*”

r.” “You’re a prick,” I say as I step forward to match up with him.

against “What are you going to do about it?” He pulls his shoulders back a  
his chin.

rising, I have to remind myself that we’re at his wedding, and causing  
right now might not be the smartest moves. Besides, he outranks me  
take isn’t over,” I reply as I walk away. I flick a look to Marco, my righ  
who’s been intensely watching us.

her.” “That’s it, run to your whore,” he calls after me in a condescending

I want to smash his fucking mouth in, but instead I close my eyes, hold my breath, and walk away. My brother needs to be taught a lesson. But it's not worth a confrontation here. This isn't the time or the place. *Yet.*

Adrian I head back inside, where I see Rose is sitting with Eliza at the bride's table.

"Ladies," I say as I take my place beside Adrian's seat. They both look at me. Rose rolls her eyes while Eliza offers me a soft smile. They appear to have been deep in conversation that I've interrupted. I flick my hand at the server and he appears within seconds with another scotch for me. He puts it on the table and I shoo him away with a hard look. The scotch barely touches the sides as I throw it back.

The girls haven't lifted their heads from whatever they're talking about. My brother is still outside. I stand and walk over to Eliza. "May I?" I ask. She offers me a soft smile and I offer her my hand.

"Go away," Rose sneers toward me.

I can't help but like her sassiness. It's refreshing, and quite alluring. "I wasn't asking you," I reply with a slight grin.

She arches a brow and sucks in a deep breath. "Good." Rose sits back and crosses her arms in front of her chest.

I control my urge to stare at her pushed-up tits. I refrain from laughing at her cute annoyance with me. "May I?" I repeat to Eliza.

Eliza sucks in a breath and plasters a fake smile on her face. She pushes her shoulders back and effortlessly stands from her seat. "Of course."

"Eliza, what are you doing?" Rose grips onto her hand and tries to pull her back. "This back."

"It's fine, Rose." She lays her hand in mine and I guide her to the dance floor.

I make sure I keep a good distance between us as we dance to the music.

, take asong playing. Eliza’s shoulders are stiff and she can’t look at me. “F  
it’s notyou holding up?”

“I’m fine, thank you,” she replies in a flat voice.

al table. “Are you okay?”

k to me “Yes,” her reply is wooden.

pear to “What’s happening?” Is my brother being an asshole to her?

l to our She visibly swallows then slowly looks to me. “It’s an emotiona  
laces itThere’s no expression on her face. She’s telling me what I want to h  
toucheswhat’s actually going on with her.

“You’re my sister-in-law now, Eliza, and we take care of our own fa  
; about, “I’m sure you do.”

?” I ask “If you need anything, you can always ask me.”

“Uh-huh,” she says flatly. Eliza quickly breaks eye contact with r  
looks out over the guests, inhaling deeply. “There are so many people  
ring. “I Finally, she’s opening a little. “There are.”

“Do you know everyone?”

ack and “Basically,” I reply. “There are a lot of associates from work.”

“Work?” she scoffs. “Other than Rose, I don’t really know anyone.  
;hing atpeople I’ve met. Generally we’re on polite basis.”

“You’ve summed that up fairly accurately.”

ulls her Eliza turns to look at me as her forehead slightly crinkles. “You  
friends with these people? Is Adrian?”

pull her “It’s more about connections,” I’m careful not to say anything I sh  
or even give the appearance that we’re not a tight-knit family.

e dance Eliza’s jaw tightens as she chuckles. “Right.” She steps back and

“Excuse me, I see my *husband* returning and he’s calling me back  
ie slowtable.”

low are “I’ll walk you back.” I guide Eliza toward the table and see my  
glaring at me. Once we’re back I hold Eliza’s chair out then help her  
in before taking my place beside Adrian. I beckon the waiter to bring  
scotch. “What?” I ask as I throw back my drink.

“Keep your fucking hands to yourself,” Adrian warns.

“We were dancing because you weren’t here.”

il day.” “I don’t touch what’s yours; you don’t touch what’s mine.”

ear, not I lift my hands in surrender. “Fine.” I look over and find Ruben st  
us. “The boss,” I whisper.

amily.” Adrian’s attention goes to Ruben, where he lifts his glass in appreci

Ruben gives him a small nod as he sits back and continues to watch

Rose is right. Adrian is a dick. But he’s my brother. And blood is  
ne, andthan water. Especially in our line of work.

here.”

. A few

i’re not

ouldn’t

smiles.

: to the

“I’ll walk you back.” I guide Eliza toward the table and see my brother glaring at me. Once we’re back I hold Eliza’s chair out then help her slide it in before taking my place beside Adrian. I beckon the waiter to bring another scotch. “What?” I ask as I throw back my drink.

“Keep your fucking hands to yourself,” Adrian warns.

“We were dancing because you weren’t here.”

“I don’t touch what’s yours; you don’t touch what’s mine.”

I lift my hands in surrender. “Fine.” I look over and find Ruben staring at us. “The boss,” I whisper.

Adrian’s attention goes to Ruben, where he lifts his glass in appreciation.

Ruben gives him a small nod as he sits back and continues to watch us.

Rose is right. Adrian is a dick. But he’s my brother. And blood is thicker than water. Especially in our line of work.



## Chapter Two

### Rose



I t's been two days since I've heard from Eliza, so I'm making a quick stop before I head in to work. I pull up the driveway gates and wait for the car to be buzzed through before heading up to the massive mansion and parking my car.

I sit for a moment looking at the front of the house, and scrunch my nose. It's ostentatious to say the least. The immaculately manicured lawn, the pristine brick and gaudy gilded trim. I walk to the front door and ring the doorbell.

Jackie answers the door. "Hello, Miss Hopkins," she greets as she opens the door with her petite body.

"Hey, Jackie," I say as I try to step past her.

"Mrs. Sacco isn't here." She looks over her shoulder then tilts her head slightly forward as if she wants to tell me a secret.

"Yes, she must be. She told me she'd be home," I lie.

"No, ma'am," the young housekeeper says. "She's gone out with some of the other wives." Her voice deceives her though, I know my sister is

try once again to move past her, but Jackie blocks my entry. “Miss Ho  
She rapidly blinks and purses her lips together. “Please,” she whispers.

I hate this. It’s been two months since the wedding and Eliza is  
away from me. I know something is going on. I just wish I knew what  
back to my car as I shift my weight impatiently from foot to foot. “Tel  
call me, please.”

“Yes, ma’am.” Jackie nods once and closes the door.

“Fuck,” I grumble as I walk away. I slide into my shitty old car and  
toward work.



ck stop  
ait until  
parking

“Hey, you’re in early,” Finn, one of the staff, says as I rush past him  
y nose.  
my stuff away and try to call Eliza before my shift starts.

s frame  
ring the  
“Yeah, I tried stopping in at Eliza’s but she wasn’t there,” I lie.  
want my co-workers knowing what’s going on. “I’ll be out in a few mi

blocks  
customer.  
“Your shift hasn’t even started yet,” Finn says as he brews a coffe

I walk through to the staff break room in the back, and put my b  
sweater away. Evelyn is sitting at the table where she lifts her ch  
er head  
smiles. “Rose, you’re eager aren’t you?” she jokes. “You know, I ha  
good authority the boss likes you, so you don’t need to come in early.”

ome of  
here. I  
“Considering you’re the boss, that makes me happy.” I smile toward  
was hoping to see Eliza. But she wasn’t home, so I just want to talk

pkins.”before my shift starts.” I wave my cell toward her.

“You can take it in my office, or I can leave to give you privacy.”  
pulling She’s already pushing up out of her chair. I have a feeling Eliz  
: I lookgoing to answer though. “It’s okay, there’s nothing private.” I br  
l her tophone up to my ear. My heart quickens as I hear the click. “Hey,  
expecting Eliza to reply.

“You know what to do,” Eliza’s message plays.  
nd head “Ugh,” I grumble as I shake my head and lower my phone.

“Everything okay?” Evelyn asks as she flicks through her phone.  
“Yeah, everything’s fine. I was hoping to talk to her, that’s all. A  
I’ll head out to start early.” I slide my phone back into my pocket ar  
out to the front. “Has the morning been busy?” I ask as I sidle up  
Finn.

“Not really. It’s been a steady stream since we opened, nothing  
1 to put Abbie and I have been handling it, but Evelyn had to come out a few t  
help.”

I don’t “Okay.” I tie an apron on and look around the café. “Do you wan  
minutes.”work the coffee machine while you serve? Or would you prefer me to  
e for a Considering Finn has been here since opening, he can have his ch  
what to do.

og and “I’ll help Abbie while you take over the machine.”  
in and “Sure.” He finishes with the coffee he’s making, then brings over t  
ve it on ticket waiting. The tickets are coming in faster as more and more pec  
coming into the café.

l her. “I “What can I get started for you?” Abbie asks.

κ to her “I’m here to see Rose.”

His deep, smooth voice is like cool silk on a hot summer night. My

catches and I close my eyes for a split second so I can regain my com  
I look around the machine and see Abbie pointing toward me. The  
a's not denying that Dominic is sexy and suave. But, I'm not a fool and I don  
ing the to get involved with someone like him. Dominic approaches and loo  
" I say at me. "What do you want?" I ask with fire.

"A coffee," he replies with mirth.

I stop frothing the milk for the cappuccino I'm making, and stare  
"Did you order one?"

"Not yet, I was hoping you would take my order." He winks at me.  
nyway, I run my tongue over my teeth, and huff. "What do you want, Do  
id walk You're obviously not here for the coffee. So, what do you want?"

next to "Why are you always so short with me? I'm just trying to get to kno

You *are* my sister-in-law's sister, and I think it's important we get to  
; crazy each other."

imes to I return my attention to the milk I'm frothing. "No, thanks. I don't  
get to know any of you."

t me to "Rose, I think we should talk."

serve?" "I'm working." I instantly shut him down.

oice of He takes a few steps to the side and shoves his hands in his pocket  
staring at me. "This is a cute café. It has a European feel to it."

"It's also my place of employment, and my boss is in the back. If s  
he next me not working she won't be happy. Can you leave, please?"

ople are "No, I'm not going anywhere." He's beginning to irritate me. "Wh  
of things do you serve here?"

I glare at him from above the jug of milk I've just finished fi  
"Haven't you ever been inside a café before? Would you like a guidec  
/ breath I click my tongue and shake my head. "We're busy. Go away." E

posture. hunkers down and doesn't move. He looks out the front window; she's not follow his line of sight. Two of his men are outside, their backs to us. I don't want stand protectively in front of the café. "I'm going to get into trouble. You can't leave."

"If you make me a coffee."

I glance at the tickets stacking up. "What do you want?" If I don't make him a coffee, he's going to end up staying here and being a nuisance.

"What are you making?" He peers over the coffee machine.

"A cappuccino."

"I'll have one of those."

"If I make you one, will you go away and leave me alone?"

"Sure," he replies with a dead straight face. But, I know he won't.

"Promise me," I push. I don't want him hanging around.

"I promise."

I wag my finger at him. "Say it. Say, 'I promise I'll leave you alone once you make me a coffee'."

He's doing everything he can to hold in his smile. But his flaming eyes tell me another story. "I promise I'll leave you alone once you make me a coffee."

"Good." I rapidly make him a cappuccino and give it to him in a tinfoil cup. "There."

"You really want me gone, don't you?" He takes the cup and lifts it to his lips. "Wait, you didn't ask me if I wanted sugar."

"Because I don't care. You have your coffee, now leave." I pointed to the door, before quickly returning my attention to my job.

"I'll be back for a coffee?" Sure enough, Dominic is true to his word and begins to walk toward the door. I exhale as he reaches for the door, but my relief is short-lived when he exits.

s and I turns and calls over everyone, "I'll see you tonight, Rose."  
as they Abbie and Finn both stop what they're doing, as do the patrons occ  
. Please the inside tables, and look at him. I don't know what he's playing at, b  
not going to see me tonight. The bastard knows I won't make a scene  
of my co-workers which is why he's so bold. He leaves the café and  
't makeout, where he speaks with his two guys, then leans up against a car  
right outside the café.

He's staring in while drinking his coffee, and I have no doubt at  
he's watching me.

I could let it fluster me, but there's no way in hell I'm going to gi  
the satisfaction. So I ignore him, and continue with my work.

"Who's he?" Abbie asks. "Cause, he's cute."

"No one," I say trying to keep that part of my life hidden fr  
colleagues.

ie once "Are you two dating?" Finn asks as he slinks up next to me and loo  
at Dominic who's now watching us with a rigid jaw and tight shoulder

auburn "No, no." I shake my head.

ake me "How do you know him?" Finn asks. There's a touch of sadness in  
voice. Does he like me? I hope not. He's a nice guy, but I'm not inter  
ake-out anyone. Not Finn, not Dominic.

"My sister knows his brother." Finn leans against the counter, close  
it to his and waits. "What?"

"Who is he?" Finn's eyes harden as he waits for my reply.

lly look "How about, none of your business. Now, just like I told him." I j

Dominic who's advanced closer to the glass as he stares inside. "I hav  
ard the to do." What the hell has gotten into everyone today? "And I'm sure  
when he too."

Finn pushes off the counter and peers over toward Dominic. “Sorry,” he says, running his hand through his hair. “I just don’t like the way he looked at me.” Finn clears his throat. “Is *looking* at you,” he corrects. I turn my angry face toward him. “I’ll get back to work.” Finn lowers his head and walks away.

I stay at the coffee machine but can’t help looking out at Dominic. He’s parked in the lot and is again leaning on the car. There’s something about the way he looks that makes my blood heat with desire. I squeeze my thighs together and attempt to tear my eyes off of him.

What is wrong with me?

I know the Sacco brothers are bad news, so why am I inclined to spend any of my time or headspace on Dominic? It doesn’t matter. I can spend as much time as I want with the miserable Adrian he’s made Eliza. And there’s no chance I’ll have any time to do with Dominic. Hell no.

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Finn pushes off the counter and peers over toward Dominic. "Sorry." He runs his hand through his hair. "I just don't like the way he looked at you." Finn clears his throat. "Is *looking* at you," he corrects. I turn my angry face to him. "I'll get back to work." Finn lowers his head and walks away.

I stay at the coffee machine but can't help looking out at Dominic who's retreated and is again leaning on the car. There's something about Dominic that makes my blood heat with desire. I squeeze my thighs together as I attempt to tear my eyes off of him.

What is wrong with me?

I know the Sacco brothers are bad news, so why am I inclined to give Dominic any of my time or headspace? It doesn't matter. I can see how miserable Adrian has made Eliza. And there's no chance I'll have anything to do with Dominic. Hell no.



## Chapter Three

Rose



**M**y apartment is small and old, but at least it's clean and uncluttered. The range is an antique, but functional. I lift my right leg on my left as I heat up the sauce for my pasta. My hips move slightly to the upbeat music coming from my phone. Lifting the spoon, I taste the sauce and screw up my nose. "More salt," I say as I add a pinch.

I glance at my phone in case Eliza has called or messaged. But she hasn't, and this reminds me it's now been three days since I've heard from her. I know she doesn't want to worry me, but I need to know she's okay.

The music suddenly seems too happy for my heavy mood. I leave the wooden spoon in the sauce, and pause the music. "Talk to me," I say into my phone and stare at it. "Come on." I will Eliza to call me.

There's a knock on my door, and I crinkle my brows as I look toward the door. Maybe it's Eliza. I leave my phone and rush toward the door. I open it and try to throw my arms around my sister. "Oh, it's you," I say when I see Dan. "What are you doing here?" I position myself in the doorway, and I push the door behind me so he can't see in.

“I wanted to see if you needed anything.”

“I don’t.” I step back and try to close the door, but he shoves it open and steps inside. “Go away.”

“Are you cooking?” He looks over to my little kitchenette.

“Wow, you’re a genius,” I say with sarcasm. “You can leave now.”

He shrugs out of his jacket and places it on the back of one of the chairs at my small, two-seater dining table. “Let’s taste it.” Dominic walks over to the range, lifts the spoon and tastes the sauce. He screws up his nose and looks at me. “You’re going to eat this?”

“So, you push your way into my home, and then insult my cooking? You’re a real charmer, aren’t you?”

He plonks the spoon down in the sauce and turns the range off. “Come to lean on me. I’ll take you to a *real* Italian restaurant, one that makes the best sauce and serves it with homemade pasta. Not this store-bought shit.” He frowns at my revolted look at my boxed pasta. “This is a travesty, not food.”

I open the door and stand to the side. “You’re more than welcome to leave.”

“This isn’t food. This is cheap and nasty.”

“Thank you.” I smile at him. “It’s what I can afford. So, thank you for insulting me and reminding me that I’m poor. I appreciate it.”

Dominic shuffles awkwardly on the spot. “I’m taking you out to dinner. Let’s go.”

He puts on his suit jacket and buttons it. It’s a shame I don’t have a suit, because he looks damned fine in a suit. “You can wear what you want, ready or not; you don’t have to change.”

“Are you fucking kidding?” I snap. “You barge into my home and call me a cheap cook to insult me and you expect me to go to dinner with you. Are you delusional?”

“I’m sorry,” he swiftly apologizes. “I would like to take you to dinner and screw my face at him. “Please.”

“Sorry?” I pretend to not have heard his plea. “What was that? I didn’t hear what you said at the end.”

Dominic pinches the bridge of his nose. “I said, would you please come to dinner with me?”

“So, you’re asking, which means I have an option.” I slam the front door shut and lean against it. “No, thanks.”

He walks over to me and reaches across me for the door handle. I can feel the heat rolling off his body onto mine. The faint aroma of cigarette smoke mixed with the ocean breeze drifts past me. This is a bad idea. I shouldn’t go anywhere with him. “I wasn’t asking, *Rosa*,” he whispers in my ear as he’s reaching for the handle.

My eyes involuntarily close as I push my body into his. Jesus, what is he doing to me? *Get it together, Rose*. No, I can’t let him play me like this. My eyes open and I lift my chin. “My name is Rose, not Rosa.”

“Rosa is the Italian version of Rose.”

“Well, I’m not Italian, so it’s just plain Rose.” I stand my ground, refusing to allow him to overtake my senses the way he has.

Dominic cages me against the door, and looks into my eyes. His fire is a vortex of lust. They can easily suck a woman deep into them, but I’m not like a woman. “The car is waiting, *Rosa*.”

“You go ahead and I’ll meet you down there.” The moment he’s out of my apartment, I’ll lock him out. That way I don’t have to be close to him any longer, and I can eat my stupid box pasta in peace.

He wraps his hand around my wrist, pulls me off the door, opens the door, and tugs me behind him. “I’m not a fool, *Rosa*.”

ner.” I “Stop calling me that.” I try to use my weight to stop him from di  
me toward the stairs. “I’ll scream.”

missed “No, you won’t,” he says with confidence.

“You’ve just left my apartment open for anyone to waltz in there a  
come to whatever they want.” He ducks down and throws me over his shoulder  
you insane?”

nt door “You don’t want to come voluntarily, so I have to improvise.”

“By kidnapping me?”

He’s so “Yes, so I can feed you.”

roma of “I have food back at my apartment, and I’m capable of making it.”

s a bad “That’s not food, that’s cardboard.” He walks down the one flight of  
whispers and waiting at the door are the same two guys from yesterday at the

“Her apartment is open, secure it,” he orders one of the guys who take  
at is hedo what he’s been told. The other guy opens the back door of his shiny  
his. Mycar, and Dominic places me to my feet and waits for me to slide in.  
up.”

“I don’t like you,” I protest as I fold my arms in front of my chest.

refusing “I’m heartbroken. Now get in.” The guy who took off reappears and  
while looking up and down the street. “I’m hungry, and you should be

ry gaze “No, I’m not.” I shake my head, refusing to get in the car.

not *this* “You can watch me eat then. Hurry up,” he repeats.

I screw my nose at him. “I’m not going to watch you eat.”

t of my “Then get in the damn car so we can enjoy our dinner.”

um any “I hate you,” I say as I finally concede and slide into the back.

“No, you don’t. You like me, a lot.” He climbs in next to me and the  
s it and guy closes the door, while the other one settles behind the steering wheel

ragging don't even know their names, only that they seem to be everywhere I  
is.

I scoot over to the opposite side of the car, and try to make myself as  
and take as possible. "Don't touch me," I warn.

r. "Are "I can wait until you want me to."

"Good, because you'll be waiting for a damned long while." I  
sweetly at him. "By the way, I'm not wearing shoes, and no restaurant  
going to let me in without shoes."

He looks to my feet and smirks. "You have cute toes."

"Great, you have a foot fetish. Just what I need." I look out the window  
of stairs regretting my life choices.

ie café. "I don't have a foot fetish, though yours are adorable."

is off to I rub my hand across my eyes and sigh. "Stop talking." That  
y black Dominic does shut up, at least until the car stops. I look around, attempt  
"Hurry gauge where we are. "Where are we?"

"I told you, I'm taking you to the Italian restaurant that has the best  
in the state." I move to open the door, but Dominic places his hand  
id wait mine. "No."

too." "What?"

"When you're with me, my men will do everything for you."

I feel myself gawking at him in disgust. "How repressing." I don't  
anyone, instead, I open the door and slide out of the car.

"Rosa," Dominic calls as he makes his way around the car to where

"I told you, you wait for my men."

ie other "First." I lift my hand and point my finger. "Call me Rosa again  
wheel. I walk home." I extend a second finger. "Second, I don't need to be wa

Dominic by anybody. I can open the door on my own.” I walk toward the restaurant where his driver holds the door open.

is small “It’s not about if you can or can’t do these things, it’s about your safety.”

I swing around and place my hand on my hip. “My safety?” I ask incredulously. Dominic nods. “The only person I need to be kept safe is you.” I point to my feet. “I don’t even have shoes on, because you thought it was inappropriate to barge into my home and kidnap me.”

“Kidnap you? You’ve got this all wrong,” he says with humor. “I’m merely having dinner.”

“Great, let’s go.” I make a sweeping movement toward the open door. “In all means, don’t let me stop you from taking me to dinner.”

Dominic gestures for me to enter the restaurant, and follows close behind me. I awkwardly stand at the host desk, but Dominic waltzes in and links our fingers together, pulling me along. He apparently doesn’t want to wait for anyone to come and greet us.

Instead, he heads toward the back, where there’s a private area. We wait at a small number of tables whose occupants notice my barefoot appearance and raise their eyebrows in surprise. “Rosa,” Dominic says as he pulls out a chair for me at the most secluded table in the restaurant.

“It’s Rose,” I snap at him, walk around and sit in the seat opposite him. “I don’t want to wait for you.”

He shakes his head, unbuttons his jacket and sits. Dominic’s silent laughter irritates me. He’s not taking me seriously. “Mr. Sacco, it’s a pleasure to have you with us tonight. Miss Hopkins,” the waiter says as he hands me the menus. He knows my name?

and I’ll “Give us a moment, Jeffery.”

“Yes, sir.” The waiter backs away.

“He knows my name?” I don’t even look at the menu.

restaurant, “Yes.”

“Why?”

“Because I told them.”

I ask, “You seriously don’t see a problem with any of this?”

Dominic shuts the menu and looks to me. “I’m hungry, you’re hungry. What’s the issue with us eating together?” He opens the menu again.

He peruses it while I sit staring at him. “The cannelloni is excellent, as are the ravioli and the pasta. We’re rearrabbiata. What would you like?” He doesn’t lift his chin to look at me.

I know he knows I’m staring in disgust. “Of course, there’s mushroom ravioli or. “By the way, everything is perfect here.”

I sigh and finally open the menu. “Mr. Sacco, are you ready to order?” He looks behind me. “Yes, bring us one of everything.”

I tug me “What?” I ask as I look over my menu to Dominic. “No, don’t bring us one of everything. I’ll have a caprese salad and garlic bread.”

I walk past “There’s no meat in either of those,” Dominic says.

I nod and raise “Because I’m vegetarian.”

I look at the “You’re what?” He seems genuinely surprised by my statement. I

but I want to make this as painful as possible for him so he leaves me alone. “It means I don’t eat meat,” I explain slowly like I’m speaking to a child.

“I know what a vegetarian is, I just don’t understand why.” The waiter shrugs. I shallow still waiting for the rest of our order, and I glance at him then Dominic looks at me. “Nice to meet you, Bucco.”

I look at us two “And to drink?”

“Scotch for myself and wine for Miss Hopkins.”

“Very well.”

“No. I don’t want wine. I’ll have a soda please. It doesn’t matter what you get, thank you.”

“Coke, Sprite?” the waiter offers.

“Sprite, thank you.”

He smiles and leaves the table. I sit on my hands as we wait for return. “Are you going to do that wherever we go?”

hungry. “Do what?” I ask Dominic playing dumb.

ain and “Every single thing I say, you counter.”

s is the I smile and lean forward so the other diners in the VIP area don't see, but I “This is the first and last time I'm going anywhere with you.” A smile tugs at my lips.

“Has this got anything to do with my brother?”

?” “The fact he put his hands on my ass?” I tilt my head to the side. “He asked me if he gets a two-for-one deal?”

g us one “I've spoken to him about that. He won't bother you again.”

My breath catches as I sit back, finding myself surprised by his

“You did?”

“Yes,” he replies with confidence. “I give you my word, he won't bother you again.”

alone. “Why would you do that?”

child. “Because it made you uncomfortable, and he shouldn't touch what's mine.” The waiter pauses and visibly swallows. I wait for him to finish his sentence. “What?”

“Osso Buco” Dominic leans back and drapes his arm over the chair. He glances at me and lifts his chin. “Ma'am, your soda.” The waiter places it in front of me. “Mr. Sacco, your scotch.” He lays a glass in front of Dominic.

“Thank you,” I say to him before he leaves. Dominic takes the glass and swirls the deep amber liquid around, not bringing it to his lips.

“Which what's...” I stop and lift my shoulders while waiting for Dominic to finish his sentence.



“What?” His hard eyes meet mine.

“You were saying something and didn’t finish. What was the rest of the sentence?”

He continues to stare at me while a slight smile pulls at his lips. “I can’t recall.”

He’s not going to tell me, which completely frustrates me. But, I can’t hear. We’ll attempt to have some kind of conversation with him. “So,” I say, strained, ultimately relinquishing that conversation. “What exactly do you and your brother do?”

Dominic’s shoulders tense as he averts his eyes and looks down at the glass. “What exactly has Eliza told you?”

“Eliza?” He nods. “She hasn’t told me anything. Actually, I haven’t seen her for days.” I look down at my soda to avoid Dominic. I don’t want him to see the pain I’m in, or even how deflated I am when it comes to the crumbling relationship between Eliza and me. I feel like she’s pulling away from me and I don’t know why.

“Are you two close?”

“We used to be,” I say in a small voice. I bring the soda to my mouth and take a sip. “Before your brother happened.” I lift my chin but I can’t help myself to look into his eyes. This hurts too much, and I hate being so vulnerable with a man I know to be dangerous.

In front of me, Dominic takes his phone out of his pocket, dials someone and brings it to his ear. “I’m with Rosa.”

“Rose,” I correct. “Who is it?” I mouth as I shift in my seat.

“Yes, I know,” he says in a hard, clipped voice. “Where’s Eliza?” I wish I was talking to Adrian. I perk up, completely invested in his conversation.

He huffs. Instantly I know I’m not going to be able to speak to Eliza. “H

call her sister.” He lowers his phone and slides it back into his pocket.  
t of theasleep.”

My body slumps as all my excitement evaporates. “Thank you for t  
‘I don’tI say flatly. “I just wish I could talk to her.”

“She’ll call you tomorrow.”

may as “Miss Hopkins,” the waiter announces as he places my caprese and  
I start,bread on the table. There’s another waiter behind him holding Do  
id yourosso bucco. “Is there anything I can bring?”

“I’m fine, thank you.” I offer him a smile. Dominic merely flicks h  
1 at hisat the waiter. I pick my fork up and push the food around on the pla  
hung up at my false hope of being able to talk to my sister.

’t heard “You’re not hungry?” Dominic has already started in on his food.

’t want “Yeah, I guess I am. I’m just thinking, that’s all.”

s to the “About your sister?”

g away, Dominic has shown me he’s persistent, and I don’t want him invo  
Eliza’s and my relationship. “No, actually, I’m thinking about why yc  
ever say thank you to someone who waits on you.”

uth and His fork stops midair. Dominic’s forehead crinkles with confusion.  
’t bringare you talking about?”

eing so “You’ve not thanked our waiter once.”

“That’s his job,” he says dismissively.

gs it up “Yes, his job is to wait on you, and me, but a little courtesy can go  
way, Dominic.”

He lowers his fork to sit in the plate. “Say that again.”

” Is he My head flinches back slightly. “A little courtesy can go a long way

“Huh,” “No, not that.”

ave her I look over to the side and find myself absentmindedly touching m

“She’s “What?”

“My name, say it again.” He wets his lips and leans his body trying,” forward.

A slow ache of desire caresses my skin. A flutter of heat creeps i veins as I watch his eyes darken with need. Dominic is a man any d garlic could easily fall for, but I can’t allow myself to become caught in his minic’s lust. My body may be flooded with warmth at the way he’s staring at

I won’t do this. I take in a sharp breath and smile. “Dominic,” I s is hand absolutely no emotion.

ite, still He releases a humorless chuckle and shakes his head. “I’m disap *Rosa.*”

Nope, I’m not falling for this. “Seems like you have a problem the take me home so you can sort that out.” I gesture toward him. “I’m r go.” I sit back, not having touched a bite of my food.

olved in “We’re not going anywhere until I’m ready to leave. And if you dc ou can’t then I’m fine to stay here all night.”

“I’m sure they have a closing time,” I say with a sassy tone.

“What “They’ll stay until I leave.”

“They have families to go home to.”

Dominic lifts his shoulders, then points at my food. “Then you be because if they have to stay open it’ll be because of you.”

o a long Any attraction I had toward him is now long gone with his condesc tone. “You’re an ass,” I grumble as I pick up my fork and begin eat salad.

.” Dominic appears amused as I shovel the food into my mouth attempt eat as quickly as possible while still savoring it and attempting not y neck myself indigestion. “Happy?” I ask with a mouth full of food.

He steeples his fingers together and taps them to his lips. “Watching weight is an aphrodisiac.”

I stop chewing and lift my brows. I give myself a moment of reprieve before I lower my fork. “Look.” I tear the garlic bread into bite size pieces. “What do you think is happening here...” I lift my gaze to Dominic. “It isn’t.” I feel a web of tension between us. “There’s nothing here. There are no feelings, no connection, but anything. You’re not going to get anywhere with me, so the chase is just futile.”

“Maybe I want to get to know my sister-in-law’s sister. We are related, after all, and family sticks together.”

“Do they?” I lean into my seat and circle back to one of my first questions. “What exactly do you and your brother do?”

Dominic twists in his chair as he looks around the VIP area. I’ve caught him off guard because he probably thought I’d let this go. “You surprised me, I sit staring at him, not biting at his ploy to distract me. The silence between us intensifies. It takes him what feels like forever to finally say, “What is never to be talked about with our women.”

“Your women’?” This time it’s me squirming in my seat. “I’m not your women.”

Dominic scoffs and once again looks around the VIP area. “Yes, you’re right,” he says with utmost confidence.

The hell I am. “I’m not a fucking possession.” I stand to my feet and with the back of my hand I hit the plates and glass over him. “I don’t belong to any man.” I walk through the restaurant in order to get away from him.

“Get back here,” Dominic calls from behind me. I can hear his footsteps closing in on me. The fact I’m shoeless is to my detriment, I

ing youI could probably outrun him. I manage to get out of the restaurant before he calls, “I said, get back here.”

ave and I don’t make it more than ten steps outside before his fingers are wrapped around my arm and he’s tugging me back toward him. “Let me go,” I yell, trying to yank my arm out of his vice-like grip. “I said let me go.”

ons, no “You’re not going anywhere. It’s late at night, and you’re not wearing shoes.”

“Gee, I wonder why,” I yell in his face. He drags me closer to his body and the heat rolling off of him is fanning a flame of desire deep within me.

*wrong with me?* “Let me go,” I repeat in a low, gravelly voice. His scent, a mix of sea salt and a hint of tobacco, hits me hard causing a flutter in my stomach.

caught Dominic steps forward, our bodies touching. My breath is shallow, and his is the same. His gaze focuses on my lips. If he bent to kiss me, it would certainly wouldn’t stop him, and I hate myself for that. My breath hits his cheek. “Rosa,” he whispers in a deep voice. He lifts his hand to cup my cheek and his thumb skims across my lower lip.

I push my body into his, wanting him to touch me. My heart is pounding, my skin is tingling. My fingers clench as I anticipate his every touch. *taste.* His mouth on mine. *What am I doing?*

nd with “Take me home please,” I say as I step away, breaking this long connection we shared for a few seconds.

Dominic steps backward and runs his hands through his hair. “Yes, that’s a good idea.” He turns away from me, putting distance between us. Good. I don’t want this level of complication in my life.

Dominic Sacco isn’t a good man. And I don’t want to be involved

before hehim. Thankfully, the disaster has been averted. I'm fairly positive E agrees that we're not meant to be anywhere near one another.

trapped The drive back to my apartment is accomplished in silence. The air yell as Iwith an unease that I'm sure we're both feeling. He knows this wa idea, as do I. The moment the car pulls up in front of my apartment b wearingI don't even wait, I simply jump out and head upstairs. "Great," I mu myself when I realize I don't have a key to enter. I turn and close my dy, theI lean up against my door.

What is "Are you looking for this?" Dominic's smooth baritone caresses my s damn Nope, don't fall for it. My eyes open as I straighten off the door grumbleam," I say as I reach for the keys he's holding. "I don't even want t how you got these."

yet fast, "Marco retrieved them from the hook behind your door." I narrow r ss me Iat him. "You can trust Marco," he says, reading my surprised expressi hes as I "Uh-huh." I add a small nod before quickly turning it into a hea , huskyDominic waits until I open the door and I make my way inside. "Y oss mygo."

"I will once I check your apartment."

unding, What is wrong with this guy? "No." I try to shut the door, but he p ch. Hisopen and forces his way into my home. "I said, I'll leave once I che apartment."

insane "What exactly are you checking for?" He's silent as looks in the be bathroom and around the small living room slash kitchen slash dinir I think"Satisfied?" I ask as I stay by the open door, ready for him to leave s een us.finally shut him out.

He walks toward the door but stops just short and looks around the ed withHe turns to look at me and shakes his head. His expressive eyes lock o

Dominic sending a prickle over my skin. "Good night," he finally says as he wa

"Lock your door."

is tense Yeah I will, to keep weirdos like you out. "Will do," I say in a chee  
s a badyou voice.

uilding, Dominic Sacco halts his steps, runs his hand through his hair and  
rmur to his head before finally leaving.

eyes as *Weird*.

skin.

: "Sure

o know

ny eyes

on.

dshake.

ou can

ushes it

ck your

edroom,

ing area.

so I can

e room.

n mine,

sending a prickle over my skin. “Good night,” he finally says as he walks out. “Lock your door.”

Yeah I will, to keep weirdos like you out. “Will do,” I say in a cheery *fuck you* voice.

Dominic Sacco halts his steps, runs his hand through his hair and shakes his head before finally leaving.

*Weird.*



## Chapter Four

### Dominic



Sitting in my office, I stare at the laptop in front of me. I can't find the numbers, but I know they're not adding up.

"What's wrong," Marco asks as he waltzes in and sits opposite me.

"Nothing." His presence has forced me to pay attention to the screen.

"Is it the girl?"

"No," I say as I lift my stare above the screen to Marco.

He takes in a breath and sits back on the seat. "Collections didn't go smoothly this morning." I close the laptop and look at him, waiting for "Dean didn't pay."

"He didn't?"

"He said he didn't have the money."

"And you did what?"

Marco's lips slightly curl with amusement. "He's in the trunk."

"Good, bring him here."

Marco pushes up from the chair and leaves my office. He returns a few minutes later, pushing Dean in front of him. "Look, man, I'll get y

money,” Dean’s voice has a slight shake to it. I gesture to Marco with  
of my eyes to push him onto the seat. Dean stumbles forward when  
shoves him, and he falls into the chair. Dean holds in his breath and his  
widen as he looks around my office. “I’ll pay ya.”

I sit back in my chair and cross my arms in front of my chest. Tilt  
head to the side, I watch as terror creeps through him. My silence was  
sending him insane. Marco leans against my book shelf and waits for  
instruction.

“I’ll pay ya, I promise,” Dean repeats in a near scream.

“I have a problem, Dean.” I push up out of my chair and head over  
myself a scotch.

focus on “I promise. You won’t have no trouble with me.”

“My problem is that this is the second time you’ve been late  
payment. The first time I gave you an extension, but now...what do you  
1. I should do?” I lift the scotch and twirl it around in the glass before I  
it with one movement.

“Just give me until the end of the week. I promise, you won’t need  
t go so again.”

r more. “No?” I pour myself a second scotch. “How rude of me, would you  
for a drink?”

Dean looks to Marco, then back to me. His breathing is rapid and shallow.  
“Yeah, yeah, okay.” I pour a drink for Dean, and turn to give it to him.  
reaches out to take it, and as he does, I put him in a headlock, and smash  
glass across his temple. “Fuck,” he yells. With the shard of glass still in  
hand I hold it against his ear, and slice the fucking thing off. “Fuck  
within a screams in pain.

you the I release him from the headlock, and step backward. Dean is holding

with a flickside of his head while whimpering. “You’re lucky it’s a fucking ear  
Marco have one week to pay everything you owe us.”

his eyes “That’s a hundred thousand dollars!” he protests.

“A hundred thousand in a week, or I’ll let Marco take his time with  
ing my won’t be quick.” I flick my hand at Marco, essentially giving the instr  
ould beto get rid of Dean.

for my Marco strides over to Dean, easily lifts him by the scruff of his sl  
shoves him out of my office. I’m left looking at the blood in my office  
my hands. “Fuck.” I head into my private bathroom and wash the bloc  
to pourmy hands. I look down at my suit and notice the drops of blood splas  
it. “Fuck,” I grumble again. He ruined my perfectly good suit, and now  
to burn the fucker. I unbutton the shirt and shrug out of it, leaving it  
with a floor. I toe off my shoes, then unzip my pants and let them slide to  
ou think accumulating. I walk over to my closet and take one of the other suits  
owning hanger and pair it with a crisp white shirt.

When I walk back into my office, I flip the phone on my desk o  
l to ask message Frank to come to the office. I sit again and open my laptop to  
the finances of the Sacco Family. “You wanted to see me?” Frank ask  
ou care he walks in. He assesses my office and snickers. “Someone lost an e  
looks at the mess.

hallow. Dean’s fucking lucky I didn’t take him to the basement. “Clear  
im. He Frank.”

ash the “Yes, sir.” Frank leaves the office and when he returns he’s wearing  
l in my and has a plastic bag with him. Frank is not only my cleaner, but als  
ck!” he care of whatever I need. He’s a good cleaner, and has a way of dispc  
the bodies. Or in this case, parts of the body. As he makes easy v  
ling the

ar. You're removing all traces of Dean from my office, I continue looking  
numbers and accounts.

you. It  
uctions



hirt and

and on I scrub my hand across my eyes to relieve the pressure behind the  
d from moment I do, I'm hit with an image of Rose sitting across from me  
shed on restaurant last night. Marco has returned and is sitting in my office, s  
I have through his phone. "What?" Marco asks when he catches me sta  
on the nothing.

the pile "What?"

off the "You're staring which means you're thinking. What is it?"

"Nothing." I look back to the numbers. "The girl's apartment, I w  
ver and door replaced." Marco appears amused. "Do you have something to sa  
look at "I haven't ever heard you say anything about any woman, much l  
s when you haven't fucked."

ar." He "She's my sister-in-law's sister. I have to make sure she's safe."

He wipes his thumb across his lower lip and nods once. "Uh-huh."

1 it up, "Spit it out."

"Me?" He points to himself and shakes his head again. "I'm not  
; gloves anything. If you want me to replace her door, I'll get it done toda  
o takes pushes off the chair and walks toward the door. "Are we talking keep  
sing of strength, or just keep everyone else out?" I tilt my head to the side and  
work of brows. "I see. I'll get it done today. I guess you want the key?"

at the “Make it a thumbprint keypad.” That’ll give me access any time I w  
“On it.” Marco exits my office, leaving me to my thoughts. I pu  
images of Rose Hopkins away and return my attention to the numbers.



m. The  
e at the Marco’s number flashes up on my screen. “Is it done?”  
crolling “The girl wants to talk to you.”  
ring at I know she’s not going to like what I’m doing, but too bad. “Put her  
“Mr. Sacco,” I hear Marco say as he hands the phone over to my Ro  
“Are you insane?”  
“I take it by your tone that you have a problem.”  
ant that “Don’t be an ass.”  
y?” “I beg your pardon?” I say, sick of her constant insults.  
ess one She takes a sharp breath, and I know I have her. “You have your  
here installing a fancy new door to my apartment. I don’t need it, n  
want it.”  
“I don’t care.”  
“You’re not listening.”  
saying “Neither are you,” I say. “The door stays.”  
y.” He “Why? I’m perfectly fine in my apartment.”  
you out I stretch my neck to the side at her insolence. “You’ll be safer with t  
lift my door.”

ant. She huffs and remains quiet for a moment. “How did he even get  
ish any apartment to begin with? You gave me back my key last night.”

“Marco has his ways. I suggest you don’t ask him.”

“Dominic,” she starts. The way my name rolls off her tongue cau  
dick to stir. I palm my erection through my pants and lean back on my  
chair. I close my eyes and imagine her on her knees, my cock deep  
mouth as she swirls her tongue and scrapes her teeth up my shaft. “I  
hear me?” her nagging snaps me out of my moment of bliss.

“No, what did you say?”

“You don’t need to do this. I don’t require protection.” I laugh out  
on.” her ridiculousness. “Why are you laughing?”

sa. “Because clearly, you can’t protect yourself. If Marco can find h  
into your apartment, then so can anyone else. Like I said, you’re fami  
we look after family.”

“I can’t afford this,” she says in a small voice.

“I didn’t ask for payment, Rosa.”

muscle “Rose,” she corrects. “I can’t expect you to pay for something li  
or do I Look at it.” I can imagine my Rosa waving her hand over the doc  
probably worth more than every single thing inside the apartment.”

“Probably,” I agree.

She huffs her annoyance once again. “Can you please not do this?”

“It’s already done.”

“Then I’ll have to pay you back.”

he new “No need.”

“No, I don’t want to owe you a single thing, Dominic. Nor do I w  
sister having to pay for it.”

“This has nothing to do with Eliza, Rosa.”

t in my “Rose,” she says. I can’t help but smile at her irritation.

“This is about your safety.”

“I’m perfectly safe.”

uses my “This is going nowhere. The door stays, and be lucky I don’t assign  
y officemy men to you too.”

o in her “What?” she shrieks at my words.

Did you “End of conversation.”

“No, it’s not. I have...” I hang up on her and place my phone next  
laptop. I’m done arguing with her. This isn’t open for negotiations.

loud at My phone rings once again with Marco’s number. “Yeah.”

“She’s pissed,” he says and laughs. “She’s really pissed. Told me to  
his wayof her apartment and even threatened me with calling the cops.”

ily, and “She’ll learn when they show up, and leave.”

“She’s a real live wire, Dominic.”

I can hear my Rosa in the background murmuring her displeasure at  
having a new, sturdier door installed at her apartment. “She’s damn lucky  
ke this.allowing her to stay there.”

or. “It’s “I’m keeping out of that one,” Marco says.

“Pussy.” I smile. “How long until the door is done?”

“They’re installing the keypad now, and should be done within the  
half an hour.”

“Leave her my number,” I instruct Marco.

“Sure thing, boss.” I hang up and look to my phone, expecting my  
call. Thankfully, she doesn’t. Good, it means she understands that  
want mycomes to me, what I say goes.

one of

t to my

get out

out me  
cky I'm

he next

Rosa to  
when it



## Chapter Five

Rose



“**W**hat’s gotten into you today?” Tilly asks as I make a coffee machine.

“Huh?” In truth I’ve been distracted by Dominic’s stupid controlling. That new door is extremely sturdy and safe, and much thicker than what there before it. I *did* have the best night’s sleep though. I felt completely and at ease in my apartment. But I don’t need him to save me, because I need saving.

“You’ve been distracted all day.” Tilly takes a quick sip of her soda walking around to the other side of the counter to wait for the coffee making.

“It’s nothing,” I say as I exhale.

“Sure, that’s why you’ve been mumbling to yourself since you got here. I stop frothing the milk and look over to her. “No, I haven’t.”

“Yep. Your lips have been moving, and you’ve been grumbling sorry about a stupid door.” I purse my lips together. *Shit*. “What happened your stupid door?”

I shake my head and flick my hand at Tilly. “It’s nothing. Don’t worry about it.”

“Did the door do something to you?” Tilly asks with a giggle.

“Don’t you have work to do?” I ask as I slide the coffee across the counter for her to take. She pokes her tongue out, takes the coffee and makes her way over to the table.

I look up to get the next ticket, and notice the expensive black car in the front. “You’ve gotta be kidding me.” I scan the café looking for him.

His tall, intimidating frame is easy to pick out among the people in the café. Not only does his stature stand out, but his expensive suit and air of confidence makes him even more outstanding. “Hey, Finn,” I call to get his attention. Finn lifts his head from wiping down a table. I motion for him to come over. “Can you take over for a few minutes while I do that?” I ask in a few ways. He holds the rag and antiseptic spray he’s holding.

“Hell, yeah.” He thrusts it at me, happy to be off the floor.

I wait until Finn washes his hands before I step away from the machine and take the rag and spray out to the table he was cleaning. I

finish it, and walk over to Dominic and Marco. “What are you doing here?” I ask in a small voice, careful not to make a scene.

Dominic lays his tablet face down and looks up to me. “Having lunch here.”

“Why here?” I glance around at the other diners, hoping I’m not too obvious as I try and encourage Dominic to leave.

“I only had a coffee from here, and I enjoyed it.”

“There are plenty of other places for you to eat, you don’t need to be here. Or, you don’t need to be here when I am.”

“And what would the fun of that be?”

I lean down with one hand on the back of his chair, and the other

t worrytable. “Can you *please* leave?” His steely auburn eyes cut through  
shiver of anger vibrates deep inside, and even though I should be frig  
I’m not. In truth, I’m aroused as if I have an inner darkness that sparks  
counterwith one look from his hooded eyes.

ier way “I won’t leave,” his tone is dark and obdurate.

*Shit.* I stand and shrug. “Do whatever you want,” I say as I step back  
car out “I have work to do.” What the hell is wrong with me? This man found  
into my apartment, and I know he has the ability to make me easily dis  
: in the without a trace.

l air of *Ugh.* I have a feeling I’m stuck with Dominic Sacco and his con  
get his ways. “What time do you finish work?”

him to “Why do I have a feeling you already know the answer?”

look at A small grin tugs at his lips. Marco coughs once, and when I look  
he lowers his head and stares at his phone. “There’s a family dinner  
I’ll have Marco pick you up at eight.”

coffee “A family dinner? That’s nice.” My mouth turns down and I shrug  
quicklyhead. “I’m not going.”

iere?” I “Your sister will be there.”

“Eliza,” I whisper. I haven’t seen or heard from her in days. “She’s  
h.” to be there?” I ask, waiting for his nod of confirmation.

t being “She will be.”

“Okay,” I reply without a moment of hesitation. “I want to go.”

“Marco will pick you up at eight.”

o come “I’ll be ready.” I beam at him, relieved that I’m going to finally  
sister. “Thank you,” I say. “I appreciate you thinking of me.”

Dominic arches a brow, then turns back to his tablet.

on the I walk away with mixed emotions. I can’t wait to see my sister toni;

me. At the same time, I hate how I have to be invited to these Sacco family  
htened, things in order to see her.

s to life It's okay, I tell myself. It doesn't matter how I see her. The fact  
finally going to be able to talk to her.

There's a lightness to my step as I clean and wipe down three more  
backward. Once I've taken the dirty dishes out to the kitchen, I make my way  
l a way the coffee machine. Finn is finishing up with a coffee when he says  
s appear the same guy from the other day."

"Yeah, he is."

trolling "He's staring at you." I turn to see Dominic's hard eyes on me. "  
he?"

"He's no one, don't worry about him." The words leave my mouth  
at him, don't even convince myself. "Anyway, do you want to stay on the  
tonight. machine, or do you want to be out there?"

"I'll stay on the machine."

ake my "Okay." The kitchen bell dings, and I walk back to grab the food fi  
pass-through. I look at the table the food is going to and roll my eye  
course," I mutter, taking in a sharp breath and walking to Dominic'  
s going "Burger and fries?" I ask as I stand at their table. Dominic flicks h  
over to Marco. "Fried chicken?" I ask with humor as I place the plate  
of Dominic.

"Are you laughing?"

"I didn't take you for a fried chicken kind of guy. More like a re  
see my lover." I look between the two. "Enjoy your lunch," I say as I step back

"If you had a decent pasta dish I would've ordered that," I  
challenges, halting my getaway.

ght, but "What's that supposed to mean?" Why does everything he say irri

dinner as much as it does? I should let it go and say nothing, but it's like he's purposely trying to get a rise out of me. The worst thing is he's succeeding, I'm managing to do just that.

He shrugs. "There's only one pasta dish on the menu and it's probably mass produced. I'm not even going to attempt to eat that."

I shut my mouth, afraid of what I'm going to say to him. Instead, I just shrug my shoulders back and smile. "Enjoy your fried chicken, *sir*." I don't remember he invited me to family dinner where I'm going to see my parents. I just need to let go of whatever it is that's irritating me about him.

Who is he? Yep, that's it. I won't bite when he tries to goad me into an argument.

h, but I  
coffee



From the closet, I have no idea what to wear at one of these family dinners. I look through the closet as I chew on the inside of my cheek. "Nope," I say as I flick past the table of my tighter dresses. My selection of dresses is limited, but that's okay. I'm not a huge fashion lover. I mean, give me a pair of jeans and a comfortable sweater and I'm happy.

But I don't think this dinner is somewhere I can get by with jeans and a sweater.

"You?" I take out a black dress that's fitted in the bodice and flares out at the knees. "I guess you'll do." I then look at all four pairs of shoes I have. "You're out," I say to my work shoes. "And there's no way I'm wearing these." I look at the black strappy stilettos I love, but are vintage. I hate me.

ke he's dressy for tonight. "And you're out." I kick my sport shoes to the side  
essfully guess it leaves you." A pair of black wedges.

I jump in the shower to clean up and quickly wash my hair before I  
robably get ready. Once out, I towel dry, blow dry and run the flat iron over  
auburn hair falls halfway down my back. I feel most comfortable w  
pull my hair in a messy bun, or back in a ponytail, but tonight I'll leave it c  
ave to apply a small amount of make-up before slipping into my dress.

sister. I The knocking on the door startles me. I rush over and open it. "I'm  
ready," I call over my shoulder as I rush back into my bedroom.

it. "I told you eight."

His voice drips with irritation. I backtrack into the living room,  
Dominic is standing tall. His expensive suit is fitted to his body, hi  
shirt is crisp and a complete contrast to his dark features. Dominic's e  
laser focused on me. "I thought Marco was picking me up." He sho  
hands in his pockets and cocks an eyebrow. "Or not," I say in a sma  
as I head back into my bedroom. I trip over my own feet in my haste  
ugh my away from him, but catch myself before I face plant and kiss the gr  
st a few look at myself in the full-length mirror stuck on the door to my bat  
ay, I'm "Get a grip," I lift my hand to warn myself. I take a breath, and sit  
fortable edge of my bed to slip my wedges on. Once the straps are fastened,  
s and a and look for my bag. I head out to find Dominic standing like a marbl  
by the front door. "I'm ready."

es from He lifts his chin as he runs his gaze down over my body. "You  
of shoes jacket."

ay I'm "I don't really have a nice one that goes with this dress," I say. "It  
vay too matter, I'll be fine." I'm rethinking my choice in wardrobe. Maybe I  
change into jeans and sweater.

“So, I “You don’t have a jacket?” His brows lift in surprise.

“I do, I just don’t have one that goes with this dress. Honestly, I’ll need to Don’t worry about me.” Dominic’s jaw tightens. “I’m ready.” I a it. My toward him with my clutch in my hand.

with my Dominic steps to the side and allows me to leave first before he cl down. Inew, thick door behind us. Marco is in the hallway, waiting for us Hopkins,” he acknowledges.

o nearly Dominic offers his elbow and expects me to slide my arm throu “Um.” I glance between his offered arm, and his steely eyes.

“For the love of God, *Rosa*.” He takes my arm and links it through h where “Rose,” I correct for the hundredth time. “Where is this family dinner s white “At Ruben’s,” he says in a short, clipped tone.

eyes are “Ruben Sacco?” I ask. “Your uncle?” The same guy who paid ves his sister’s wedding.

ll voice “Yes.”

e to get “And he lives where?” Dominic leads me down to the waiting c ound. I opens the back door. I slide in, still having no idea where he’s taki hroom. Once he and Marco are in, the driver merges onto the quiet street. on the going to see my sister tonight, right?” I wring my hands together, su I stand nervous about where we’re going. Why do I feel like I’m on the way e statue own execution? Wait, is this some weird kind of last dinner where I’n to have the best meal of my life, then I’m going to be killed?

need a “You’ll see,” Dominic replies.

His lack of response, cold tone, and the secrecy of everything is doesn’t me extremely nervous. The farther the driver heads out of the city, the should the tense quiver in my stomach grows. “Where did you say we’re going “I didn’t.”

Marco chuckles from the front. I lick my lips as I stare out the window. Tears prick my eyes as I refuse to look at the man causing me so advanced anxiety. I find myself absentmindedly scraping my fingers across my throat as my mind plays every possible scenario out.

I keep an eye on my surroundings, and notice we're heading toward the coast line. Does Ruben live near the ocean? Jesus, why can't Dominic tell me what's happening? I discreetly shuffle closer to the door in an attempt to make myself as small as I can. "We're nearly there," Dominic announces.

I look out and crinkle my brow. "We're near the marina."

"Yes."

"He lives near the marina?"

The driver slowly maneuvers the car close to a daunting yacht. "Stop for my car, Frank," Dominic says. The driver's name is Frank? He looks like Frank. Frank stops the car, and Marco is out first. I move to open the door and Dominic leans over to place his hand over mine. "Don't," he warns in a deerly controlled tone.

I pull my hand away and wait for Marco. Marco rounds the car and opens the door for me. A part of me wants to turn to Dominic for approval but I suddenly slide out, but another part wants to tell him that I'm more than capable of doing these things by myself. Dominic slides out after me and takes my hand in going in the crook of his. "Why do you do that?" I look to our linked arms but a small shiver tears through me from the cool ocean air.

"Rosa, I.."

"Rose."

Domino blinks a few times then continues, "Rosa, I do what I want." "Wow, talk about a non-answer answer."

"You do what you want and I can't question it?"



window. “Precisely.” He pets my hand and adds, “You’re learning. So much Condescending ass. “After you,” he says once we’re at the ramp across my mega-yacht.

“I don’t think I’ve ever seen a yacht this big before. I didn’t even know they make them like this.”

“Welcome aboard the Venus,” the captain of the yacht announces. In front of them are two staff members holding silver trays with flutes of champagne and glasses with scotch.

“Miss Hopkins.” One of the waiters offers me a champagne.

“No, thank you.” I wave it away.

“She’ll have a Sprite,” Dominic announces from behind me. I remember.

“Yes, Mr. Sacco.” The same waiter scurries away.

“Wow,” I say as I look out over the ocean. The twinkling lights of the city are reflected in the still water. “So pretty.” But I’m excited to see my friend and can’t wait to get to her. “Is Eliza here yet?” I ask Dominic.

“Not yet.” My shoulders droop with disappointment. “She’ll be here in a moment,” he says in a comforting voice. “Come.” He forces his fingers through my hair and leads me further onto the yacht. “Ruben.” Dominic approaches Ruben, who is standing at the bar talking to a woman who’s quite scantily clothed.

I think I overdressed considering she’s only wearing a cherry red bikini.

“Dominic, I’m glad you could come.” Ruben approaches Dominic and does the whole double cheek kiss. “Rose, you look beautiful.” He wraps his arms around me and kisses both my cheeks. Dominic’s fingers tighten on my hand. What’s that about?

“Thank you.” My body is already rigid with unease while my

Good.” continues to race. I flick a look to the woman who looks like she’s r  
for theShe steps into Ruben and pushes herself into his arms.

“This is...” Ruben pauses and looks to the beautiful brunette with p  
n knowrounded boobs, a tiny waist and slender hips. “This is...” He crinkl  
brows.

Behind “Courtney.” She places a hand to his chest and smiles. “Silly ma  
gne andteases.

I have no idea what’s going on here. Who is she? “Pleasure,” I s  
reach out to shake her hand.

“Oh, how cute.” She grabs my hand and limply shakes it. Again,  
ne. Heshe? “I’m starving, when can we eat?”

Oh right, she’s joining us for dinner.

“You’ll be leaving soon,” Ruben says.

the city “What? Why?” She snuggles in closer to him, kissing him on the jav  
y sister Jesus, I really don’t need to be here for this. “Because I don’t w  
Dominichere when my other guests arrive.”

Did he really say that? My eyes widen and I lower my chin, trying  
ere,” he into the floor of the yacht. How humiliating. “Ohhh, can’t I stay?”  
ine andserious? She *wants* to stay after he embarrassed her like that?

, who’s “No. Actually, Dante,” he calls loudly.

Wow, I “Yes, sir.” A man with fierce eyes and a hard face steps forward.

“Take Courtney home now.” Ruben lifts her hand and gently presse  
nic andto it.

raps his “Let me stay,” she whines.

around “Go with Dante.” Ruben points toward the front of the yacht.

She slumps her shoulders and lowers her head, defeated. “Okay.” C  
y mindwalks over to Dante and they both disappear.

ny age. What the actual fuck? “I apologize for her behavior,” Ruben starts.  
drink?” He smacks the top of the bar several times and the waiter po  
erfectlyscotches into glasses.

des his I’m still in shock by the way he treated Courtney. “Um.” I look o  
shoulder but Dominic squeezes my hand not to say what I’m thinkin  
n,” sheCourtney was under dressed, but to throw her out like that. Man, that’s

“What is it?” Ruben asks as he hands Dominic a drink then offers  
ay as Iother scotch. I shake my head as I look at the glass. I really want  
something about what I just witnessed, but I’d be lying if I don’t s  
who isintimidated by Ruben’s presence. Hell, I’m even nervous around D  
“No?” He attempts to thrust the glass into my hands.

“I don’t drink often, thank you.”

Ruben’s forehead crinkles. He turns to the bartender and opens his  
n. before turning to me and lifting his shoulders. “She’ll have a  
ant youDominic speaks on my behalf.

I feel like telling them the other guy was going to get me one, but  
to sinkreally think it’s going to make any difference. “Give the girl a Sprite,”  
’ Is shesays easily.

Who would’ve thought a Sprite could be such a big deal?

Ruben takes the glass with my soda and hands it to me. “Thank  
take it and suddenly find myself in an awkward position. The tension  
s a kissair is thick and suffocating. I feel like I’m an unwanted guest, and I su  
am. But I’m not here for either Dominic or Ruben, I’m here to see my  
“When will Eliza be arriving?” I look to Dominic, then Ruben hoping  
them offers me an answer.

ourtney “Adrian is on his way,” Ruben answers as he pulls his shoulders bac  
“And Eliza, right?” I’m only interested in her.

“Now, “Yes, Eliza will be joining him,” Ruben’s voice remains strong and deep tone. But something flutters across his face. It’s a tiny tremor beneath his eye, something that many would easily miss. But I saw it, and judging from the way he straightens, he knows I witnessed it too.

“Yes, “This is a beautiful yacht,” I say trying to deflect his suspicion as harsh. Though I doubt a man like Ruben Sacco is easily deflected.

“Once Adrian and his wife arrive, we’ll be setting sail,” Ruben announces. I turn to Dominic and silently question him. He gives me a small head tilt with a squint of his eyes. Am I not supposed to ask anything? “What are you eating dinner out under the stars.”

“Little bro,” I hear from behind me.

I turn to find Adrian sauntering into the room. It’s amazing his ego and how he gets access through the door. I look behind him, hoping to see my sister. “Hold my breath, waiting.”

Dominic’s fingers tighten and he pulls me into him as I crane my neck. I don’t search for my sister. “Adrian,” Dominic says as he releases me and I shake Ruben’s hand to shake his brother’s.

“You didn’t tell me you’d be bringing...Rose,” Adrian announces as a smile drips from his mouth. He closes the gap between us and Dominic with his arm around my waist, stopping Adrian from advancing further. “Rose. I see my sister walk into the room, and I break out of Dominic’s grip to run to her. “Eliza,” I say as I throw my arms around her.

“What are you doing here?” she whispers. “You need to go.”

I pull back and look at her. Jesus, she’s a shell of her former self. How did she change so quickly? Adrian’s eyes are scalding my skin, and when my suspicions are confirmed. He’s standing at the bar, nursing a scotch. His eyes are locked on me. Thinking quick, I offer the three men

with his smile. “I haven’t seen my sister in what feels like forever, do you mind sitting outside for a while?”

By the time Ruben’s body has softened, and his gaze is focused on Eliza. I glance at Dominic whose steely eyes are dedicated on me. “Go ahead,” Dominic allows.

I don’t wait for the other two, I link my arm with Eliza’s and lead us to where there are deck chairs toward the front of the yacht. “Why did you call me?” Eliza is wearing an elegant white dress with an apron behind that’s draped over her head. Her eyes haven’t left the floor since she’s been here. I sit her down, and take both her hands in mine. “Eliza?” I urge her to look up at me. Her eyes are red and puffy, though she’s tried to hide the effects of crying with makeup. “What’s going on?”

sister. I “I didn’t know you were going to be here.”

“If you called me and didn’t try to shut me out, then I wouldn’t be here. What’s happening?”

“Nothing,” she replies robotically.

I lift my hand to tuck some loose hair behind her ear but she flinches. “Let me in, let me help you,” I say. “Is it Adrian?” Her jaw tightens and she quickly shakes her head. *Yeah, right.*

“It’s nothing like that, really.” Eliza lifts her head and offers me a weak smile. I know something is going on, I just don’t know what.

“Why did you marry him?” I hate having to ask such a painful question. “You clearly don’t love him.”

“No one could ever love a man like Adrian.” She looks over my shoulder and sighs. “No one could love men like any of them.”

“This entire wedding happened in a heartbeat, Eliza.” I try to wrap my hands around hers, and find the coolness of her skin unsettling. Some

id if we clearly going on here. “You and I were happy in our apartment. Just y  
me in our shitty one bedroom, where it was you and me against the wo  
ance to “It’s different now,” she whispers.

Dominic “I know, but why?” I look around, hoping none of the men are an  
near us. But, judging by Adrian’s reaction, I don’t think he’s going  
her outaway long enough for her to tell me what’s actually happening. “I wis  
haven’t and Dad were here,” I say. “They’d be able to help you.”

attached Eliza lifts her chin to look at me. Hardness passes over her normal  
e she’s face. She shakes her head and scoffs. “Help me?” she scoffs with a  
I force contempt. “Sure.” Eliza squares her shoulders and stands abruptly. “I  
o cover find my husband, I’m sure he’s worried about me.” She moves past  
heads back in to where we left the three men.

What the actual fuck just happened? I stay seated while I look  
What’s searching for answers in the air. Am I in an alternate universe? My s  
no longer my sister. Who is she? What’s happened to make her so diss  
from me and reality?

s away. I wrap my arms around my body as the cool of the sea chills me to r  
and she core. Great, and we’re going to be sitting outside while having dinne  
am I supposed to concentrate on anything knowing my sister is mi  
a small, and hiding something?

A jacket being draped over my shoulders startles me. I don’t have  
question at who’s with me. His scent of cigarettes mixed with the ocean bree  
me whose jacket this is. “You’re cold,” his deep raspy voice cools m  
houlder than the weather does.

“I had no idea we’d be on a yacht, or I would’ve worn jeans  
ing my sweater.”

thing is He leans up against the railing of the yacht and crosses his arms in

you and his chest. "I'm partial to seeing you with my jacket."

world." Slanting my head to the side, I lift my chin to look at him. "What's on with Eliza?" Dominic takes a breath and looks out to the still water where silence screams in my face. "Do you know anything about..." I flail my hands to stay around the yacht. "Anything?"

My Mom Dominic pushes off the railing and extends his hand to me. "I think dinner will be served soon after we leave port. We'd best make our way upstairs." "You know something. What do you know?"

A hint of He lifts his chin and looks around at the sound of the engines kicking in. "Dinner will be served soon."

Me and I stand without his help and look him in the eyes. "What do you know, Dominic?"

Around, He grabs me around the upper arm and drags me into him. "You know your sister. Remember your manners, *Rosa*."

Associated I hate how my body reacts to him. My skin prickles with desire as my mouth pools with desperate want as the ache between my thighs craves any very touch. I purse my lips together as I drag my gaze down to his chest. How Dominic pulls me closer, his breath hot on my sensitive skin. "What's miserable, doing?" I whisper as I find myself caught in his hypnotic yet dangerous gaze.

"Please, what do you know about Eliza?" I hate having to beg for someone to look at information.

Rose tells "Dominic, Rose," Ruben calls from behind us. "Would you both join me more on the upper deck?"

Dominic's grip on my arms tightens, he's not releasing me. *Nor* his eyes and *flaming eyes*. They stay stuck on me, unforgiving, and calculating. He releases my right arm and slowly moves my hair to the side, exposing the front of my neck. He leans forward and skims his nose across the column of my

His skin barely touching mine. A small whimper of desperation drags  
s going deep inside me.

ter. His “Rose!” Eliza’s shrill voice startles me.

my arms Dominic releases me from his possessive grip, and I lean my fore-  
his for a mere second. While our eyes are locked, I step back and lick  
dinner before smiling and turning to find my sister. “I’ve missed you,” I s  
sirs.” head toward her.

“Don’t do it,” she whispers as we wrap our arms around each other  
ing on. head toward the upper deck, where Ruben is already waiting for us  
family is cancer, and I won’t lose you to them.”

I know, “What is happening?” I ask again.

“Ladies, why don’t you both sit here?” Ruben steps to the side of the  
I’d best table and pulls out the first chair. “Rose.” I sit and watch as he move  
seat next to me. “Eliza,” his voice slightly changes when he says my  
and my name.

ives his “Eliza can sit beside me,” Adrian says flatly.

mouth. “I do believe the girls have a lot to catch up on,” Ruben interjects.  
are you turn to Adrian and wait for his response. Eliza’s breath hitches and I  
is eyes. her body faintly trembles.

draps of Adrian takes a drag of his cigarette while he stares at me. “I would  
to come between the sisters,” he says and winks. I know exactly what  
join me means by those disgusting words, because I’m sure he’d be happy  
between us, under us, and over us. He’s a fucking pig.

are his Eliza sits and Ruben pushes her chair in. He skims his hand across  
Dominic’s shoulder before he moves to the head of the table and sits. Eliza slow  
ing my eyes away from Ruben, and when she looks to me she gives  
throat.



gs from smallest hint of happiness which is torn away when she catches A  
scowl. Her shoulders turtle in and Eliza drops her chin.

“How do you like working in that little coffee shop?” Adrian ask  
read on looks over to me. He’s sitting opposite me, Dominic is opposite El  
my lips Ruben is at the head of the table.

ay as I “I enjoy it,” I say flatly as I refuse to even look at him.

“Tell me, what’s it like serving people?” Ruben’s question is g  
her and though surprising.

is. “This I turn my full attention to Ruben and smile. “It’s a job that pays the  
shrug. “It’s what I make of it, and I enjoy it. I like meeting peop  
talking to them.” Dominic’s growl is low and I don’t think anyo  
he long catches it, because no one else even looks at him. “I have great work  
s to the and the boss is really nice.”

sister’s “Is he decent?” Ruben asks.

“*She* is.”

Adrian lights yet another cigarette and blows the smoke direct  
We all toward me. “A fucking woman boss?” he scoffs dramatically.

I notice “Adrian,” Ruben warns and cuts him a cautionary glare.

The uncomfortable tension rises as we awkwardly sit here, forced t  
i’t want Adrian’s presence. What did my sister ever see in him? I wasn’t a pa  
what he fan of his before the wedding, but now, he’s not even trying to be  
to get He’s a downright pig. I turn to Eliza and grip her hand in mine. “Wh  
you been doing?” I’m not here for them, I’m here for my sister and *oni*  
oss her Dominic and Ruben begin speaking about something, but what  
ly tears saying is of no interest to me. Adrian’s continuing to blow cigarette  
me the toward me, and I glance over at him. His narrowed eyes are glued to r

Adrian's tight jaw and stiff posture screams psychotic stalker-slash-killer-slash- in the head. What is his problem? Whatever it is, it's his problem, not mine. As he says, "First course." Five waiters lower the plates in front of us simultaneously. I look to my server, a young man maybe my age and smile. "Thank you, say."

The corners of his lips pull up as his eyes meet mine. "You're welcome, genuine," he replies before turning to leave.

I return my attention to the plate of food then look around the table. "Everyone has a delicately plated dish of shrimps with a white sauce. I have a beautiful looking salad. I'm confused, why do I have a salad while the others have shrimp?" Rosa, is everything okay?" Dominic asks.

friends, "You all have shrimp, and I have a salad."

"Because you're a vegetarian."

My mouth falls open and I slump my shoulders. I lift my hand and absentmindedly run my fingers across my bottom lip.

ly over "No, she's not," Eliza says matter-of-factly.

I look to Dominic whose deep frown creases his forehead. "I remember becoming vegetarian," the lie slips out of my mouth easily.

to be in "What? Since when?" Eliza asks.

particular "Before you were married." She narrows her eyes as she looks at her human. of food. "I asked the chef to give me vegetarian food on the day."

at have "Oh." Eliza adds a nod as if my lies are all plausible. I guess, they're not. she'd be fighting me on this.

they're I steal another look at Dominic, who's now engrossed in a conversation with Ruben. *He remembered.* Not only did he remember, he ensured that I had. His prepared vegetarian courses for me. It's so stupid to be impressed by something like this, but, that's exactly what I am. *Impressed.*

-fucked Adrian is only adding a few words in the conversation between Eliza and Ruben. His main focus seems to be me. I push past his intimidation and turn to speak with my sister while in the front of my mind I'm re- you," Iof Dominic's kindness every time a new course is offered to us.

Thankfully, by the end of the courses Eliza has loosened up and is welcome," much more than she was at the start of the night. "This is how I remember sister," I whisper when the men are all deep in conversation. at the table. "I've missed you so much," she says as she hugs me. "I'm sorry, I should have shouldn't have shut you out."

The others "Dessert," one of the waiters announces and all five again simultaneously lower the dishes in front of us.

"Thank you," I smile to my waiter, the same guy who's been serving me all night.

and "You're welcome, ma'am," he says as he spends a second too long with his eyes locked with mine before he leaves.

Adrian clicks his tongue to the roof of his mouth, but it's Dominic who recently pushes up out of his chair abruptly. He takes off down the stairs and disappears. I look around the table and notice how Ruben and Adrian are both smirking, while Eliza's staring at her dessert as she takes small bites from her plate of the cake that's been served.

Am I the only one who has no idea what's happening? "Miss Farrow, there's something you need to know about my boys." Ruben gestures

towards Dominic's empty chair and Adrian. His boys? What a bizarre way to start the conversation. "They both work for me."

The chef "I know that," I say. I don't dare say anything else, though I'm confused by thinking it. What has them working for you have anything to do with

Dominic has taken off?

Dominic “Our women are not to be ogled,” Ruben says in a clear and defining glare commanding respect. I still don’t know what’s happening. “You and E minded our women.”

I inhale deeply and hold a breath. *Back up a second, buddy. Are you smiling me we’re going to be shared between the three of you? Because if y ber my that’s a hell to the no for me.* I don’t dare speak the words though. But the confused and revolted look on my face screams volumes. Ruben c Rose, I and shakes his head to my unasked and silent question. “No,” he say only share women who want to be shared.”

neously I lift my hand to stop him talking, but I still have a million questions what kind of haunted madness have I fallen into?

ing me When Dominic returns, he’s wiping his hands with a pocket square at his knuckles and see the faint bruising already forming. “Taken ca ng with Adrian asks while watching me.

A shiver creeps through my body as I watch him shove the pocket ic who into his suit pants pocket. I blink several times as I piece it together irs and poor waiter has been beaten because he looked at me. I feel sick ian a stomach that I did that to him. No, *I* didn’t, Dominic did.

nibbles “You haven’t touched your dessert,” Dominic says as he sits to enjo

I pick the spoon up, cut a small piece of the cake off and find Iopkins staring at it as I push it around on the plate. He’s just undone everyth toward could’ve been.

refer to “Sir, we’ll be turning around in a few moments,” the captain Ruben.

certainly “Thank you.” Ruben flicks his hand dismissively and continues to ith why his dessert.

I look around and find the tension has returned. Eliza has retracte

ite tone into herself, Adrian chain smokes while staring at me and my sister. Liza and Dominic look absolutely pleased with himself.

Well, at least I got to spend time with my sister. For that I'm thankful. I'm telling Dominic. I too pull back and refuse to look him in the eyes. I'm doing you are, him.

I think

huckles

s. "We

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ed back

into herself, Adrian chain smokes while staring at me and my sister, and Dominic looks absolutely pleased with himself.

Well, at least I got to spend time with my sister. For that I'm thankful to Dominic. I too pull back and refuse to look him in the eyes. I'm done with him.

## Chapter Six

### Dominic



“**M**arco,” I call. His heavy footsteps can be heard from across the house. He enters my office and waits for my words. “Tell me how to get the car.”

“Sure.” He disappears and I stay seated, looking at the numbers from the clubs we own. There’s a discrepancy, and I need to go down to the club to check it out. “The car’s ready,” Marco says.

I stand from my desk and shrug into my suit jacket before heading toward the front of the house. Marco holds the back door open and I get into the car. Frank wordlessly drives down the long driveway and stops for the gates to open before he turns onto the road. “Where to, boss?” he asks.

“Heaven,” I say as I look out at the dark night sky. I lean on the edge of the door and rub at my lower lip. I’m distracted by images of how beautiful my Rosa looked when I took her out on Ruben’s yacht two weeks ago.

“Boss,” Frank calls, disrupting my images of Rosa. Have my thoughts been totally consumed by my Rosa the entire drive?

I blink several times and suck in a deep breath as Marco waits for me to exit the car. I slide out and button my jacket while looking at the line of cars down the street and everyone waiting to enter.

The bouncer holds the door open for me. “Mr. Sacco,” he says and gives me a nod.

The sound of the music intensifies and carries down the street with the door opens. I stroll in, flanked by Marco. “Adrian’s here,” Marco says and I head toward our private area.

“Mr. Sacco,” one of the girls says and smiles. She bats her eyelids across the bar and tucks some hair behind her ear before continuing over to the bar.

Frank “Mr. Sacco,” one of our men acknowledges as he holds the door open for me to head upstairs.

I take the steps two at a time and when I reach our private room, one of my men is positioned outside the door. “Sir.” He holds the door open for Marco and I to enter.

Adrian is sitting on a sofa with his arms outstretched over the back of the sofa.

There’s a blonde bobbing up and down as she sucks him off. He looks at her over his shoulder and smirks. “Little brother,” he says. I sit on one of the sofas and flick a look to the bartender waiting on my standing order.

The bartender immediately pours me a scotch and brings it over. Adrian fists the woman’s hair and slams her down on his cock further. “That’s it, take me deeper.” I can hear her gagging.

“I need to look at the inventory and books.”

“Hang on,” he says as his hips buck up and he groans. “She’s nearly there. Do you want her?” He glances at the slim blonde, then back to me.



thoughts This is something we've often done, shared a woman who enjoys being at our beck and call. But I'm in no mood to do so tonight. Actually, I've never been in a mood to share anything with him for a while. "Not tonight," I say, leaning back and swirl the liquid around in my glass.

"What a good slut you are." He grips her head with both his hands and forcefully moves it up and down while his hips buck into her mouth.

"That's it." His eyes roll to the back of his head as he relaxes into the seat. The chick lifts herself off his cock and wipes at the cum dripping out of her mouth. She's wearing nothing more than a bra and panties, and her juices are dripping down her leg. She looks over to me and smiles. "Not at me, she asks as she looks toward my crotch.

"No." I flick my hand at her. Her shoulders slump as her smile disappears quickly.

Adrian looks over his shoulder to Marco, the bartender and Adrian's other Tony, who are all here in our private room. "Who wants her?" I ask casually. Tony clears his throat. "Fuck him, slut," Adrian instructs.

"Adrian, we have work to do," I say, not particularly interested in work of it tonight.

"What's gotten into you?" He glances at me and scoffs. "Tony, fuck her against the glass." Adrian stands and leads the woman to the window. "Heup here." She leans her hands up on the glass, and Adrian taps her leg. "You need a good fucking, don't you?" he whispers. "Yes, sir, I do," she shamelessly begs.

"That's my little whore." He turns and gestures for Tony to come. Tony grabs the back of her neck and forces her down so her ass is exposed. He unzips his pants, moves her thong to the side and impales her in one swift movement.

being at My cock twitches when she moans with pleasure. Her tits slightly  
been in and a part of me wants to walk over there and free them so I can see  
as I sit move back and forth. She has nice tits, not too big, and not too small. I

for them to jiggle as Tony fucks her from behind.

nds and “She’s yours for the taking,” Adrian offers.

“Yeah, My mouth dries and a part of me wants her to sit on my cock and  
at. until I cum in her little cunt. “We have work to do,” I say while still st  
t of her. She turns to stare at me; she bites on her lower lip while Tony u  
er own for his own pleasure.

“May I?” My cock grows and all I want to do is grab her and use her until I f  
own release. “Slut, want to suck my brother off?”

appears I place my glass on the table beside the sofa and stand. Buttoning  
jacket, I begin to head into the office. “You can stay, I have work to do  
i’s guy, Adrian jumps to his feet and stops me with his body. “What the  
he says wrong with you?”

“I told you. I have work to do.” I glance at Tony and the woman a  
atching myself drawn to them. Especially her. She’s downright beautiful  
pummels into her. Her little moans, the way she makes eye contact. I  
k her up her pussy, her ass. Everything about her is simply breathtaking. But...

“Hands “It’s not like you to shy away from a woman. What’s wrong with  
egs out. You on your period?” His diabolical chuckle grinds on my nerves. My  
heats as I cock a brow at him. “That’s it, right? Little Dominic is  
period and he needs all the hugs he can get.” Condescendingly h  
ie over. forward with open arms to hug me.

sticking I slam him once in the face making him stumble back. The fuckin  
er with and Tony pulls out of the woman to use his body as a shield between

y jiggle and myself. Marco steps forward, ready to protect me. “We have work to do.” I remind my brother.

Enough “What the fuck?” Adrian squares up and comes at me with his hands ready.

In this moment of chaos, Marco straightens, Tony zips his cock up, and I slide myself on the glass in an attempt to not get in the way as they are facing off against me. The thing with Adrian is he’s predictable as he always throws punches. The confrontation lasts no more than ninety seconds, the end of it, Adrian’s shirt is ripped and he has a bloody lip. I find my managed to land a few on me, but out of the two of us, he’s faring far better than I am.

He looks around the room, and booms, “Out.” Everyone leaves the room, including the woman. He walks over to the bar and pours two scotch. “What the fuck is this?” he offers me a glass and knocks his back in one movement. “What the fuck is this man?”

I place the glass on the bar, untouched and straighten my tie and jacket. “I told you, we have work to do.”

“Is this about that bitch?”

“I don’t give a shit who sucks you off, Adrian.” I move past him toward the office.

“I’m talking about Rose.” The fact he’s breathed her name has irritated me. My skin prickles when the fucker says her name. “It’s her stepdaughter, isn’t it?” My jaw tenses as I suck in a breath, attempting to calm myself. “Has she gotten under your skin?”

I unbutton my jacket, and take it off as I turn to look at him. Rolling up my sleeves, I’ll fucking kill him if he keeps going. “We’ve got work to do.” I repeat as I advance toward him.

to do,” “You’re prepared to fight me over *her*?” His mouth turns into a tight  
“The Viper going after his brother, huh?” He turns to pour himself  
a highball.

“Don’t turn your back on me, *brother*.”

the girl “Why, what are you going to do?” His dark chuckle causes a surge  
of adrenaline to rush through my body. We both know I can take him down  
and he also both know he’s higher than I am in the Sacco family but  
and by although we’re both in the administration. But I’ll still kick his fuck  
the also regardless of whatever will happen to me.

or worse I grab my jacket and walk into the office. I sit at the desk and type  
my password into the computer. I begin to search through all the records in  
the room, easily find a few small discrepancies, nothing major enough to account  
for the inconsistencies I’m seeing with the figures I’m being sent.

the fuck, The door opens and Adrian waltzes in and sits opposite me. “We go  
I flick him a glance before returning my attention to the figures.  
and suit fine.”

He exhales as he leans back in the chair. “What’s going on?” He  
leans his chin toward the computer.

to head “The figures aren’t matching.”

He narrows his eyes at me and sits forward, now invested in  
the conversation. “What do you mean?”

because “The income figures that are being emailed to me are lower than  
what we’re depositing matches the lower figures. But our expenses are  
going up.”

; up my “Is someone stealing?” I look at him. “From us?” Adrian snorts and  
) do,” I his head. “Dumb fucks.”

“That’s why I’m here. I need to see where the problem is.” I bring

it snarl. liquor inventory and print it. “Grab that off the printer and give it to  
another Marco. Have them go down into the cellar and count it.”

Adrian pushes up off the chair and walks over to the printer. He takes  
sheets of paper off the printer and looks at them. “This looks right.”  
pike of “It does, but like I said, things aren’t matching up. I need it checked  
own, and “I’ll do it.” He walks toward the door and stops. “I’ll deal with the  
business, stealing from us.”

ing ass, Adrian’s temper is quick, but in this case, whoever’s stealing from  
business needs to be taught a lesson. No one steals from the Sacc  
ype my whoever does will need to become an example of what happens when  
rds and become sticky.

unt for I continue with what I’m doing while Adrian is down in the  
undertaking an inventory. I pull my phone out of my pocket and slice  
od?” the table beside the computer. Marco bursts through the door and says  
“We’re Rose.”

I turn and look to him. “What is it?”  
juts his “There’s a fire at her apartment building.”

I jump to my feet, swipe my phone and run out of the office. Marco  
clearing the way making sure nothing stops us. Frank is waiting in the  
in the the time we’re out of Heaven. “Is she okay?” I dial her number and bring  
phone up to my ear, waiting for her to answer, but she doesn’t. “Is she  
normal, I repeat.

ises are “I don’t know,” Marco replies.

My heart sits in my throat the entire way to her apartment.  
shakes

; up the

liquor inventory and print it. “Grab that off the printer and give it to Tony or Marco. Have them go down into the cellar and count it.”

Adrian pushes up off the chair and walks over to the printer. He takes the sheets of paper off the printer and looks at them. “This looks right.”

“It does, but like I said, things aren’t matching up. I need it checked.”

“I’ll do it.” He walks toward the door and stops. “I’ll deal with the fucker stealing from us.”

Adrian’s temper is quick, but in this case, whoever’s stealing from the business needs to be taught a lesson. No one steals from the Saccos, and whoever does will need to become an example of what happens when fingers become sticky.

I continue with what I’m doing while Adrian is down in the cellar undertaking an inventory. I pull my phone out of my pocket and slide it on the table beside the computer. Marco bursts through the door and says, “It’s Rose.”

I turn and look to him. “What is it?”

“There’s a fire at her apartment building.”

I jump to my feet, swipe my phone and run out of the office. Marco is clearing the way making sure nothing stops us. Frank is waiting in the car by the time we’re out of Heaven. “Is she okay?” I dial her number and bring the phone up to my ear, waiting for her to answer, but she doesn’t. “Is she okay?” I repeat.

“I don’t know,” Marco replies.

My heart sits in my throat the entire way to her apartment.

## Chapter Seven

Rose



The bashing on the door rouses me from a heavy sleep. Instantly, the hazy, thick smoke spreading through the apartment. My cough is violent and immediate as I sit up in bed.

“Shit,” I groan as I spring to my feet. Completely woken from my slumber, I realize the intensity of what’s happening. I search through my apartment for what’s caught on fire, but everything appears normal. The pain in my chest hits me hard as I grasp the fact that the fire isn’t inside my apartment, but elsewhere in the building.

I look around to grab whatever I can of value, but my coughing is getting it harder and harder to breathe. My eyes are watering from the intense smoke billowing into my apartment, and the air is impossibly thick to breathe through.

There’s more thumping on the door and someone bellows from the other side. “Help!” I call, but every breath I take in is filled with smoke. My coughing and spluttering increases, but I have to find a way to get out.

My head is thumping and I'm becoming weaker by the second. I d  
body toward the door, and finally grab onto the handle. In my declini  
I find myself without strength to open it. "Help," I attempt to call  
Black dots dance merrily in my vision as I lose the fight to breathe. I  
several short, shallow breaths and claw at the door to open it.

My eyes slowly close and my feeble body loses the ability to even c  
"Rosa!"

My arm feels like lead as I try to lift it. My voice is a meek and  
whisper as I call out, "Here."

"Rosa!"

"Here," I try once again.

I notice "Fuck!" Is he here? Or am I dreaming it? Is this what death fee  
gning is Someone scoops me up and carries me out of my apartment. The we  
feeling is surreal, yet comforting. "Hospital, now!"

lumber, "Where am I?" I try to say as I flutter my eyes open.

ent for "Shhh." He strokes my hair while cradling me in his arms, close  
y chest chest. "I've got you."

ent, but My coughing is violent as my body attempts to expel the smoke fr  
lungs. "It hurts," I choke.

making "We're nearly there." Dominic says as I continue to wheeze while s  
: smoke in short, shallow breaths. "Fucking move!" Dominic yells.

breathe He tightens his arms around me as the car aggressively moves  
corners. "Dominic," someone says.

ie other The next thing I know, I'm being moved and Dominic is shouting.  
ke. My where I tap out.



drag my  
ng state  
l again.  
attempt



all out. The lights are dim but there's a constant whirl of people's muffled  
My eyes flicker open and closed several times, and I scratch at m  
coarse. "Where am I?" my voice is abrasive and my throat is rough with  
knock at the something in my nose.

"It's oxygen, Rosa. Leave it." Dominic stands from the chair he's b  
approaches me and sits on the edge of the bed. He tenderly sweeps ten  
ls like? my hair from my face. "There was a fire at your apartment building, a  
ightless sorry, but your apartment was destroyed."

"Everything?"

"The firefighters managed to put the fire out before it totally de  
e to his everything toward the back of the building, but most of the apartment  
front are gone."

om my My stomach contracts, and for some reason I feel guilty. "Did I s  
fire?"

sucking "No," Dominic says with certainty. "The fire department is invest  
but it appears that it wasn't up to code."

around That much I knew. "How long have I been in here?"

"We came in late last night."

This is I stay staring at Dominic. His face isn't as smooth shaven as he usu  
and has a sprinkle of dark stubble. "You look tired," I say.

"I'm fine."

“Did you sleep here?” I look around the room and find his suit jacket slumped over the back of the chair he was in. “You should go home.”

“I’m fine,” he repeats as he continues to smooth my hair. “How do you feel? Does anything hurt?”

“My chest, and my ribs.”

“Probably from the coughing. I’ll let the doctor know you’ve woken up.” He pushes up off the bed, and I close my eyes as I try to think about everything that’s happened. Dominic opens the door to the room and mumbles something, before heading over to sit on the bed again. “Marco’s letters are in the nurses know.”

“Marco’s here?”

“He goes everywhere I do.”

He tilts his head as he stares at me. “Who got me out?”

“I did. The fire department was only getting to the scene as I was being pulled out with you.”

“You ran into a burning building?” I narrow my eyes as I stare at him. “Why would you do that?”

“Because you weren’t safe.”

“I need to talk to Eliza, let her know what’s happened.”

“I’ve spoken with Adrian and she knows. She’ll be coming tomorrow to see you.”

“I don’t have a home anymore.” Tears well in my eyes as reality

“I don’t have anywhere to go,” I whisper. “Or any clothes, or a toothbrush.”

“You’re moving in with me.”

“What?” I ask as I shake my head. “No, I’m not.”

“This isn’t open for negotiation. You’ll move in with me.”

ket and I shake my head. “The offer is generous, Dominic, but I can’t. I’ll  
.” something out.”

are you The door opens and a doctor walks in. “There’s no discussion,” E  
says, having the last word before the doctor begins asking me questions  
doing a basic exam on me.

en.” He The doctor spends about ten minutes and determines I’ll stay for  
rythingnight to keep me on oxygen and if I’m fine by tomorrow then I’ll be re  
umblesShe walks out, leaving Dominic and me alone.

ing the “You do know staying with you is out of the question, right?”

Dominic snorts as he sits in his chair and crosses one leg over the  
casually. “You’re adorable.”

I lift my brows as I turn on my side to face him. “Adorable? Wow, c  
be any more condescending?”

coming “It’s actually a term of endearment.” He clicks his tongue to the roof  
mouth, though a tiny smirk turns up his lips. “You’re moving in with me  
king atspeaks the words with confidence and finality.

It’s no use on arguing with him at this stage, I can do that tomorrow  
I’m discharged. “Do you know where my phone is?”

“Probably melted.” Ugh, of course it would be. “Who do you want  
; homecall?”

“Evelyn, I have work tomorrow, but obviously I won’t be able to  
icks in.probably going to need a week so I can get myself together.” E  
even apinches the bridge of his nose. “What now?”

“You don’t listen.”

“To what?”

“You don’t need to *get yourself together.*” He air quotes my  
“You’re moving in with me.”

I figure The skin beneath my right eye twitches. Is he not listening? “What ‘no’ aren’t you getting?”

Dominic He stands to his feet and paces toward the door. “I need a smoke, and I’m hungry.” He opens the door and exits the room.

“Well,” I mumble. “That went better than I thought.” The door opens and Dominic stalks back in toward the bed. “I thought you were leaving. He leans down, his arms are either side of me keeping me caged to the bed. “This is the last time I repeat myself.” Dominic moves closer toward me, his breath hot on my lips. His sinful eyes locked onto mine. “You *are* more interesting than I thought you were.”

I gulp as I continue watching the promise in his eyes. He cocks a brow and looks down to my lips before returning his hard stare back up to my face. I feel the words caught in my chest, my own voice wedged in my throat. “About time,” he says before pushing off the bed and leaving the room. He I stay staring at the door, afraid, yet excited for him to return. I feel a heat of burn creeping up my torso. I lift my hand and run my fingers over my face when as I try to snap out of whatever spell he put on me.

What’s wrong with me?

The more time I spend with Dominic, the more I find myself drawn to him. He’s like a beacon, not of light, but of something entirely different. I don’t know what it is about him.

Dominic Clearly, he’s an attractive man, what with his auburn eyes that bore into me, his taut body that’s always dressed in impeccably fitted dark suits, not just his mere height. He could easily intimidate me by standing over my five-foot-seven frame, but he doesn’t.

Thoughts of Dominic heat my body, causing me to become lost in the moment.

part of I scrub my hand over my face to distract myself long enough to d  
images of him. “Stop it,” I scold myself. Nothing good can come from  
and I’m like Dominic Sacco. Look at my sister, Eliza. It’s obvious she does  
Adrian, but for whatever reason she married him, quickly. The Sacco  
is again people to be messed with, nor are they people to get involved with.

g.” The door opening startles me. Dominic has returned carrying a pap  
he bed. “I thought you were leaving,” I say. “Didn’t you say you were hungry?  
me, his “I am.” He lifts the paper bag onto the little portable table and w  
iving in over to me. “Minestrone.” Dominic opens the top of the bag and take  
bowl of soup, two sets of flatware, and crusty bread.

ow and “You got me soup?”

eyes. I “Of course, *Rosa*.” I don’t even bother correcting him. “Don’t wo  
. vegetarian.” He removes a second plate covered in aluminum, takes  
om. flatware and moves to sit on the edge of the bed. “Eat.” He pointedly l  
a flush the soup in front of me.

my lips “It smells amazing,” I say as I close my eyes and let the aroma t  
open my eyes to Dominic watching me. “What have you got?”

“Lasagna. I know you’re vegetarian, and they didn’t have veg  
to him. lasagna, so you got minestrone.”

I don’t “About that,” I say as I dip the spoon into the soup. “I’m not  
vegetarian.”

ore into His fork and knife still and he slowly lifts his chin to look at me. His  
uits and rise and he clears his throat. *Oh no*. I gulp as I continue to stare at him  
ly five-lie.”

“Not exactly,” I try to backtrack.

: in the “It’s not a question.” He places the flatware on the side of the plate  
did you lie?”

is lodge I nibble on my lower lip as I tear my gaze away from his heated  
1 a manstare. “Because I wanted to make it as difficult for you as possible  
1’t loveconsidering you forced your way into my apartment, insulted my clothes  
s aren’t then kidnapped me without shoes.”

Dominic dismissively flicks his hand at me. “You make it seem like  
er bag, did was wrong.” Now it’s my turn to stare at him. My head lolls to the  
?” my mouth gapes. “It’s my job to look after you.”

heels it “What? And just so we’re clear, yes it was wrong.” I point my fingers  
as out at him. Dominic’s deliberate raised brow and smirk tells me he doesn’t think  
did anything wrong. “And what’s all this shit about your job to look after me?  
I hate to tell you, but no, it’s not.”

rry, it’s His smile instantly disappears. “You’re my responsibility.”

a set of “No,” I argue. “I’m not. You and I have no ties other than the fact  
ooks to sister is married to your brother. That’s it.” I point to myself, then him.

He clears his throat and continues eating. “Rosa, you *are* my responsibility.  
ravel. I because you’re in my family now, and forever.”

My response is immediate and without thinking. “Ewww.”

vegetarian “Ewww?” His face relaxes into a blank and emotionless stare. “You  
Sacco, and Saccos are looked at with respect and fear,” he barks. “You  
exactly not demean the Sacco name.” He turns his anger toward his lasagna.

“It has nothing to do with the name, Dominic.” He snaps his attention  
s brows me.

1. “You “Then what?”

“Your brother,” I say without hesitation. “He’s horrible and I don’t  
be a part of *his* family.” Dominic knows what Adrian did to me  
. “Why wedding, yet he appears unaffected by the fact his brother put his hands  
me. Not to mention he’s married to my sister.

d, hard Dominic straightens and pulls his shoulders back as he lifts his  
ossible defiance. “We have an understanding,” he says without looking at me.  
ooking, Luckily, I’d already swallowed the delicious soup or I would’ve spit  
all over Dominic. “What does that even mean ‘understanding’?” I air c  
: what I “He knows he can’t have you.”  
side as “Have me?” my voice elevates with shock. “What exactly are you sa  
“You’re part of this family, but you’re not his.” Dominic cocks a  
nger at “Now, finish eating before your soup goes cold.”  
hink he “Dominic,” I sigh. “We-”  
ter me? He holds his hand up. “Enough.” Dominic flicks his eyes to my sou  
can have this discussion later. For now, you need to eat something dec  
rest so I can take you home tomorrow, *Rosa*.”  
fact my My jaw tightens, and through clenched teeth, I correct him with  
“Rose.”  
isibility Dominic intakes a sharp breath and releases it slowly. “Eat.” He onc  
nods toward my soup and continues inhaling his lasagna. Man, that  
does look good. But I make a mental note to continue this conversatio  
ou’re al’m out of the hospital.  
ou will *And back at his place.*

tion to

want to

at the

ands on

Dominic straightens and pulls his shoulders back as he lifts his chin in defiance. “We have an understanding,” he says without looking at me.

Luckily, I’d already swallowed the delicious soup or I would’ve spat it out all over Dominic. “What does that even mean ‘understanding’?” I air quote.

“He knows he can’t have you.”

“Have me?” my voice elevates with shock. “What exactly are you saying?”

“You’re part of this family, but you’re not his.” Dominic cocks a brow. “Now, finish eating before your soup goes cold.”

“Dominic,” I sigh. “We-”

He holds his hand up. “Enough.” Dominic flicks his eyes to my soup. “We can have this discussion later. For now, you need to eat something decent and rest so I can take you home tomorrow, *Rosa*.”

My jaw tightens, and through clenched teeth, I correct him with a short, “Rose.”

Dominic intakes a sharp breath and releases it slowly. “Eat.” He once again nods toward my soup and continues inhaling his lasagna. Man, that lasagna does look good. But I make a mental note to continue this conversation once I’m out of the hospital.

*And back at his place.*



## Chapter Eight

### Dominic



“Can we stop by the café?” my Rosa asks once Frank leaves the hospital.

“Why?”

“I’m supposed to be working today, and I need to let Evelyn know I’ll be in. I told you this yesterday.”

My beautiful girl’s blue eyes look dull and tired, like she’s been there too much. *And she has.* “Frank,” I call. He glances in the mirror. “Café.” He veers toward the opposite direction of home.

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, *Rosa.*”

“Rose,” she absentmindedly replies as she looks out the window. Her defiance makes me smirk. I can’t drag my attention away from her beautiful full lips and can’t seem to stop thinking about how they’d look wrapped around my cock. Her on her knees, tears in her eyes as I fuck her. She’d look up at me and silently beg me to ravage her mouth, stretch her lips as a dildo vibrates in her pussy and her ass is filled with a prett

studded butt plug. *Fuck*. I shake my head as I attempt to dislodge that image from my mind. “I won’t be long,” she says as she moves to leap the car. She tries the handle and instantly huffs. “The child lock, serious

“I told you, when you’re with me, you wait.” Marco opens my door round the car to open Rosa’s. I extend my hand to take hers, which she squeezes with all her might. She’s even more adorable when she’s

I step up onto the sidewalk with her, and she turns in surprise. “What are you doing?”

“I’m coming in with you.”

“I can do it on my own, Dominic.”

“Yes, you can.” I continue walking beside her, and when we reach the doors, I open it and step aside. Rosa enters, and I walk in behind her. She turns to look at me and shakes her head. “Hey, Tilly,” she greets a woman at the counter.

I won’t Tilly looks at me, then her, confused. “You’re supposed to be with her but...” She scans a cautious gaze over her body.

through “I’m here to talk to Evelyn about that,” Rosa replies. She turns to me. “To the” whispers, “Can you stay here, please?”

I don’t like leaving her on her own, especially considering she’s only been discharged. “Make it quick.” She offers me no more than a small walk over to Tilly and place my coffee order. “Black coffee, and whatever Rosa usually has.” I take my money clip out of my pocket, ready to pay for our coffees.

trapped “Rosa?” She draws in her brows. “Who’s Rosa?” She lifts her chin at me and suddenly she realizes who I’m talking about. “Oh, you’re talking about Rose.” She turns to the guy on the coffee machine. “Hey Finn, why do you always get the blue-Rose drink?”

sensual “She has a latte with no sugar,” he replies effortlessly. I hate I  
p out of knows something about my Rosa that I don’t. He looks toward me and  
isly?” wary eye over me. “Who are you?” he asks with venom.

r, and I I lift my brows and slightly tilt my head to the side. He’s fucking siz  
ie takes up, and I have no intention of letting him think he’s anything to my gi  
s angry. than just a fucking co-worker. I hand Tilly the money and straighten,  
/hat are my shoulders back as I keep my eyes on him. My jaw tightens and I c  
tongue, staring at him with hatred.

The thick air between us is palpable, and uncomfortable for him. H  
from one foot to the other before finally capitulating and turning h  
ach the away. I close the distance between us, all the while keeping my eyes o  
er. She He needs to know she doesn’t belong to him. She’s mine...I mean sh  
young of my family and I look after my family.

“Okay, I’m ready...to...” Rosa pauses and glances between *Fi*  
orking, myself. What a ridiculous name, *Finn*. Is he a fucking fish? Fish are  
breaded and deep fried. “What’s going on?” Rosa places her hand  
me and chest and I instantly pull my deadly glare from the fish.

“Rosa, I ordered us coffees.” I snap my gaze back to the fish, then s  
nly just I turn to her.

I nod. I “Oh, thank you.”

whatever “Did you speak with your boss?”

pay for “Yeah, she’s giving me some time to recover.”

“Your coffees,” the fish mumbles and pushes them over the counter  
to look us.

I mean “Thanks, Finn.” Rosa gifts him with a smile, and I find myself sq  
at does my hands into fists. The fish doesn’t lift his eyes to look at her, ins  
offers her a small nod.

how he I take my coffee off the counter. “Keep your fucking eyes down b  
l casts atear them out of your head and force them down your throat.”

“Dominic!” Rosa shrills as she attempts to tug me away. The fish  
zing mehis head further and I see his shoulders shaking. “What the hell is wro  
rl otheryou? I have to work here,” she murmurs as we walk out to the car  
pullingcan’t do shit like that, Dominic.”

lick my Marco holds the car door open, but Rosa stops walking. “I didn’t  
way he asked me who I am.” Rosa steps back and lifts her hand to t  
e shiftsend of her ponytail around her fingers while sipping on her coffee.  
is headthe car,” I order and wait for her to slide in.

on him. She releases the twirled hair and points at me. “I need to wor  
e’s partDominic. You can’t come in and intimidate the people I work with.”

From behind her Marco tries not to smile. He knows I can do whate  
*nn* andfuck I want, intimidate, beat, kill. *Whatever* I want. “Get in the fucking  
guttled,repeat.

to my “Promise me you won’t do that again.”

I look around and find a trash can, waltz over to it and throw my  
smiling,away. Closing the distance between Rosa and me, she backs up unt  
leaning against the car. I trap her between my arms and stare into h  
eyes. “Get in the car,” I whisper with a guttural groan.

Her breath hitches while she scrapes her teeth along her bottom lip  
doesn’t say a single word, she stays caged in my arms, her eyes do  
towardand a slight pink tinge touching her cheeks. Fuck me, she’s turned on.

I need to step back before I do something she might regret. Like fa  
ueezingmy knees and feasting on her right here for everyone to see. I wouldr  
tead hebut I doubt she’s ever fucked anyone publicly.

“Car,” I snap as I step back.

before I Rosa's chest is rising and falling quickly as she ducks into the car. She slides as far away from me as she can. Marco closes the door and turns around before he climbs into the passenger seat and Frank merges onto the highway with street.

1. "You The ride home is filled with tension and silence. The gates to my driveway open and Frank drives to the front of the house, waiting until we're outside like the pulling the car into the detached garage.

swirl the Rosa looks up at my house, and doesn't even crack a smile. "When will you Get in room?" she asks flatly.

"I'll show you," I say as we step into the foyer.

back here, "Fine," she grumbles as she sips on her coffee and stares at me. Her insolence is adorable. She's attempting to be cold and indifferent with me, but that won't last long.

my car," I "Frank will take you to buy clothes, let me know where you want to go, and I can arrange it with the store."

"I can drive myself," she bites.

her coffee Upstairs I lead my Rosa to the left where there's a room set up for her. I wait until she's open the door, and wait until she's inside. "Your car was damaged in the bluefire," I say. "Frank will drive you."

Her shoulders sink forward and she releases a long sigh. "Seriously? What's wrong? Rosa turns to look at me while still holding the coffee cup in her hand. "I have nothing, everything?" Her eyes brim with tears, but I can see she's trying to hold it together.

back. Maybe she thinks she needs to be strong in front of me. "I have nothing," she whispers. Rosa shuffles forward until she finds the bed. She doesn't care, plonks onto it. She lowers the coffee cup to the floor then brings her hands to her face to hide her face. Rosa's shoulders shake as she slides off the bed and sinks to the floor. "I have nothing," she repeats through the sobs.

car and It takes me no more than three steps before I yank her up and into  
d lookson the bed. She latches her arms around me and buries herself i  
nto theshoulder to continue crying. “I’ll look after you, baby.” The smell of  
still lingers in her hair, but it doesn’t stop me from holding my Ros  
y estateshe needs me. *Nothing would stop me.*

t before Rosa pulls back and wipes at her eyes, and attempts to stand but n  
clamp her to me. I like her being close, I especially like it when she  
re’s myme her vulnerability. “I’ll be fine.” She attempts once again to stan  
refuse to let her go. The tip of her pink tongue darts out and swipes  
lower lip. The things I want to do to her mouth. “Please,” her voice i  
ie. Herand small.

ith me, The moment I release my Rosa, she has put distance between us a  
Standing by the window, she looks out over the garden. “Thank y  
go so Iallowing me to stay here.” She continues to look outside and wipes  
eyes once more. “I have a little in savings, so I should be able to m  
soon. A month, maybe two at most.”

r her. I I push off the bed and walk toward the door. “You’ll stay here.” Sh  
l in theto argue and I silence her with a cold stare. “Your sister will be arriv  
dinner at about eight. Frank is at your disposal.”

y?” She “Dominic...” Her soft voice goes straight to my cock, making  
've lost“Thank you,” she repeats and offers me a small appreciative smile.

ld them “I have work to do, if you need anything my office is directly  
'I haveBefore you leave, come and find me.” She looks around the room and  
ied andA small smile tugs at her lips, but she looks anything but happy. I ge  
ands upone of the doors and say, “You have a private bathroom that’s fully  
and shewith whatever you need. Also, I’ve taken the liberty at having some  
shoes and t-shirts brought here for you. You’ll buy whatever you lik

my lap didn't think you'd want to go like that." I point to the clothes she  
nto my wearing since the fire.

Her shoulders cave in and she hangs her head. "Thank you," she m  
a when before turning to look at the back gardens.

My Rosa is sad, but hopefully, once her sister arrives, that'll change  
my arms  
: shows  
d, but I  
s at her  
s rough



"Rose has asked Frank to take her to the store," Marco says as he walt  
already, my office and pours himself a drink. He lifts the glass, silently offer  
you for for me.

Dismissively, I wave my hand. "When are they leaving?"

"She asked him to be ready in half an hour."

"Go with them."

"Okay." He pours another scotch and downs it. "She's not going to  
being there." He walks over and sits opposite me.

I chuckle and shrug. "I don't care what she likes. She needs to be sa  
it hard. "She's going to fight me." I tear my attention away from my laptop

at Marco. He holds his hands up in surrender. "All I'm saying is she  
below, understand our world, and she's not going to do anything willingly."

"I got her here without too much of an argument."

"Because she has nothing." Marco snorts with sarcasm. "She also  
stocked Frank for his phone."

"She did what?" I sit back and cross my arms in front of my chest.

e, but I

's been "She asked Frank to use his phone." I tilt my head to the side and toward the door. "Frank told her it was charging and said her entire murmursdropped." He crosses one leg in front of the other. "Look, I think she be lonely here."

"She can do whatever she wants on the grounds." I guess, I really think about her position. "She's lost everything, and is reliant on me thinking out loud.

"You *want* her to be reliant on you," Marco corrects. "I don't think wants to be in that position, but you're forcing her to be."

My jaw jumps as I blankly stare at the laptop screen. "I'll speak with Marco stands and runs his hands down his suit pants. "I'll get even ready for her to leave."

"Sacco women don't pay," I remind him.

"I know." He walks out of my office, leaving me alone.

Standing, I head upstairs to her room, and knock once. She doesn't so I open the door to find the room empty. "What the fuck?" I hear like me muffled music coming from the bathroom. I walk over and open the find my Rosa emerged in the bath tub. Her head is resting back with her fe." closed. One leg is braced up on the tub, her fingers buried deep inside to look There are a few bubbles in the bath, but not enough to shelter her from doesn't eyes.

Small moans of pleasure escape her as my Rosa expertly finge herself. My cock twitches and I hold onto my control. I want to rip her the bath, prop her up on her bed on all fours and lick her precious asked "Mmmm," she moans. Her hips buck while her breathing hitches. M bites on her lower lip as the water sloshes around the tub. "That's i there, Dom, right there," she whispers.



glance *Dom?* Good, she's fantasizing about me.

re face "Dominic," my voice is richly dark as I watch her fuck herself.

e might Her eyes spring open and she instantly removes her hand from her

"What are you doing in here?" Using her hands, she tries to cover up.

7 didn't over and lean against the wall. "Get out!" she shouts. Her cheeks are

," I say and I can't help but draw my eyes over her body. She has a small tatt

rose on her hip. "Get out."

the girl "Not until you finish what you were doing. But it's Dominic, not Do

My Rosa continues to attempt to cover her body, but I stay exactly

1 her." am. "If you don't get out, then I will," she threatens.

rything "Good idea. Because if you don't finish what you started, then my

will." Her eyes widen and she licks her lips before pursing them together

looks toward the towel, which I take off the hook and hold it out

"Your fingers or my mouth, the choice is yours."

answer, She's huddled in the bath as she attempts to shield her magnificent

ear the from me. "Fine," she challenges as an air of confidence overtakes her

door to lean back in the bath and opens her legs for me to watch. She has a

er eyes landing strip of auburn hair running up the center of her beautiful

ide her. "You wanna watch?"

om my My lioness has found her empowerment. "I want you to fuck those

of yours." Her eyes lock on mine and darken as she drags her hand down

r fucks body. She spreads her beautiful lips and circles her finger around her

r out of guttural moan erupts from deep inside her chest. She closes her eyes and

pussy. her lips. "Eyes on me."

y Rosa She snaps them open and plunges a finger deep inside. God, I wish

it, right my tongue. "Mmmm." She opens further, allowing me total access

plump clit, her perfect lips and as she slides down, even her asshole. I

fill all her holes, my cock will start in her mouth and once she's crying, choking, begging me to fuck her, I'll pleasure her sweet cunt. "Dominion pussy whispers, snapping me out of my own fantasy of what I'll do to her. My legs walk strains inside my pants, and I'm going to have to take care of it once I'm flushed finished. "Mmmm." Her moan instantly transports me back to thoughts of fucking her, taking her ass deep as she grinds back against me. Please me to give her relief. "There, keep doing that."

"Mmm." I shake my head and focus on my lioness. The water is sloshing up where I sit in the tub, her breath quickens and her hips roll as she watches me work her. "What am I doing to you?" My resolve is weakening with every stroke of her perfect pussy. God, I want to bury my tongue into her while her hips thrust on my face. I'd die for her. A flash of embarrassment flushes over my face. "Tell me what I'm doing to you." It's killing me to merely stare at bodywatching and not participating. But I won't dare until she begs me for it. Rosaher, and when I do, I'm not sure I'll ever be able to stop. "Tell me," I cry in perfect once again.

pussy. Her teeth sink into her bottom lip before her tongue sweeps across it. "I told me to crawl over to you." My lioness isn't vanilla. "You lean your fingers back on the sofa you're sitting on, and make me climb up on it." I'm down on her fucking-lutely. "You grab me by the hips and lift me onto your face. I want your clit. A image of me is so accurate. "You tease me by flicking my clit with your tongue and lick my clit." Her fingers do exactly what she wants me to do with my mouth. "Sink down further and ride your face. You're using your tongue and making it was for my pleasure."

to her. My cock is hard in my pants desperate for her mouth. "Does my cock want to feel good in that tight little cunt of yours?"

ing and “I love it. I want it.” Her eyes close as her fingers increase in speed.  
ic,” she “What are my hands doing?”

ly cock “They’re everywhere at once. You’re pinching my nipples.” She li  
e she’s hand to pinch and twist her nipple. “Your hands are rough, yet gentle.”

ghts of “Rosa,” I say as I continue watching her pleasuring herself. She  
ling for opens her eyes as she brings herself closer and closer to the edge. “I w

to finish yourself off. Fuck those fingers like you’d fuck my mouth. I  
and out see you come.”

atching “Jesus,” she murmurs while she spreads her lips open and rubs at l  
sound, Moans of pleasure tumble from her mouth. I want to seal mine over h

I want share every desire with her. My lioness’s legs tense, her toes point a  
a happy groans low and long. Slowly, her breathing calms and she stares at r

ness’s removes her fingers from her pussy and looks away. I walk over, kn  
id here, grab her hand before she can wash her taste away. I lift her hand and :

to take her fingers. She tastes like my own piece of heaven.

demand I lick her juices off her fingers as I watch her. Her eyes are glued  
mouth. Swirling my tongue around her fingers, I offer her a hint of w

t. “You do to her. Once her fingers are clean of her juices, I remove them and  
ur head tips. “Next time you want to do this, my mouth is available to you.”

’ Abso- and walk out of the bathroom.

e.” Her My lioness is a dirty slut. *My dirty slut.*

th your I’m going to fucking revel in her body.

outh. “I

. mouth

tongue

“I love it. I want it.” Her eyes close as her fingers increase in speed.

“What are my hands doing?”

“They’re everywhere at once. You’re pinching my nipples.” She lifts one hand to pinch and twist her nipple. “Your hands are rough, yet gentle.”

“Rosa,” I say as I continue watching her pleasuring herself. She slightly opens her eyes as she brings herself closer and closer to the edge. “I want you to finish yourself off. Fuck those fingers like you’d fuck my mouth. I want to see you come.”

“Jesus,” she murmurs while she spreads her lips open and rubs at her clit. Moans of pleasure tumble from her mouth. I want to seal mine over hers as I share every desire with her. My lioness’s legs tense, her toes point and she groans low and long. Slowly, her breathing calms and she stares at me. She removes her fingers from her pussy and looks away. I walk over, kneel and grab her hand before she can wash her taste away. I lift her hand and suck on her fingers. She tastes like my own piece of heaven.

I lick her juices off her fingers as I watch her. Her eyes are glued to my mouth. Swirling my tongue around her fingers, I offer her a hint of what I’ll do to her. Once her fingers are clean of her juices, I remove them and kiss the tips. “Next time you want to do this, my mouth is available to you.” I stand and walk out of the bathroom.

My lioness is a dirty slut. *My dirty slut.*

I’m going to fucking revel in her body.

## Chapter Nine

Rose



I'm not sure I can ever look at Dominic again. The bathroom incident was so hot, but still. What the fuck happened?

If for no other reason, I have to push past this internal embarrassment and head downstairs because Eliza will be arriving soon. My shopping trip this afternoon started out somewhat okay considering my bathtub scene with Dominic. That all changed when Marco informed me that I wasn't allowed to spend my own money on clothes. So I did what any reasonable girl would do: I bought under duress. I bought no more than a few items of clothing because I didn't want to owe Dominic a single thing.

Staying in his lavish home is enough without having to owe him for clothes too.

There's a knock on my door, and my shoulders tense, hoping it's not Dominic. "Yeah," I call with a voice crack.

The door opens and Frank announces, "Mrs. Sacco has arrived."

I bolt past him, down the stairs and see my sister standing awkwardly in the foyer. I throw my arms around her and kiss her cheek. "I've missed you."

I say as I tighten my arms around her.

She winces and attempts to step back. "I've missed you too."

I pull back and run my eyes down over her body. She looks like Eliza's wearing a long, flowy blue sundress, with oversized sunglasses and a big sunhat. "Why are you wearing sunglasses at night?"

"It goes with the outfit," she says, though her voice conveys something else.

"Take them off."

"There's my sexy sister-in-law." Adrian's voice makes my skin crawl. I turn to see him waltzing out of Dominic's office. Dominic doesn't even look at him. "Come give me a hug," he says and stands with his arms open.

"Fucking creep." "Adrian," I say in a flat, unimpressed tone. I turn my attention back to my sister and completely ignore *him*. I refuse to touch him. He's a filthy pig.

"Are you hungry?" I hook my arm through hers.

"Not really."

Adrian hovers, watching us intently. I need to get her away from him. "Come upstairs and see where I'll be staying until I can get an apartment of my own."

Eliza slightly turns toward Adrian. I follow her line of sight, and he gives her a small nod. What the actual fuck? "I'd love to see your room." She pulls me tighter as we head up the stairs.

I can feel his eyes glued to my ass. Not Dominic's, but Adrian's. My stomach tenses as vomit curdles in my gut. I turn to look at him, and he's not even looking at me. He's just staring. "Enough, he's standing in the same spot, his head to his side as he watches me head up the stairs. Something tells me it's not Eliza he's looking at, it's you," I think. *Fucker.*

We get into my room and I close the door. “What’s happening?” I ask as we’re alone.

different. “Nothing.”

is and a “Take off your glasses.”

Eliza sighs slightly and lowers her chin. “You have to understand that nothing.” “Take them off,” I repeat with assertion. It’s clear she’s hiding something from me. “Eliza.”

She takes the sun hat off, then slides the glasses down her nose. I crawl. I hand to cover my mouth when I see both her eyes encircled with yellowing. She’s attempted to cover the bruises with makeup, but I can see them. I shake my head as I stare at her, speechless. “It’s not what I think.”

My body begins to tremble as I stand staring at my sister’s marks. “No? Then what is it?”

“I’m clumsy...”

“You walked into a door? A wall? Tripped? Which one of those men did it? There’s a pounding in my ears as I wait for her reply. Eliza is gentle, wouldn’t hurt anyone, how can *he* do this to her?”

“I’m...”

“Bullshit! Don’t you dare say you’re clumsy again, Eliza. *He* did it, didn’t he?” I point down gesturing toward where my pig brother-in-law was.

She lifts her shaking head and sucks in a breath. “You don’t understand.” “Then explain it to me.”

“This life.” Eliza closes her mouth and wipes at the tears rolling down her cheeks. “It’s not for women. They hate us.” She looks around the room at the door and whispers, “Get out while you can.”

I rush over to my sister and kneel in front of her. I take her hands in mine.

sk once and stare into her soulless eyes. She seems dead inside, but I know she's  
in there. "Come with me. We can leave, and get a shitty little apartment  
somewhere on the other side of the country. We can both get a job, and  
at night we can walk along the beach and talk and be sisters again. What  
at..." leave right now."

nothing Eliza's chin trembles and her lips turn down. "He'll find me  
whispers. "He'll find *you*."

lift my "Then we'll run again. And again, and again until he gives up looking  
a faint you."

can still Eliza's mouth quirks into a humorless smile. "He'll never give up  
what you eyes redden, but she sucks back the tears and straightens. "But you  
out before you're in too deep."

ed face. "We can go to the police." Eliza throws her head back and laughs.  
We can. We'll get protection."

"Half of the police are on their payroll. Do you really think they care  
is it?" us?" She pulls her hands away from mine and wipes at her eyes. "It's  
a little matter." Feigning happiness, she plasters a fake smile on her face.

I don't see a married woman who's blissfully happy, I see my  
*Broken*. Her bruises are a mere symptom of what's happening inside.  
I did this, My own anger escalates as I watch her settle for a life no person  
could ever have to experience. There's a pounding in my ears as I try to hold  
and." my own anger. But I can't allow this to happen. I jump to my feet and  
open my bedroom door. With furious haste I head down the stairs and  
listen for a second to listen for where *he* is.

om and His booming laugh is like nails down a chalkboard. I follow the sound  
him to find he's in the kitchen hitting on one of the servers. "You're  
on mine, pig!" I fly at him, ready to smack the smug look off his face.



e's still "Hey, hey, hey." He overpowers me and manages to wrap me in his arms. His front to my back. "What's going on, princess?"

and at "Let me go, you fucking pig," I shout.

We can I search the room, hoping for help from any of the servers, but they've all been cleared out. "You know," he whispers in my ear. "I like them wild and free," she breaks them in." He licks my face and tightens his arms around my waist.

I stomp on his foot, and the fucker laughs. "That's the best you've got?"

King for "You beat my sister. Let me go, and I'll show you exactly what I've got." He kisses my ear, and I nearly vomit. "If you don't behave yourself properly," he never see her again," he threatens.

can get "Rosa!" Dominic's roar startles me. "What are you doing?"

"She's a spitfire," Adrian says and releases me with a smirk.

"What?" I turn and slap him across the face. "You're a pig."

"Hey!" Dominic leaps forward and drags me away from Adrian. "What the hell is going on?"

Doesn't "He beats my sister, that's what's going on." I fight out of Dominic's grip but in truth he's barely holding me. He positions himself between Adrian and my sister, holding his arm out so I can't go to his brother.

Adrian cocks a brow and with a deadly leer he says, "I think it's best if you should Eliza and I leave."

ld onto "No!" I shout and lunge forward again.

nd tear "Rosa," Dominic warns with a hard stare. He turns to look at his brother who's adjusting his suit jacket. Adrian's dark hair flops over his forehead and he slicks it back, exposing his devil eyes. "Perhaps a drink in my honor," Dominic offers Adrian.

fucking "Ugh," I scoff as I leave and head back to the room.

Once back upstairs, I find Eliza pacing back and forth. "He didn't hurt me," she says, her voice trembling. "He didn't hurt me."

Adrian looks at her, his expression unreadable. "He didn't hurt you," she says, her voice breaking. "He didn't hurt me."

Adrian looks at her, his expression unreadable. "He didn't hurt you," she says, her voice breaking. "He didn't hurt me."

Adrian looks at her, his expression unreadable. "He didn't hurt you," she says, her voice breaking. "He didn't hurt me."

s arms. did he?" she asks as she wraps her arms around me.

"I fucking hate him." I pull back and link our fingers together. "Would you marry him, Eliza? It's clear you don't love him, and he doesn't love you either, or he wouldn't hurt you."

So I can Eliza's shoulders tighten for only a split second before she relaxes her body. She releases my hands and steps over toward the window. "I love Adrian as my husband," she says in a rehearsed and emotionless voice.

got." "If you could just tell me why, then I could figure out a way to get you'll out."

Eliza wraps her arms around her torso as she continues to look out of the window at the garden. Carefully, so I don't startle my sister, I walk over and stand on either side of her. We both look out the window. There are thousands of twinkling lights that illuminate the perfect blooming gardens beneath. "It's pretty here. What the hell is that?" "It is," I say.

She turns to me and smiles. "But you need to get out before you get caught in his grip, there's a warning in her voice. No, not a warning, more like a desperation." "Ladies," Dominic's raspy voice startles Eliza. I turn to look at him. Eliza's eyes are locked on mine. "Dinner is served."

best if Eliza pulls her shoulders back and gifts me a weak smile before turning to face Dominic. "Thank you, Dominic," she says as she walks away from me toward where Dominic stands. He offers her his elbow, which she takes. Her brother just like that she disappears from my room.

rehead, A second ago she was a shell of a woman begging me to leave, now she's a shell of a woman pretending her life is perfect.

It takes me a few moments to gather my strength so I can join the rest of the family at dinner. A part of me wants to stay up here so I don't have to see Adrian's repulsive face, but I also want to spend time with my sister too. And I

to be in a room with *him* than away from my sister. I hate having to  
Why didbut if it means seeing Eliza, then that's what I have to do. Hesitantly,  
ove youdown to the dining room where they're all sitting.

Dominic and Adrian are sipping on what I can only assume to be sc  
es. She what looks like expensive crystal-cut tumblers. Eliza has her head l  
n. He's while sitting beside Adrian, and hasn't seen me enter.

"Rosa," Dominic says as he jumps to his feet, walks around to th  
get youbeside him, opposite Adrian and holds it out for me.

I can't tear my eyes away from Adrian and his arrogant, stupid face  
over theto leap over the table and stab him in the eye with his fork. The wor  
opposite is, he knows I hate him and he's reveling in my hatred. Deliberat  
g lightsplaces his hand on Eliza's thigh, his touch causes her to flinch.

"Rosa," Dominic repeats causing me to snap my attention away fi  
pig opposite me. Adrian glances at Dominic and when he notices Do  
can't."attention is on me, he winks and blows me a kiss. My lip draws up  
te plea.snarl. "Sit." Dominic glances at the chair, then back to me.

n while I sit and Dominic pushes the chair in for me. "Thank you," I say as  
to him and smile. The moment Dominic commands my attention I f  
ning toheart jumps in my chest. Not because of the murderous thoughts I'm  
om meof his brother, but because of *him*.

es, and His finger grazes against my upper back, causing my skin to goo  
with desire. I want him to touch me again. To take my fingers in his  
she's aand suck on them the way he did earlier. *Snap out of it, Rose.*

Dominic and Adrian continue talking about things I have no inte  
iem forThere are only two things I want. The first and most important is that  
drian'sto spend time with my sister, and second, I want Dominic to tou  
I prefer

do this, Seeing as I won't allow the second to ever happen, then I may as well  
, I head the first work.

“Eliza, come sit here,” I say and tap the seat beside me.

notch in Her eyes widen and she slightly trembles as she turns to get per  
owered from the pig. He gives her a nod, and she jumps to her feet within a he  
and moves to sit beside me.

ie chair The food begins to come out, and thankfully Dominic and the pig f  
their own conversation. It gives Eliza and me the chance to talk, l  
. I want careful to keep the conversation light so Adrian allows her to return.

st thing Maybe she can't leave yet, but one day soon she will.

ely, he And I'm going to be the one to help her. I just have to play my card  
to my chest, because Adrian is cruel. I have no doubt he'll keep h  
rom theseeing me just to punish me for hating him.

minic's *Pig.*

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ch me.

Seeing as I won't allow the second to ever happen, then I may as well make the first work.

"Eliza, come sit here," I say and tap the seat beside me.

Her eyes widen and she slightly trembles as she turns to get permission from the pig. He gives her a nod, and she jumps to her feet within a heartbeat and moves to sit beside me.

The food begins to come out, and thankfully Dominic and the pig fall into their own conversation. It gives Eliza and me the chance to talk, but I'm careful to keep the conversation light so Adrian allows her to return.

Maybe she can't leave yet, but one day soon she will.

And I'm going to be the one to help her. I just have to play my cards close to my chest, because Adrian is cruel. I have no doubt he'll keep her from seeing me just to punish me for hating him.

*Pig.*

## Chapter Ten

### Dominic



Adrian closes the door to my office before heading over to the cabinet and pouring two scotches. He brings them over and puts them on my desk, takes out his cigarettes and lights one. He sits back in his chair and looks around my office. “She’s a handful,” he says then takes a long drag of his smoke. “Fucking women.” He shakes his head and snorts.

I lift my tumbler and take a drink. “I saw the bruises on Eliza.”

He shrugs nonchalantly. “She walked into the wall.”

“You know Ruben won’t allow that,” I warn.

He turns to me and relaxes further back into the chair. “And who’s going to tell him?” He keeps his eyes on mine, giving me his own warning. “Besides, when our uncle dies, I’ll take over, and things will change.”

“Things will change?” I find myself questioning his words. “In what way?”

He flicks his hand dismissively then takes another long drag. “Five-star whore houses. He runs them like five-star fucking hotels. Those bitches are there because they *want* to be.” He snickers and shakes his head. “Well,

fuck? We're mafioso, not the fucking soft pussies he's trying to make  
slaps his hand on the table, clearly irritated by the way our uncle run  
organization. "Bitches *want* to be there. Those bitches do what we say  
what they want."

"Adrian, I run the books, and the way Ruben has set it up is  
profitable. The brothels earn thirty-one percent of the income of  
businesses combined, so he must know what he's doing."

"We can increase that to fifty percent, or even higher if we open  
houses everywhere. Get the girls addicted, keep them there until they  
More money lining my pockets." He lifts his hand and rubs his thumb  
forefinger together. "More money, little brother. More money."

liquor "Ruben would never go for that."

places "Which means I have to wait until he dies." He shrugs again and sits  
k in the "Whenever that is," he murmurs as he brings his cigarette up to his mouth  
takes a "What?"

ckers. Adrian looks over to me in question. Did he just threaten Don?

"Adrian, what are you doing?"

He smirks and raises a brow. "Sitting in my little bro's office here  
drink with him. My only blood relative. The little brother I'd protect with  
s going were kids when our father finished beating our mother up, then move  
warning. us. Same little brother I protected." He lifts his finger and points it at  
warning not to say a word to Ruben.

n what "Lay off Eliza," I say. "Leave her alone."

"She's my fucking property, I'll do whatever I want with her," he says  
rst, the dismissive tone.

hes are "If Ruben sees those bruises..."

hat the "He won't."

us.” He “Adrian, don’t fucking touch her anymore.”

uns our He rolls his eyes and sighs, ignoring my warning. “She knows say, notmouth off.”

I decide to leave this alone and try to figure out how to deal with highlyFor now, we have some work to go over. Problem is, I don’t like see all thebruises on my sister-in-law. And I know Ruben will feel the san

Adrian’s my brother. I have a loyalty to him. But...fuck, Adrian’s whoresomething. I need to figure out what that is and deal with it before they die.himself killed.

mb and



ts back.

uth.

I open Rosa’s door and find her asleep on the bed. She’s curled up on l Ruben? with her hands beneath her cheek. I sit on the edge of the bed and wa woman as she sleeps soundly. I gently lay my hand on her hip and sh aving a closer to me.

hen we Rosa’s eyes flutter open and when she sees me, she smiles and d on to “You’re a stalker,” she says with a gravelly, sleep-heavy voice. She si t me in bed and scrubs her hand over her face. “I know he’s your brother, but don’t like him.”

“I know,” I reply as I sit, staring at her beautiful face. Her blue e ays in a bright, even under the night sky.

“He’s hurting her, Dominic.”



“We spoke about that.” She turns to me, eager to hear more. I cannot toher the answer she’s looking for. “He’s my boss,” I say the words she want to hear.

it later. Rosa’s eyes fill with tears as she stares at me. Rosa and Eliza bot iving thethe same piercing blue eye color. *Breathtaking*. She inhales deeply ar ae. Buther head to look out the window. “I see,” she whispers.

s up to “He’s also my brother.”

he gets “Who beats my sister,” she adds without hesitation. “And I hate t how many other women have suffered at his hands.” Hugging her leg to her body, she lays her head on her knees. “Could you please le reach out to touch her supple skin, and it’s as if my Rosa knows w doing. “Please,” she begs in a small voice. “Leave.” I stay seated on t just watching her. She shakes her head and lowers her chin, staying st long moment. When she finally turns to look at me, her eyes are red ner side cheeks glisten with tears. “Please.” Rosa’s chin quivers, but she pu itch my shoulders back trying to be strong in front of me.

e shifts I run my tongue behind my teeth but finally accede to her one wish off the bed, walk out of her room and head down to my office, where yawns. myself a scotch. Leaning up against the edge of my desk, I swirl the ts up in around the glass several times as I attempt to clear my head.

I really “Fuck,” I grumble to myself.

“What is it?” Marco’s voice booms as he enters my office.

yes are “You haven’t left?”

“I had a few things to check on. A shipment of guns came in earl had to check it against the invoice.”

“Early’s good. Pace family?” I ask about the supplier.

“Yeah,” he confirms. I open my laptop and enter my password. “

1't give wrong?"

doesn't "Nothing." Marco snorts as he throws back the scotch he's poured himself. "Why are you looking at me like that?" I ask.

h share "Nothing." He lifts his shoulders slowly. He places the tumbler on the table and turns of my desk and taps the wood. "I'm going home, I'll be back in the morning." He looks up to the ceiling. "Don't do anything I wouldn't do." He says with a wide smile and a quick glance up.

o think *Dirty bastard*. It's my turn to snicker and roll my eyes. I continue to stare at the door. I close the door though the only thing I can focus on is the sad woman upstairs. *Alone*. "What's wrong?" I

hat I'm

he bed,

ill for a

and her

ills her

. I push

o I pour

o scotch

y and I

What's

wrong?”

“Nothing.” Marco snorts as he throws back the scotch he’s poured for himself. “Why are you looking at me like that?” I ask.

“Nothing.” He lifts his shoulders slowly. He places the tumbler on the edge of my desk and taps the wood. “I’m going home, I’ll be back in the morning.” He looks up to the ceiling. “Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do,” he says with a wide smile and a quick glance up.

*Dirty bastard.* It’s my turn to snicker and roll my eyes. I continue working though the only thing I can focus on is the sad woman upstairs. *Alone.*

## Chapter Eleven

### Dominic



**F**ranks pulls up to the front of Ruben’s house. The house itself is not almost like a castle on the east coast of America. The grounds are what feels like acres and acres, with security that surpasses anything a leader has ever seen.

Marco opens the door for me and waits until I’m out. Ruben’s mother is a young woman, cute and rather quiet. I can’t help but notice the pink cheeks and the innocence in her eyes when she opens the door. “She says in a barely audible voice. “Mr. Sacco is in his office.”

“Thank you, *bella*,” Marco says as he offers her a smile and glances at her body. Her cheeks redden and she attempts to suppress a smile.

Marco and I head down to Ruben’s office where I knock once, and wait for his approval before I enter. “Come in,” he calls.

“Stay here,” I instruct Marco.

He straightens and stands against the wall, outside of Ruben’s office.

I open the door and find Ruben in front of his two monitors, talking between them while speaking on the phone. “See to it,” he says and hangs

He looks over to me and acknowledges me with a swift nod. He then shifts his attention to his phone, and dials a number. “Maria, two espressos.”

“Si,” she replies in a thick Italian accent and he hangs up.

Ruben sits back and crosses his arms in front of his chest. “What can I do for you, Dominic?” The thing about Ruben is he never minces his words. He absolutely hates small talk.

“We got a shipment early yesterday from the Pace family.”

“They always over-deliver.” He taps something on his keyboard, and then turns over to me. “They’re consistent in their deliveries?”

“They are, which is why I believe we should give them more business. I’ve been looking at the deliveries from the DaMarias and not only have they been late on two deliveries, but their prices increased on the last shipment.”

“They did?”

“It cut our profit down by two percent.”

“What’s the ratio split between the two?”

“Pace gives us sixty-five percent of our inventory, and DaMaria supplies the rest.”

Ruben scoffs and nods. “Speak with the Pace family and see if they can accommodate another ten percent increase.”

I take my phone out of my pocket and write the notes. “There’s also an increase from the brothels.”

“Yeah?”

“We’re up eight percent from last quarter.”

Ruben’s brows draw in. He’s not happy with the increase. “Eight percent?”

“Yep.” I add a nod in my confirmation.

“Across all the brothels?” I nod again. “Let’s take a look at them, because I was expecting at least ten. Is something happening there?”

en turns “The figures indicate solid growth.”

“Not enough, though. I’ll check them out. We might need to improve something new that can help our bottom line more.” I clear my throat and shuffle in my seat. “What is it?” There’s a knock on the door, stopping me from asking something that’s been on my mind since I spoke with Marco yesterday. “Enter.”

Marco opens the door and Maria, Ruben’s chef, enters holding two coffees. “Signore,” she says as she places them on the table.

“Thank you, Maria.” She backs out of the room and closes the door behind her, leaving us in privacy once again. “What was your question, Dominic?” I place the spoon in the coffee and stir it once, before resting it on the saucer. “I’ve been thinking about something,” I start. I look up at Ruben and can see he’s already losing patience with me. “Why did you change the brothels from what they were to what they are now?”

“Are you questioning my methods?” Ruben’s voice darkens. His eyes narrow and his jaw tightens.

I have to be careful in my choice of words, because even though I know he’s still the Don. “I can easily see that the direction you’ve taken with the brothels is much more profitable than the way others conduct their businesses. Besides, I’ve been doing the books for the last eleven years since I turned eighteen, and all I see is it’s increasing. I’m trying to figure out why others don’t follow your path.”

“Huh,” Ruben scoffs as he sits back in the seat and stares at me. Still silent, he taps his fingers to his lips. “The way the brothels were weren’t making us as much money as the way I run them now.”

That’s still not answering my question, but who am I to challenge him on giving me a more in-depth answer? “Okay,” I say as I look to my

accepting his non-answer answer.

plement “I may be the Don, and I may be a man, but I abhor violence  
oat and women.” I’ve known this for a long time, but again it’s not answer  
ing me question. I decide to leave it alone because he’s still not telling me any  
Adriandon’t already know. “Women are to be cherished like a queen outside  
bedroom, and treated like a high-class whore between the sheets.”

ng two “But she’s still a whore,” I say.

“She’s a whore for the man who leads her. She only offers that to se  
e door, who’s man enough to accept the responsibility. Her body is his honor,  
, other way around.”

on the The words resonate with me, especially considering what Adrian s  
oen and night. That still deeply bothers me, and I’m not sure what I’m goin  
age they et. My alliance is to my brother, my uncle and the Don. “One  
nightclub’s expenses and income hasn’t been adding up. Adrian and  
is eyesthere to see where the discrepancy is, and Adrian was going to take  
it.”

ie’s my “He hasn’t told me about it.”

ken the “He hasn’t?” the words leave my mouth quicker than they should  
t their was going to let you know, but the fire kind of...” I lift my hand and  
rs since twist it near my head. “My apologies, Uncle Ruben I was distracted.”

out why “Rose is lovely,” he says in a softer tone.

“She is.” I feel my lips tugging into a smile.

eepling “She’s yours.” I take in a sharp breath and slightly tilt my head to t  
ere run “I see.” Ruben chuckles before he sips on his coffee. “She’s not yours.

“She’s stubborn.”

he Don “She’s not part of this world, so she needs to be taught.”

coffee, “Rosa is...” I look out the window behind Ruben as I think about t

way to describe her. "Spirited."

toward Ruben barks a loud laugh. "Dominic, all I can say is, good luck."

ing my "I think I need more than luck."

othing I "Women like your Rose shouldn't be broken. She should be nurt  
e of the understand that in this world, we can only rule with them by our side."

"You don't have a wife, Uncle. How do you do it?"

"I have no wife but I have many..." He smirks and waves his hand  
omeoneside.

not the "Friends with benefits. Goomahs. La padrona. La puttana."

Ruben laughs louder. "All of the above. None of the above." He  
aid last "They scratch an itch."

g to do "Can I ask another question?"

of the "I have a feeling it doesn't matter what my answer is, you'll  
I were anyway."

care of "Nephew to uncle," I say in an attempt to distinguish our roles.

He sits back and nods once. "Nephew to uncle." Ruben lifts his cof  
takes a sip.

I've. "I "Why didn't you take a wife?"

slightly The corner of his lips turn up and he stares at one of the two scri  
flash of something crosses his eyes while I suspect he's reflec  
considering a thought. He lifts his eyes and intakes a breath. "No wor  
ever caught my attention long enough to deserve my mother's ring  
he side. what I was expecting. "Do you have plans on fully claiming Rose?"

" I close my eyes for a moment as the delicious memory of her taste  
lips creeps in. "I'm not sure," I say.

"Sure you are. Why are you waiting?"

he best "I don't know yet if she's my queen outside the bedroom and m



class escort inside it.”

“My boy.” Ruben chuckles. “If she chooses you then you have no but to step up and be the man she needs. But, in the meantime, *sh* ured to you’re the man she needs. Don’t wait for her to make that decision.” I his shoulders back and starts clicking on the computer. “As I hear moved her in with you.”

l to the “News travels fast,” I say with a snicker.

“Sacco women need to be strong to be able to deal with us. Though remember, we control them.” He laughs again. “They rule us.” He cli shrugs.mouse and continues working. “Don’t you have work to do?”

Just like that, he’s back to being my boss not my uncle. I tip the res coffee into my mouth before standing and heading out of his office.

ask it I’m not even surprised to find Marco is leaning up against the w arm caging in the young maid. Her cheeks are flaming red as she car lift her eyes to look up at him. “Sir,” she says when she sees me. In fee and she straightens and her eyes widen in fear. She scurries away and cranes his neck to the side to watch her ass.

“Did you have to do that?” he asks.

ens. A “Ruben will kill you if you lose him a good housekeeper,” I warn.

ting or “She’s...” He keeps watching her walk away from us and when I nan has hand to his shoulder, he turns to look at me. “What?”

g.” Not I run my hand through my hair as we head out of the house. “B don’t look at her.”

on my “But, she’s cute.”

“What’s her name?” I ask, knowing he has no idea and all he war fuck her.

y high- “Isabella,” he replies surely.

“I’m impressed that you actually stopped to ask.”

choice “Isabella,” he whispers as we walk out to where Frank is waiting for  
ow *her* like her name. I called her Bella when we walked in, and now I know  
he pullsher actual name. She looks like a Bella.” He opens the door and waits  
it, youI falter as I stare at him.

“You need to get laid. Shit, go and ask Ruben if it’s okay for you  
her out.”

always “No,” Marco protests. “It’s not like that.”  
icks the I slide in the car and look to Marco. “Fuck, do I have a lovesick sch  
on my hands?”

t of my He slams the door and takes the front passenger seat. “Fuck c  
grumbles, making me snicker.

all, one We head back home so I can take a closer look at the transactions  
i barelynightclubs.

stantly,

Marco



clap a The knock on my door drags my eyes away from the screen. “Yeah,  
expecting to see either Frank or Marco. But I’m pleasantly surprised  
est you Rosa enters. “Oh.” I close the laptop and gesture for her to enter. “Wh  
do for you, Rosa?”

its is to “Rose,” she corrects for the umpteenth time. “Um.” She stands awk  
wringing her hands together as she shifts on the spot.

“What’s wrong?”

She purses her lips together and looks around my office. “I feel intimidated in here.” She does, does she? Good to know. I stand and move that seat opposite mine out. When she sits, I slowly trail my finger across her shoulders. I particularly enjoy it when her body shivers and she sucks in an audible breath. Her body is so responsive to my touch. I can’t wait until my mouth is on her pussy, tongue fucking her until her legs clamp around my head. “Um,” she says again, still nervous.

One day soon she’ll crawl to me, kneel under the desk and suck my cock while I work. “What is it?” I sit on the edge of the desk with one leg propped off the ground. Rosa’s eyes travel from my face, down my torso and across my thighs. She nibbles on her lower lip before her tongue peeks out and sweeps across her plump mouth. “Rosa,” I say distracting her from staring at me.

She clears her throat and shakes her head once, dislodging the thought she had of me. Although, I’d like to know exactly what she’s fantasizing about. Perhaps she’ll have a bath again, and I’ll find myself there with her. “Um,” she says with more confidence though her eyes are still wondering over my body. “You look really good in a suit. I think this is my favorite.”

” I call I stifle a laugh because I don’t want to embarrass her. “Thank you.”  
d when “Anyway,” she shouts with enthusiasm. “I didn’t come in here to talk to you  
at can I that. But...” She waves her hand over my body. “You distracted me.”  
wardly, “Then why did you come into my office? Do you need to be kissed?”  
would you say that?”

“Because your *lips* beg for mine.”

Rosa brushes her auburn hair from her neck as she squirms in her seat.

el quite “Well.” She blinks rapidly then lifts her chin. “Where’s the closest bus stop?”

oss her “Why do you need a bus, Rosa?”

is in an “Rose. I need one because I have no other way of getting to work until my insurance pays up and I can buy another car.”

and my “Work?” I tilt my head to the side. Did I hear her right?

“Yes, you know that place I go to, and put up with customers’ shit so I can get a pay check at the end of the week so I can purchase things I need slightly know, a car, clothes...*stuff.*”

land on “You don’t need a car. I’ll arrange for someone to take you. And while we’re on the subject of work, you don’t need to work either. I’ll take care of you.”

“Um, no. You’ve been more than gracious, allowing me to stay here. That is enough. I’m feeling better and I need to speak with Evelyn to see when I can return to work sooner.”

myself in “Ridiculous.” I stand from the edge of the desk and walk around. Still knitting my fingers together, I shake my head. “There’s no need.”

is one is “Ahh, what are you talking about, Dominic?” My cock twitches when she says my name.

“There’s no need for you to work.”

tell you “I’m not playing these games with you. I’m also not asking for permission. You can either tell me where the bus stop is, or I’ll figure it out myself.”

w, why There’s something sexy about her spark. She has a fire I find refreshing and challenging. “I can see you intend to be difficult.”

“There’s nothing difficult about me working. I need the money.”

er seat. I take my checkbook out of the top drawer and open it. “How much

us stopneed?”

“I’m not taking your money.” She stands to her feet and walks toward the door. “What is wrong with you?”

until my “You’re offended?”

“What do you think this is, Dominic?” My cock hardens. The way her hair curls when she speaks my name. “Do you think you can buy me?”

so I can “Not at all.”

ed? You “Then what is it?”

“Sacco women have no need to work,” I reply.

actually, “My sister is a Sacco, not me. And hopefully, she won’t be one you’ll take much longer.”

I close my checkbook with a slam. “You’re not to interfere.”

ere, and “She’s my sister. Who’s being beaten by your fucking brother,” she lets her hair fly while furiously pointing at me. I stand and with two quick strides I’m in her personal space. “What are you doing?” she asks as she looks up at me. My heated fury quickly dissolves.

“You’re a Sacco woman, and Sacco women listen to their men.” She pushes her back up until she’s against the door. Rosa’s breath hitches while her eyes fix on my mouth. Her lips part and her breathing quickens. I lean against the door, caging her between the wood and my body.

g your “Dominic...”

he it out “Do you want me to kiss you?” I reach out and skim my finger up her cheek, leaving her breathless.

reshing Rosa’s eyelashes flutter as she turns to look at where I’m touching her. She shifts her weight on her feet, pushing her hips out to rub against my dick. “I...” My lioness has become shy.

do you I lean down and trace the line of her jaw with my nose. My hand m

her hip where my fingers possessively dig into her soft skin. “I want to use my tongue to discover every part of your body, Rosa.”

“I’m...” Breathlessly she pants while pushing her tits into me. I move my hand across to her butt and skim my pinky finger into the top of her panties. A small moan escapes her telling me she’s my dirty girl. My hand moves to her neck who wants to please me. I nibble on her earlobe, then pull back. She thrusts herself into me further, silently giving me permission to access her pussy. I move my hand to her thigh and lift it to coax her to hook it around my waist.

“What are you doing, Dominic?” Good lord, her voice is husky with desire. I slip my hand into the front of her pants and find she’s not wearing any panties. “You’re not wearing underwear.”

“I don’t have any.”

She shouts “Good, keep it that way. I want total access to you.”

I slip a finger into her wet and greedy pussy. “Oh, Dominic, I...” She moans as her head rolls backward and she closes her eyes.

“Eyes on me, my lioness.”

She opens her eyes and watches me. My thumb easily finds her clit, and I apply hard pressure on it while inserting another finger into her pussy. God, she’s so wet. Rosa’s eyes become dark with a hooded yearning.

She moves her hips while watching me. “More,” she shamelessly pleads. I remove my fingers and lift them to my mouth, coating my lips with her pussy. She gulps and whispers, “Fuck.”

I step back and look at her. “Take it all off.”

“What?” she squeaks.

“Take it all off.” I walk over to my sofa and sit, extending my arms.

“You want me to take off my clothes?” She sees my cock tenting my pants and runs her tongue over her lower lip.

ant my “The one thing I hate is having to repeat myself. If I do it again, I’  
you exactly how much I hate repeating myself.”

ove my Her brows draw in together. “Huh?”

er yoga Oh, this is going to be fun. I lift my hand and gesture for her to cor  
lionessto me. She gulps and slowly walks over until she’s standing a foot  
pushes“Closer.” She shuffles an inch toward me. “Closer.” She steps up u  
body. I toes are touching my shoes. “Closer.” Rosa’s brows furrow but she  
ny hip.until her legs are either side of mine. “You’re learning.”

esire. “Learning what?”

wearing “To listen to me.”

“Oh.” She looks down to her jittery hands.

“Now, strip.”

“What are you going to do to me?” her voice is full of desperati  
i God,”longing.

“A Sacco woman doesn’t question.”

“I’m not a Sacco woman,” she replies with a hint of exasperation.

swollen I cock a brow and smirk as I wait for her to do what she’s told. He  
nto her.smirk quickly fades and again she fidgets with the tips of her fingers.  
ng. Sheup straight.” She drops her hands to her side and lifts her chin, altho  
eads. Ishoulders are caved in. “Shoulders back, and you stand with your head  
with herHer response is instant. “Good girl, now strip.”

“But.” Her anxious eyes find mine again.

“You have nothing to worry about.” Is she comparing me to wha  
seen on Eliza? “Take it all off.” Rosa’s trembling fingers find the hen  
out. t-shirt while she’s looking to me for encouragement. I lift my finger  
& in mymouth and I’m rewarded with her scent. I lick my finger and groan

ll showcock hardens. “You have the best tasting cunt I’ve ever sampled.  
more, Rosa.”

She lifts the t-shirt over her head and drops it to the ground. “Is th  
ne overyou want, *Dominic*?”

t away. The minx knows I love the way she says my name. “No bra and no j  
ntil herAnyone would think you *want* my mouth on you.”

stands “Maybe I do,” her confidence is deceived by her shaky voice.

“Then we’re on the same page.” With the finger that was in my n  
motion for her to take her pants off. She pushes them down over her hi  
kicks them off, standing gloriously naked in front of me. “Come here.  
my hand out for her to take. She places her soft hand in mine, and I j  
down so she’s over my knees. “When I tell you to do something, I exj  
ion andyou to do it the first time.” I spank her butt then quickly sink a finger i  
soaking pussy.

“Oh my God!” she gasps.

“What did I say, Rosa?” I massage her pussy, playing with her  
r smallgathers her thoughts. But, when she doesn’t say anything, I lift m

“Standagain and spank her. Her little butt jiggles, and again I insert a finger i  
ugh her “Um,” her croaky voice is dripping with desire.

l high.” “Rosa,” I warn, and spank her for a third time before sinking my  
into her.

“You um...”

at she’s Spank.

1 of her Two fingers.

to my *Moaning*. “Whoa.” She grinds against my leg, trying to find the p  
as myshe’s chasing.

Her ass is a beautiful shade of red. I remove my fingers and she g



I want she braces. “My perfect lioness.” I spank her twice in quick succession to find her clit to rub. “What do I want from you, Rosa?” I apply hard pressure as I study her body and how quickly she’s reacting to me.

“You want me to...um...” She’s lost in the moment, so I remove my panties and she mewls desperately. She’s craving my hand on her ass, inside her.

“You still haven’t learned, have you?”

In my mouth, I spank her once and lift my hand, waiting for her to tell me what I want to hear. “What?” She looks over her shoulder at me. Her cheeks are flushed with delicious red, nearly as beautiful as her ass cheeks. “Please, more.” I hold her by the waist. “Tell me what I want to hear, and I’ll give you anything you want.” She keeps her eyes on me, and whispers, “You don’t want to get lost in yourself with me.”

“Good girl.” I spank her again, then lift her off of me. There’s a dazed look on her face. I sit back and touch my lips. “Up here.”

“What?” I tilt my head to the side and cock a brow. “I’ll do what you want, but I just don’t know exactly what that is.” I bend forward, push her legs into her, and wrap my arms around her hips. Pulling her forward, I lift her to sit on my face. She flails a little and puts her hands on my shoulders in an attempt to steady herself. “I’m going to fall.”

“I’ve got you.” I clamp my arms around the top of her thighs, and feast on her. My girl’s pussy is warm and wet. My tongue swirls around inside her while her hips grind against my face.

“Oh my God,” she whimpers as I flick, lick, and suck on her pussy. I retract my hand to coat my pinky with her moisture.

“Keep hold of my shoulders,” I murmur around her pussy.

on then “Okay,” she breathlessly complies. While my mouth is attacking her  
pressure my pinky rims her ass. “Oh,” she groans when she feels my finger at h

“Slowly,” I command.

my hand “Okay.” I love how responsive she is. My dick is so hard I can  
her, on contain my own desire. I push the tip of my pinky in and Rosa groa  
careful not to go too fast, because the only thing coating my finger  
juice. She lowers a bit more, then lifts off. “It hurts.”

want to She’s not ready for my finger in her ass, but the next time I’ll be  
ushed a have lube on hand. I don’t want my lioness to feel anything but pure p.

My mouth and tongue fuck her until her thighs clamp around my  
suffocating me. Her hips move furiously while wanton sounds esca  
repeated lips. I keep eating until she attempts to pull off of me. I clamp  
exactly where they are and increase the speed of my tongue and m  
fraught, takes no more than a few seconds to be rewarded with a flood  
moisture.

u want, “Shit! Did I just come on you?”

gs open I stay exactly where I am, lapping up every drop of heaven she’s giv  
t on my Her hips involuntarily thrust against me before Rosa collapses. “No  
empt to she begs.

I keep going, wanting to coax a second orgasm from her.

nd start With her being so sensitive, I suck on her clit and drag my teeth ar  
nd curls And just like I wanted, she gifts me a second orgasm.

I lift her off of me, and wrap my arms around her. She’s shivering  
. I bury cuddles into me. I maneuver her so I can take my jacket off and  
enough around her shoulders. I kiss the top of her head and rub my arm up an  
her back, warming her. “That’s never happened before,” she says  
sorry.”

r pussy, “You gave me what I wanted. Never apologize for filling my mou  
er rear. your cum.”

“I’m so embarrassed.” She turtles into herself, ashamed of her  
barely reaction to me.

ns. I’m “Look at me.” Slowly, she lifts her head, but she can’t meet m  
r is her “Look at me.” She flicks her gaze up to me and purses her lips toget

she’s holding in tears. “I’m honored you gave me what you did. And  
sure to every single moment.”

leasure. The tiniest of smiles tugs at her lips. “Are you sure?”

y head, “Do I need to remind you?” I squeeze her butt. She shakes he  
pe past “Good.” When will my woman understand that she’s my lioness?

er legs My mouth will need to keep showing her.

outh. It

of her

ven me.

more,”

ound it.

; as she

place it

d down

s. “I’m

“You gave me what I wanted. Never apologize for filling my mouth with your cum.”

“I’m so embarrassed.” She turtles into herself, ashamed of her body’s reaction to me.

“Look at me.” Slowly, she lifts her head, but she can’t meet my eyes. “Look at me.” She flicks her gaze up to me and purses her lips together like she’s holding in tears. “I’m honored you gave me what you did. And I loved every single moment.”

The tiniest of smiles tugs at her lips. “Are you sure?”

“Do I need to remind you?” I squeeze her butt. She shakes her head. “Good.” When will my woman understand that she’s my lioness?

My mouth will need to keep showing her.

## Chapter Twelve

Rose



I can't believe I did that.

I also can't believe he loved it.

Nor can I believe he spanked me.

And I certainly surprised myself that I got off on it. No, it was me getting off on it, I loved every single moment.

My backside is a delicious reminder of what he did to me last night in bed and cheekily smile. I have to snap out of this, or I'm going myself seeking him out for more. "Get it together," I say as I attempt to do anything but the ache on my butt.

I push the covers off the bed, and head into the bathroom to take shower before I have to head to work. I also need to begin the process of replacing all my things, not to mention sourcing a car and an apartment.

The warm water of the shower stings on my butt and when I twist my waist I see the visible marks of Dominic's hands. I can't wipe the smile off my face. I've had sex before, but I've never been spanked, not last night. I could lie to myself and say I didn't enjoy it, and I'm horrified.

I'm into *that*, but there's not a single thing about it that I hated. Ever with dark bruises forming on my ass, I love it.

The shower is quick because I don't trust myself not to keep looking beautiful dark coloring on my butt. Sick, I know. "Is it?" I mumble as my body. "Is it sick? I'm not hurting anyone, so why is it sick?" I finally dry my legs, and when the towel reaches the apex between my legs, I smile into a wide smile. "Stop it." Maybe I need to see a doctor and get my ass looked at.

I push the memories of last night to the side, change into jeans and a sweater and head down to the kitchen. "Miss Hopkins," Alba, she announces as she hurries around the kitchen.

"Good morning," I reply with a gentle greeting. The first thing I do is make a beeline for coffee.

"The dining room is set up for you." Alba smiles eagerly and with more than of her eyes encourages me to head to the dining room. "Please, let me do your job."

As I lay down, Alba is a lovely lady, maybe in her late fifties with hard wrinkles to find her eyes, but pitch black hair. There's not even one gray hair on her head, which leads me to believe she colors it.

"Sure," I say softly. "And it's Rose." I wouldn't want to offend her. She's been kind to me since the day I arrived.

I head toward the dining room to find Dominic already sitting at the table, sipping coffee while looking at his tablet. Marco is beside him and is not at all stupid. Dominic lifts his eyes to look at me. "I have work to do." Marco takes a sip of coffee and leaves the dining room.

That I noticed that Dominic lowers his tablet, stands, and walks over to give me a ki-

today, turn my head away. "Sit." He pulls out the chair beside him and waits for me to be seated before pushing it in and returning to his seat.

"Um, Dominic," I begin. "What happened last night can't happen again." He looks at me, his expression unreadable. "Like hell it can't." He picks his tablet up, completely disregarding what I just said.

"No, it's not going to happen again." I burst out, my head tilted back. He looks at me from above the tablet, exhales an irritated breath, and lowers the tablet to the table. "And why not?"

Alba enters and places a coffee in front of me, then leaves. I'm not sure what to say to him. "It's not right."

"Why not? Have you been promised to someone?"

I shake my head, indignant. "Are you being serious right now or are you trying to..." Alba returns with two massively overloaded plates of food. She flicks mine down first, then Dominic's. "Thank you." I smile at her and do my best to continue our rather difficult conversation.

There's no one who has the right to promise me to anyone, and second, around in the twenty-first century, right? Promised..." I scoff as I lift the fork and stab at the scrambled eggs on my plate. "Promised. How ridiculous." I mumble with a derisive chuckle as I jab at the eggs.

Alba. "Have the eggs upset you so much that you're attacking them?" Dominic is amused by my irritation.

"You're provoking me to fight with you." I fork some egg and shove it into my enemy mouth.

"No, I'm not," he replies easily. Dominic sips his coffee while looking at me closely. "I'm merely stating a fact that what happened last night can't happen again. Because not only did I enjoy it, you did too," his tone is firm but I am assured.

its until I have nothing more to say to him, because yes, I loved it. But we just do it again. Abandoning my breakfast, I stand, grab my plate and walk back to the dining room. Dominic's laughter echoes, making me angrier than I can say. "Thank you for breakfast, Alba."

She looks to the full plate and her shoulders lower. "Did you not like the food?" her voice breaks, but she takes the plate from me and scrapes it into the trash.

"It's not that." I look over my shoulder and shake my head. "The coffee exactly put a sour taste in my mouth."

She smiles and gently pets my hand. "You'll get used to him. He's a good man."

Ugh, I don't want to get used to him. I offer her a tight smile and nod. She leaves the kitchen. I head upstairs to my room to put on a pair of shoes and wait before going to find Dominic. He's still in the dining room, eating breakfast. "First, breakfast. "I was hoping you'd return." He sees me standing by the entrance of the room. He takes in my shoes and arches a brow. "Are you going to work and somewhere?" He lowers his flatware, pushes his plate away and places his elbow on the table.

"I'm heading into work, then I need to go buy a cell, and wait for Dominic to replace all my cards." I poke my tongue into my cheek as I push my shoulders back to ask for a favor. "Could I please borrow twenty dollars until I can get all my ID together, and I can get to the bank. I need money for the bus." I doubt buses come out this far, but I can only hope. Regarding not, it's going to be a long walk for me.

Dominic's lips thin into a tight line. "No, you can't borrow formal dollars." He spits the word in disgust.

"Fine." I throw my arms up in surrender while turning to leave.



st can't "Where are you going?" I storm toward the front door, completely i  
k out of by his controlling ways. I reach the door, but hear his heavy footsteps  
should wooden floor behind me. My arm extends to turn the knob, but his  
grab my waist and he spins me around. "I'm sick of repeating m  
like my thought we cleared this up last night, Rosa." He cages me to the do  
s it into allowing me to go.

"Let me leave."

ompany "Not without me or my men." My teeth worry my lower lip. Domin  
his forehead on mine. "I need you safe," he whispers. He closes his ey  
a good inhales a long breath as he skims his nose gently across my cheek.

"Who do I need to be safe from, Dominic?"

before A low grumble vibrates deep inside his chest. My own heart flu  
neakersevery single second of last night floods my memory. *No!* I can't  
ing his again. "Rosa." He lowers his head to brush his lips against my throat  
n trance in a deep breath to help gather my thoughts. Pushing him away, I st  
1 going against the door. Jesus, I want him to kiss me, hell, I want to jump hi  
ces and now. But no. I have to remember who he is, and what he does. That  
man I want to be involved with. Dominic adjusts his suit jacket and st  
ork on his neck. "We'll leave in five minutes."

ull my "I can walk." I turn to open the door, and he slams it shut before  
rs? It's chance to leave. I look over my shoulder. "What is *wrong* with you?"  
d some He wraps his fingers around my wrist and drags me into his off  
rope. If slams the door and paces back and forth. His gait is fast. However,  
rakes his hand through his hair several times before stopping to face n  
twenty you know anything about me?"

I'm taken aback by his question. "What do you mean?"

"Do you know who I am?"

irritated “Dominic Sacco?” I reply slowly. “Aren’t you?”

son the He licks his lips and crosses his arms in front of his chest. “I have enemies, Rosa, and those enemies will do whatever they can to get to me.” I open my mouth to ask who his enemies are, but he holds his hand up to block my question. “Ruben, Adrian, and I have enemies who’ll stop at nothing to bring our organization down. Including taking you.”

“Me?” I place my hand to my chest. “Why would they want me?”

ic leans “To get to me.”

yes and “I don’t know anything.”

“No, you don’t. But...” He gulps and adds, “Like it or not, you’re a Sacco now, and that name implies danger.” He steps back, clearly misinterpreting my look of confusion for one of worry. “But I don’t want you to be scared. Do that.” “I’m not scared, Dominic, but I’m not part of your family.”

∴ I take He purses his lips together and with furious eyes looks past me and tallshaking his head. “I’m not putting you at risk.”

m right “But.” I step forward in an attempt to calm him.

’s not a “Enough.” He encroaches on my personal space, and I melt back against the door. “Enough,” he repeats softer. “You’re too important to me to let anything happen to you.” His eyes dart down to my lips. “I’ll get a card with no limit set up for you, and I’ll take you wherever you need to go today. Also, I’ll have security for you.”

ice. He “This seems excessive.”

he also “In my world, it’s not enough.” He places his hand on the door knob. “Do you want to go?” “Shall we?” Dominic gestures for me to leave his office and do, he follows.

I head toward the front door, and wait for him. The car is already waiting for us, with Frank behind the wheel and Marco holding the back door.

When did he even have a chance to tell them we'd be leaving? Ugh, enemies, too much for me. Once in the car, I look out the window as I open my everything. "Just so I understand what's happening here, I'll basically have a moment to myself from here on in?"

"Are you talking about privacy?" He shuffles to lean against the door and stare at me.

"This is a lot to take in. Once I leave does it stop?"

"You're not going anywhere," he replies casually.

"Eventually I'll leave your home and move into an apartment." I take a massive hill I'm going to have to climb. "And, then..." My voice trails off. I think about the enormity of everything.

Suddenly, the events of the fire and the fact my sister is miserable with brutal force. I can't stop the sadness, or the flood of tears that are streaming from my eyes. My heart is cracking and my soul is fractured. I'm not sure either will ever fuse into a whole again.

Dominic's strong arms pull me into his body. I try to resist it, but the warmth is intoxicating and for some reason I'm drawn to him. I allow myself a moment of weakness to cry in his arms. "I've got you, baby. I've got you." He whispers and kisses the top of my head.

I cuddle into him for a moment longer, liking how this feels. His presence is a comfort to me. "I know," I say through my tears.

"You don't have to be so strong all the time." It's almost like he's talking to my broken soul.

I pull back from him and wipe at the tears clinging to my cheek. "I'm sorry," I say. I shuffle away from Dominic and turn to look out the window. "It's just... you know?" Dominic's silence forces me to turn to look at him. His

, this isare drawn in together, his jaw is tight and his hard eyes are solely foc  
onsiderme. “You’re staring.”

y never “Never apologize to me for how you’re feeling.”

The only thing I can do is smile awkwardly and offer him a no  
oor andwhole situation is screwed.

I’m attracted to a dangerous man I know is poison for me. Not on  
I’m forced to live with him because my entire world has gone up in  
*Literally.*

What a It’s okay, all I need is to pick up as much work as I can, save every  
s off aspenny to get my life back on track.

I can do that.

hits me

: falling

not sure



but his

myself, “Thank you,” I say to Dominic once we leave work.  
t you,” “For?”

I intake a small breath as I consider what I should be thanking h  
etective, “Everything. Your generosity, for one.”

Marco snickers from the front. “Generosity?” Dominic is doing his  
can see control his own laughter.

“You don’t owe me a thing, Dominic. You didn’t need to open you  
Yeah, I to me.” I look around the car and limply point toward Frank. “Nor  
say as I have to drive me anywhere.”

st a lot,

; brows

used on Dominic stares at me for a few seconds and slowly nods once. “You need to purchase a new phone. I have one for you. So, now it’s just your identification you need to replace, correct?”

d. This I nod and add, “And my car. I need to visit the bank. I need money.” “I’ve already ordered you a credit card.”

ily that, “That’s your money, not mine.”

flames. Dominic closes his eyes and pinches the bridge of his nose. “We’re not doing this again,” he says in frustration.

single “Dominic.” His head jerks to the side as he stares, silencing me with a dead look. I gulp as I keep my resolve. I’ll let this one slide, for now. I can’t take his money, nor do I want to.

“This aversion to me helping you needs to stop. Now.” I grind my teeth and stop myself from reacting. Dominic leans over and places his hand on my thigh. “See,” he whispers. “You’re learning. Such a good girl.” His words trace the sensitive skin below my ear. I clench my thighs together, trying not to react to his advance. I close my eyes and tilt my head to the side, trying to ignore more of his touch. Why does his whispering that I’m a good girl make my heart flutter and my insides heat in reaction?

im for. The car stopping jolts me out of my dirty memories of where his hand was last night. I open my eyes and straighten in the seat. Frank’s brother takes me to the DMV, which is the first step to recovering my identity so I can move on with my life.

ir home Dominic slides out and buttons his suit jacket. He holds his hand out, waiting for me to join him. Reluctantly, I take it and with our hands entwined, we head into the DMV.

Something stirs deep in my belly when I notice a couple of women in the waiting area casting greedy eyes on Dominic. They straighten in the

u don'tand smile at him. I clear my throat and throw them a hard look. E  
st yourdrags me closer to his body and wraps his hand around my waist. "Yo  
nothing to worry about, Rosa."

' I find myself still staring at the two women, silently telling them  
away before I *make* them. "Shit," I murmur and push his hand off m  
not mine, so why am I acting like an unreasonable, possessive loon?  
e're not "They aren't even attractive," he says as we sit and wait for my nu  
be called.

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n't take Dominic slings his arm over the back of my chair and gently r  
fingertips over my shoulder. "Yes, Rosa, keep telling yourself that."

teeth to I roll my eyes and try not to look at the two women agai  
on mysuccessfully, though. I need to remember one thing...this is all tem  
urm lips*Everything*.

1stantly Once I'm out of his house, my life will be so much easier. But for  
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ir seats

and smile at him. I clear my throat and throw them a hard look. Dominic drags me closer to his body and wraps his hand around my waist. “You have nothing to worry about, Rosa.”

I find myself still staring at the two women, silently telling them to look away before I *make* them. “Shit,” I murmur and push his hand off me. He’s not mine, so why am I acting like an unreasonable, possessive loon?

“They aren’t even attractive,” he says as we sit and wait for my number to be called.

“It’s none of my business,” I manage to say in a choked, dark voice.

Dominic slings his arm over the back of my chair and gently runs his fingertips over my shoulder. “Yes, Rosa, keep telling yourself that.”

I roll my eyes and try not to look at the two women again. Not successfully, though. I need to remember one thing...this is all temporary. *Everything.*

Once I’m out of his house, my life will be so much easier. But for now, I need to keep my distance from Dominic’s controlling yet sinfully alluring ways.

## Chapter Thirteen

### Dominic



**S**he's been in my house for a week now, and other than the one I feasted on her pussy, I haven't touched her like that again.

And now I'm about to torture myself a little more. I knock once on the door before opening it. "Nice to see you respect boundaries," she says and lies on the bed, one leg propped over the other while reading on the phone I gave her. "Can I help you?" My eyes are drawn to her long legs. "Don't touch me," she says with a bite to her voice.

"Get dressed."

Rosa sits up in bed and crosses those luscious legs under her. "Why are we going?"

"To one of our clubs."

A cheeky smile pulls at her lips, her eyes widen and she nearly bounces off the bed. "As in a nightclub?"

"Yes, a night club."

Without a moment of hesitation, she leaps over to me. "What kind of music? Good music? Shit music? What? I need to know what to wear."



“About that.” I walk out of her room and return with a large white box. I hand it to Rosa, and she looks down at it, confused. “Open it.”

She turns and places it on her bed then jimmies the lid of the box up and off. “Whoa.” She holds up the shoes and turns to look at me. “They’re beautiful.” She turns them over in her hand to inspect them and says, “Jimmy Choo?” She keeps moving them around. “They’re fiery red, like the color.”

“Yes.” I shove my hands in my pockets, stopping me from reaching out to touch her. “Ruby rose shoes for my Rosa.”

“These are covered in crystals. My God, I hate to think how much they cost.”

“Not your concern,” I reply. “There’s also a dress.” I gesture toward the box.

She takes both shoes and places them on the floor before unwrapping the dress. “No!” Rosa lifts it and holds it out in front of her. “No.” She looks at me and frowns.

“I was expecting a different reaction from you.”

“This is Chanel, Dominic.”

“I’m aware.”

“This is a little black dress, from Chanel,” she says slower.

“Yes, it is.”

“Chanel isn’t for a nightclub. It’s for,” she pauses as she searches the room as if the room can give her answers. “It’s for the Oscar elegance, private planes that fly to Paris for the weekend.” She’s attempting to paint a sophisticated picture. “This isn’t for nightclubs.”

I cock a brow as I watch her grapple with the opulence I’m providing for *our* nightclubs.”

box. I “I’m not wearing this. And, if I’m being honest, I don’t think I  
wear the shoes either.”

until it’s “What’s the use in having beautiful things if you’re too frightened  
these are them? They’re not meant to be shoved in a corner somewhere, they’re  
gasps. to be shown off. Besides, this is what I want you to wear.” I’m not su  
. I love considering I’ll be torturing myself when I see her in it.

She slides her shoulders forward as she continues to hold the dress  
g out to front of her. “Are you sure you want me to wear this?” her voice is full  
uncertainty.

h these “Absolutely.” I step backward toward the door. “We leave at ten.”

“Oh, okay.” She lays the dress on the bed and begins to walk toward  
the bathroom. Just as I close her door, I hear her call, “Hang on.” The door  
and she leans against the door jamb like a damn goddess. “You want  
ing the wear those?” Rosa points over her shoulder toward the bed.

looks to “Yes.”

“Fine. But if I have to wear those, then you need to wear that da  
three-piece suit with a white shirt and that blue tie you like to wear.”

“You want me to change?”

“You want *me* to change,” she throws my own words back at me.

I smirk before turning and walking away without answering. My lie  
a minx, and if she wants me wearing my dark gray suit, then I’ll v  
around Especially if it means my cock will be buried inside her tonight.

rs, and

empting



ig. “It’s

want to “The car’s ready, Dominic,” Marco says as he adjusts his tie.

I look at my watch, then up the stairs, then back to my watch. “What do you want to wear?” Marco takes a step to go up and get Rosa. “I’ll go.” I place my hand on her shoulder as I effortlessly take the stairs two at a time. I knock on her door and walk in.

“Do you ever *not* barge in?”

Her long auburn hair is pulled back in a severe, low ponytail, and her eyes are accentuated from the dark make-up she’s wearing, but that’s not what I’m looking at. Holy shit. My cock stirs in my pants as I rake my greedy gaze down her voluptuous tits, and curvy hips. The dress is short, too short for my liking. Thank god, I’m presented with her long legs in those stunning red heels. “You’re breathtaking.” I lift my hand and twirl my finger in a circle. She smiles and spins once for me to look. “Perhaps you should wear a coat

“It’s not cold enough for that.” Her brows pull in together. “Even if you’re being ridiculous.”

I should’ve bought her a long dress that would hide her curvy hips and highlight them. I’m going to have every fucker looking at her, want her. “Perhaps you should change.”

She places a hand on her curvy hip and tilts her head to the side. “I’ll wear what you should too. And, I said the blue tie, that’s red.” She points to my tie. “Matches your shoes.”

A wide smile splits her face. She regains her composure and cocks her head. “You can keep the red tie.”

“I can keep it, can I?” I ask with amusement.

She lifts one shoulder and rolls her eyes. “It’ll do, I guess.”

My little lioness is finding her confidence. “Get a coat,” I instruct as  
toward the door. If we stay here any longer, I’m going to want to shut  
with my cock.

“I don’t need one,” her protest is followed by her moving toward he  
in and returning with a distressed leather jacket that looks appalling v  
elegant dress.

“What’s that?”

“This is the only thing I have. I haven’t got anything that’ll go w  
beautiful dress or shoes.” She puts it on and zips the front before s  
like a damned old-frumpy woman.

“Take it off.” Note to self, she needs more appropriate clothing. I sh  
of my suit jacket and hold it out for her to wear. She throws her jacket  
bed and looks at the one I’m holding.

“But...”

“I’ll be fine,” I say, sensing she’s about to argue. “Put it on.” Ros  
her arms into the jacket and turns toward me. “Much better. Besides  
being on you.” Her cheeks turn pink and she lowers her chin as a smi  
at her lips. “I would prefer to be in you.”

She lifts her head, places her hand to my chest and says, “Play you  
right, and maybe you will be.”

Holy shit, who is this lioness?

Wagging her hips, she struts out and heads down the stairs. M  
follows, desperate to be buried inside her.

s I head  
t her up



r walk-  
vith her

## Rose

ith this It's like when I put these shoes and this dress on, I suddenly I  
tandingsomeone else. Not to mention the moment I saw him in his suit, my  
spontaneously combusted and all I wanted to do was use him for n  
rug outpleasure.

t on the Once we're in the car, Dominic pulls me closer to him and posse  
splays his hand on my bare thigh. "So we're going to one of your clubs  
"The family's club, yes." He glances over at me and smirks. F  
a slideswonder what he's smiling at.

s, I like We've been in the car for about half an hour before it stops ou  
irk tugsbuilding. There's a line of people waiting to enter, but there's no  
signage anywhere. "Is this it?" I duck to look out Dominic's window.

ir cards "It is."

"Doesn't look like much."

ly cockDominic chuckles as he shakes his head. The back door ope  
Dominic slides out first before extending his hand to help me. I take  
carefully exit the car, making sure I don't flash anyone in my short dre

I turn to look at the queue of people and get a waft of his scent clin  
his suit jacket. Cigarette mixed with ocean breeze. He's not an ocean  
kind of guy, more like the smoky embers of a woodfire, or maybe e

bitter aroma of a freshly brewed black coffee. But, the ocean breeze? soft for Dominic, but for some reason it also works on him.

“This way.” He tugs my hand as I begin to walk to the back of the li

“Of course,” I reply.

“We don’t wait, Rosa.”

“I figured that.”

He releases my hand and places his to the small of my back as w  
became toward the security manning the door. “Mr. Sacco.” The security gu  
ovaries the door open for us. The door has been muffling the music, but once  
ny own instantly recognize the song playing. Dominic pulls his hand away fr  
lower back and I turn to see him giving instructions to Frank. I walk  
ssively wait for Dominic while looking around.

s?” There are life-sized bird cages hanging from the ceiling with  
Imm, Idressed as angels and demons dancing in them. There’s a sea of  
dancing and the smell of sex clings to the air. *Interesting.*

itside a His warm hand finds the top of my ass as he leans in and says, “Thi  
visible Dominic steps ahead of me and reaches back for my hand. “By the w  
says over his shoulder. “I have a surprise for you.”

Surprise? “What is it?”

“Me telling you defeats the purpose it being a surprise.” I sque  
ns and fingers and he laughs as he continues to lead me through the club.

e it and “Mr. Sacco.” A different security guard steps to the side and all  
ss. access into a room with one-way glass.

ging to The music is instantly dulled in here and it’s not as dim as the night  
. breeze look around, but I can’t see anything that could be a surprise for me. ‘  
ven the one of our VIP areas.”

“One of?” I ask as I look around.

It's too "Yes, there's two VIP areas down here, and we have one upstairs that's reserved for me, Adrian, and Ruben."

ne. "So, why aren't we up there?"

"It leads to one of the offices, and I have a meeting tonight."

"I'm going to be by myself? That doesn't sound like fun to me."

Dominic rubs his hands up and down my arms, before stepping back and letting his eyes roam over my body. "I do like my jacket on you."

When he looks at me like he's a starving lion, my body ignites with the darkest of desires. I don't know what it is about him, but I feel drawn to him. And the crazy thing is, I also feel safe with him. My brain whirrs with worried words, but my heart flutters with reassurance.

I mimic his posture and tone when I say, "I do like that suit on you." Dominic's cynical chuckle tells me he enjoys this back and forth banter. I guess women don't usually challenge him. "Bryan," he calls to the waiter. "A scotch for me and a wine for Rosa."

"No wine, thank you." I smile at Bryan who appears as shocked refusal as Dominic does. "I'll have a French martini, please."

Dominic turns to Bryan and gives him the go-ahead to leave with a squeeze of his hand. "I thought you don't like to drink."

"I don't, but why not push the limits while I cut loose and have a few drinks? And if I'm feeling extra daring, I might even have two."

"Don't go crazy now," he teases. "I wouldn't want you to get too drunk at club. I because then I might have to take advantage of you." He moves over to the sofa on the back wall and settles into it. He extends his arms over the back of the sofa.

"Huh." I tap my hand to my chin. "Maybe you should get drunk s

irs. Buttake advantage of *you*.” I sling off his jacket, getting a little overheated room. I lay it down on the sofa and walk over to the floor to ceiling window. “They can’t see us, right?” I lean my hand against the glass watching everyone out on the dance floor.

Dominic’s hot breath grazes my throat. He pushes his body into my back and molding me up against the glass. His cock is hard in his pants, and his hand is on my neck. “No, Rosa, they can’t see us.”

My body is caught between Dominic’s hard, hot body and the cool glass pane of the one-way glass. “What are you doing?” My body hungrily responds. I whisper I push my butt back into him, grinding against his hard-on.

“Do you want me to fuck you in here, *Rosa*?” Yes, desperately. “Do you want my cock inside you while you watch everyone dancing?” So I nod. Dominic’s teeth sink into the base of my neck. “I could fuck you right over here on the dance floor, allow everyone to watch as my cock drips with your sweet juices. Do you want them to watch?” God, yes. His hand releases my neck and he expands it across my stomach before inching it lower. “I want this, Rosa,” he whispers. I angle my head to give him better access. “Dominic,” I moan.

“Tell me what you want.” My nipples scrape against the lacey material of my bra, causing a delicious friction. My pussy begs for his fingers, his mouth, his cock. *All of him*. “Mr. Sacco,” a man’s deep drawl forces me to open my eyes and look back to the now.

“Don’t move,” Dominic whispers in my ear.

A small devious smile stretches my lips. “I won’t,” I say.

“What do you want?” Dominic asks without peeling himself off my back. “Your guests have arrived, sir.”

I gasp and stiffen. “Good.” The loss of the warmth of his body pricks



l in this causes my own to cool. But, I don't dare move until he tells me I can.  
window. *wrong with me?* Why do I find his instructions so erotic? "Rosa." He  
atching my jawline.

"Yes."

o mine "You can turn around."

lips are It's probably for the best, because I could feel my resolve slip  
straighten my dress and take a moment to stop thinking with my pu  
feel of start thinking with my head. "Your French martini," the waiter sa  
s to his. points to the drink on the table.

Shit, was he in here the whole time? The stupid grin is a remind  
Do you even if he was, he could've watched and I wouldn't have minded.

badly. Oh my God! What is happening to me? I haven't had many partn  
on the I've never done anything like this in the past. "Huh," I grumble to mys  
et cuntwalk over and grab my martini. Perhaps I'm not as vanilla as I though  
ne, and Maybe I like all this kinky stuff. No, correct that, not maybe but I de  
Rosa." enjoy kink. I take a sip of my martini and moan in appreciation.

"Get her another," Dominic instructs.

"Yes, please," I confirm with a nod.

delicious "Dominic." Oh no, *not him*. "Brother." I drag my gaze over to the e  
to see Adrian. "Oh, Rose." He smiles and saunters over toward me. "  
d come see you again." He bends to place a kiss to my cheek, but I turn my h  
pull away. The pig lands his gross lips on me and I shuffle toward the  
case he tries to go in for another kiss.

I look to Dominic and want to say *this is my surprise?* Behind D  
body. Eliza enters. "Eliza!" I place the martini glass on the table and nea  
toward my sister. I throw my arms around her petite shoulders, smash  
romptly bodies together. "I didn't know you were coming." I kiss her cheek a

What is back to carefully scan her face for bruises. I release a breath of relief  
nips at see that her beautiful face is unmarked by that monster's hands. "You  
good."

"Me? You look amazing," she says as she holds our hands out and  
backward to get a better look at me. "Those shoes are...wow."

ping. I Bryan returns with my second martini and places it next to the other  
ssy and I get two more, please?"

ys and "You drinking the hard stuff?" Eliza says as she glances at the drink

"This one is for you." I walk over and sit on the sofa then pat the  
ler that beside me. Dominic gives me a small wink. Heat creeps over me as I  
my sister to join me while watching Dominic. I arch a brow and s  
ers, but teeth into my bottom lip. He's incredibly sexy in his fitted dark gray s  
self as his hair is slicked back, and there's a light sprinkling of stubble on his  
t I was. jawline.

Definitely Dominic is facing me and can't keep his eyes off me. Adrian's loc  
boisterous, as usual, and judging by the way Dominic is staring at me  
not listening to a word his brother is saying.

"You and Dominic, eh?" Eliza asks in a small voice. She nurses the  
n trance without actually sipping on it.

Nice to "No, it's not like that. We're just having a bit of fun."

ead and Adrian turns and instantly stiffens when he sees Eliza with a c  
side in Dominic places his hand on his brother's shoulder then shakes his he  
says something to Adrian, to which Adrian responds by sneering at  
Dominic, then nodding.

urly run Dominic walks over to me, leans down and gives me a kiss on the  
ing our "Behave yourself while Adrian and I head upstairs to work."

nd step I know it's not my business and I shouldn't ask, but that's never :

when I'm in the past. "Are you going to be long?"

look so "Not at all. Maybe half an hour." He turns to Bryan and says, "They can have whatever they want."

and steps "Yes, sir," Bryan replies.

"Hey," I say to stop him from leaving. Dominic and Adrian both look at me. "Cantoward me. I stand to my feet, and walk over to Dominic. I lean into his body, his hand automatically grips my hip. I close the space between us and place a small kiss to his cheek. "Thank you for bringing my sister here to the seat His fingers tighten as he pulls back. Dominic moves forward, and gives me a gentle kiss to my lips. His mouth hovers, his lips stay on mine for what I think my like forever. My heart rapidly beats as he pulls me into his body. The kiss is a dangerous promise of the dirty things he can do to me. He doesn't need to show me his dominance. This kiss is enough to tell everyone that I'm his.

He pulls back and kisses my forehead. "Behave," he warns. "But be fun."

Dominic turns and walks away, allowing me the best view of his ass. He's wearing that perfectly fitted dark gray suit. I shamelessly drink my martini, eager to see that ass naked.

"Well," my sister's voice reminds me she's here. I turn and strut toward her. She lifts the martini and has a sip while watching the door. "Behave. These men aren't..." She darts her eyes over to Bryan who's standing by the door. I have a feeling Bryan is more than a waiter. She leans in and whispers, "they're not good people."

"Then why did you marry Adrian? Everything happened so fast with you. You literally married him within months of meeting him. I know you stopped

pregnant.” A visibly shiver runs through Eliza. “Tell me why you n  
he girlsEliza.”

“It doesn’t matter.” She places the now empty glass on the table. “  
want you in this life.”

th turn “I’m not in it. Dominic is helping me since the fire, that’s all.”

is hard She laughs and shakes her head. “You’re in it now, and there’s no  
us andgetting out. Although, out of the two brothers, I think yours is bett  
.” mine.” Her shoulders slump as she releases a sigh. “Yours appear  
resses adecent.”

at feels I place my hand to her knee and she jerks back at my touch. I narri  
warmtheyes when she lifts her chin to look at me. “Let me help you.”

me. He Her sad eyes are glued to mine for a long moment. “Let’s danc  
/eryonechirps as if she wasn’t on the edge of tears.

“What?”

ut have “Come on, let’s dance. I haven’t danced in such a long time.” Sor  
deep inside tells me Eliza no longer wants to talk about it. She’s clea  
his assituation where she feels cornered and trapped, but for some reas  
him in,refuses to tell me why. She tugs on my hand as she heads toward th

“Come on, Rose.”

over to “Alright, alright.” I’ll leave it alone, for now.

careful, Bryan follows us out to the dance floor. We squeeze into a spot an  
waitingto move our bodies to the rhythm of the music. Eliza closes her ey  
over tosways her hips to the music. She looks happy and carefree as she mov  
dance floor is overly crowded, but still fun.

th him. She turns and backs up into me feeling the beat of the music. I love  
i’re nother relaxed. This is the Eliza I know and love, not the one who can  
look at me. Two hands grip my hips but this feels different from Dor

married, turn to see a guy getting close to me. I peel his hands off my body and my head. "One dance?" He places his palms together like he's praying I didn't. "No, sorry," I say and turn my back to him. He roughly places one hand on my hip and digs his fingers in. His body is too close to mine and I'm not feeling comfortable. "I said no." I swiftly move my elbow back to give him a way out. Nothing that could hurt him, but enough for him to know I'm not interested.

"Just one dance," he shouts over the music.

I turn to look at him and shake my head. I grab Eliza's hand and pull her away from him. "What was that about?" Eliza asks.

"He kept rubbing up against me and wouldn't take no for an answer," she says. Her eyes widen as she shakes her head. "He'd better stay away, because your boyfriend sees that, the guy's in a world of trouble."

"Dominic's not my boyfriend," I yell over the music.

She smiles and shakes her head. "Whatever you say." A new song starts and Eliza lifts her arms and sexily sways her body to it. She's completely in her element as she feels the music. Seeing her like this fills my heart with happiness, if only she could be like this all the time.

The songs melt into each other and I look around, knowing Dominic must be too far, but I don't see him. I do, however, see Bryan standing near the VIP area watching Eliza and me. I guess he is more than a waiter.

"Hey," I say to Eliza.

"What?"

"I'm thirsty. I'm going to get some water. Do you want some?" She looks over her head. "I'll be right back." She gives me a thumbs up and continues to barely dance. I don't really want to go back into the VIP area just for water so I go to the bar.

d shake “What can I get you?” the bartender asks over the heavy bass of the

. “Just a water, please.”

and on “Sure.” I turn to check on Eliza and make sure she’s not getting harassed. I’m not anyone. “Here you go.” He places the water on the counter and I let him have some.

ow I’m “You’re prettier than the other chick you’re with,” someone says left.

I turn toward the male voice, but now it’s on my right. I look that way and move to see the guy who was grinding against me. I roll my eyes and scowl

“Go away.”

.” “She’s hot, but you’re hotter.”

cause if “Fuck off.” I turn my back on him and drink the rest of my water.

“So it’s the easy way then.”

“What?” I whip around to look at him, and he cocks a brow and grins. Suddenly, I feel woozy and grab the edge of the counter. “

etely inhappening?” I know I’ve only had two drinks so I can’t be drunk. *Fuck*

art with “I’ve got you,” the guy says and places his arms around me.

My eyes close.

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“What can I get you?” the bartender asks over the heavy bass of the music.

“Just a water, please.”

“Sure.” I turn to check on Eliza and make sure she’s not getting hassled by anyone. “Here you go.” He places the water on the counter and I lift it to have some.

“You’re prettier than the other chick you’re with,” someone says to my left.

I turn toward the male voice, but now it’s on my right. I look that way and see the guy who was grinding against me. I roll my eyes and scowl at him. “Go away.”

“She’s hot, but you’re hotter.”

“Fuck off.” I turn my back on him and drink the rest of my water.

“So it’s the easy way then.”

“What?” I whip around to look at him, and he cocks a brow and smirks. Suddenly, I feel woozy and grab the edge of the counter. “What’s happening?” I know I’ve only had two drinks so I can’t be drunk. *Fuck.*

“I’ve got you,” the guy says and places his arms around me.

My eyes close.

## Chapter Fourteen

### Dominic



“That’s impossible,” I say as I pace back and forth upstairs.  
“It’s not,” Adrian replies. “I checked the inventory, everything is right. Looks like business is down.”

“No, it’s not,” I argue as I turn toward him. My phone vibrates in my pocket to see Bryan has sent me a message. *The girls are dancing, keeping an eye on them.* I walk over to the window to look down for them. Bryan is trying to prove himself to me, but when it comes to Rose, I don’t trust anyone but Marco with her. Even Frank is questionable. I scan the floor and easily spot my girl. “Adrian, I can tell you right now, we’ve been skimmed. This last week alone, expenses are up by nine percent, and our income is down by four percent. There’s a discrepancy.”

“I don’t know what to tell you, I’ve checked everything myself, and I’m sure no one’s stealing from us.”

“Perhaps...” I pause as I watch a guy approach my girl. My spine tingles and I ball my hands into fists. She sharply turns and pushes him, and he slinks away with his tail between his legs. I chuckle when I see my lioness



so forceful with him. He's lucky he just left because I don't think he knows what I'd do to him if he stayed. My hands relax and I turn toward the girl who's hitting the scotch. I look over to Marco and say, "What have I got for tomorrow?"

He pulls his phone out and looks through the calendar. "We're leaving in an hour. I'll be over to the docks."

I turn again to watch my girl. "In the afternoon, right?" Rosa breaks from Eliza and I watch as she walks over to the bar. "Why isn't she going to the VIP area?" I ask aloud as I keep switching between Eliza and Rosa.

"The shipment should be in by four," Marco says.

"We'll come in here in the morning when it's quiet. I don't want to be here knowing what we're doing," I say.

Adrian and "You're looking for nothing, because everything is fine," Adrian says.

"But if you want to waste your time, then be my guest."

In my zone out to Adrian as I see the guy who was grinding against me approach her. He says something to her then ducks around to the other girls. His movement is quick, and if you weren't watching, you wouldn't see it. I don't just saw. I fly out of the room and down the stairs. Marco is hot on my heels with Adrian behind him. "Get Eliza out of here!" I shout over my shoulder. "What is it?" Marco asks as I slam the door open at the bottom of the stairs.

"The fucker drugged her." I get to the bar and see him whispering to my girl as she stumbles beside him, his arms are wrapped around her in an embrace. Anyone would think she's had too much to drink, and he's pushing her out of the club.

The guy I push through the crowd and get to him just as he arrives to the door. Marco rushes ahead and stands between the guy and the door. "Mind your business."

“I’d like buddy?” the fucker says.

Adrian Marco tears Rosa out of his arms, and the guy stumbles back and  
I got on around. My fist knocks him on his ass. “Get her to the car,” I instruct Marco.

He gives me a curt nod and while holding my girl up he leaves through the  
door. I grab the guy by his shirt and drag him up. “What are you doing with  
my girlfriend?”

Adrian asks away “Your girlfriend?”

Marco is going to “Yeah, she’s drunk.”

With a tight grip on the back of his neck I open the door and see  
Marco placing Rosa in the front. Once Marco’s in the back, I push the fucker  
out of the car and sit beside him. “She’s your girlfriend, is she?” Frank takes  
off at a speed that makes the tires squeal on the road.

Adrian says. The guy looks at me, then Marco, then back to me. “Um.”

“What’s her name?” I ask.

Adrian says to my girl “Look, this is a misunderstanding.” I fucking punch the guy in the  
stomach three times in quick succession, knocking him out.

Adrian says to what I Marco snorts a small chuckle. “And the viper is back. Do you want  
to go to the heels, the dungeon?” Marco asks as we drive toward the house.

Adrian says to the older. “Yep.” I sit forward and check on my girl. She’s completely out of  
control. The phone vibrates and I slide it out of my pocket to answer. “Yeah?”

“Have you got him?” Adrian asks.

Adrian says to Marco “I do. Did you get Eliza out?”

Adrian says to Marco “Yeah, I’ve sent her home. I’ll meet you at yours.”

Adrian says to Marco helping “No. I’ll take care of this one.” My teeth grit together as I turn to  
face the fucker between Marco and myself.

Adrian says to Marco the door. Adrian chuckles. “Here I thought I was going to have some fun.” I  
feel a hot anger flooding through me. I sit back while Frank speeds toward

house. This fucker has no idea what's about to happen.

d looks

Marco.

ugh the

ng with



“Get him down to the dungeon,” I instruct Marco. “Chain him up.” My response is a brief nod. I open the passenger door and slide my arm under Marco my Rosa’s body and lift her as gently as I can. She doesn’t even stir, which causes me to grind my teeth together. That fucker intended to violate a woman, and for that, he needs to be held accountable.

Climbing the stairs, I take her to my room and lay Rosa on my bed. She is not coherent at all, and doesn’t know what’s happening to her. I slide her shoes off, then as carefully as I can, unzip her dress and gently slide it down her body. My eyes take her curves in, but right now isn’t the moment to admire her. Especially considering she’s at her most vulnerable.

I head over to my closet and open the drawer with all my t-shirts, take one out, and walk back to the bed where I sit her up and pull the t-shirt over her head and down her torso.

I pull the blanket over her body then sit on the edge of the bed staring at my woman. I softly stroke the hair away from her face before leaning in and placing a small kiss on her forehead.

Marco is standing at my door and he glances toward Rosa. “She looks alright.” He walks in and claps a hand to my shoulder in order to reassure me.

“I know,” I reply. “Is Alba in the kitchen?”

“She is.”

ang up

ard the

“And that fucker?”

“In the dungeon, chained to the wall.”

“Good.” We head down the stairs and I search for my cook. “Alba when I find her cleaning the kitchen.

“Mr. Sacco, can I help you?” Her eyes are hard telling me she has to have to work downstairs.

Marco’s “Rosa is in my bed. I need you to keep an eye on her.”

s under Her hand flies up to her chest. “Is she ill? Hurt?”

, which I try not to get Alba involved in business, but sometimes I can’t help I ate my traipse blood through the house. “She hasn’t been hurt, but I need you with her until I return. If she wakes before I’m back, send word.”

l. She’s “Of course, Mr. Sacco.”

ide her “Go.” She heads up stairs and I turn to Marco before I begin to walk down the dungeon.

ment to “She’ll be okay, Dominic. You got to her in time.”

. I take My jaw sends a painful reminder that it’s been clenched and tight. I take saw that fucker spike my woman’s drink. I don’t reply to Marco as we go our way down to the basement. I can hear the rattle of the chains as I approach the furthest room under the house. “Do you know who I am?” the guy screams at me and rattles the chains again.

g down I turn to Marco who lifts a brow and shakes his head. “You’re not going to reply as I stand five feet from him.

ie’ll be “I’m gonna fucking end you!” he spits and tries to pull the chains again, but they’ve magically become weaker.

ure me. I unbutton my shirt cuffs, and roll them up slowly as I walk back and stand in front of the guy. His wide eyes follow me, but he doesn’t speak a word as I prepare myself to work. Once my sleeves are rolled up I see

front of him with my hands on my hips. “Do you know who *I* am?” I say in a low voice, barely above a whisper.

,” I say. He looks around the room, searching for some kind of visual cues. “the fuck are you?”

nows I. I release a humorless chuckle. “Do you know who the woman is that’s drugged?”

“I didn’t drug anyone.”

“You spiked her drink.”

help but. “No, I didn’t,” he argues and rattles the chains.

to stay. “Yes, you did. I saw you. Do you know who she is?” He shakes his head. “Her name is Rosa Hopkins.”

“Dude, I don’t know who she is. Why should I care, I didn’t do anything wrong.”

I run my hand through my hair and breathe a deep, frustrated breath. “You come into *my* club and try to drug *my* girlfriend and now you deny it?”

since I. “Shit,” he groans.

e make. I lift my chin to look at him and cock a brow. “You put your hands on a woman.”

n?” the. “I didn’t know she was yours,” he says knowing the wrath I’m about to bring. I take the few steps until I’m in front of him and in rapid succession,

one,” I smash my fists into his stomach and face. His guttural groans are an aphrodisiac to me. “I’m sorry,” he begs.

in as if. “You touched a member of the Sacco Family.”

“I’m sorry,” he yells.

id forth. As I pound into his face, the sound of cracking bones spur me on. another continue. “Dominic,” Marco calls, pulling me out of my rhythm.

stand in. I wipe my forearm at the sweat beading across my hairline as I turn

ask in at Marco. "What?" He gestures with his eyes toward the cabinet in the  
If Marco didn't stop me, I would've just smashed this guy until he wa  
. "Whobut I want him to suffer. My knuckles are burning with a piercing pai  
push that aside and stroll over to the cabinet. "How many women ha  
hat you taken from my clubs?" I open the top drawer and search the impl  
before opening the second drawer and smirking when I find the  
pliers.

"No. This is the first time I ever did anything like that."

I reach for the pliers I want and a pair of metal snips. When I lift  
is head. close my eyes for a moment. "Seriously, man?" Marco grumbles from  
me. We both know the guy's words are lies and only spoken so we sp  
nything life.

The more he speaks, the louder is the pounding in my ears. "Yo  
1. "You after the wrong woman," I say as I strut back to face him, holding th  
and the snips. He balls his hands into fists and continues to struggle  
the chains. "Marco."

on my Marco pushes off the wall he was leaning against, walks over  
nameless man and grabs his hand, extending his fingers. "I'm sor  
bout to fruitlessly begs.

cession "Pinky?" Marco asks as he prepares the guy's hand. But the  
are anstruggling, attempting to keep his hand in a tight fist. Marco easily  
his pinky. I place the pliers at the base and clamp down ruthlessly. Th  
crush the bones in the finger, tearing the skin and nearly severing it.

"Next," I say.

on to The guy's screams echo deep inside the dungeon, but I know they c  
heard outside here. "Please," he begs as a long line of bloody drool f  
to look of his busted-up mouth.

corner. Marco already has his thumb out, which I clamp the tip with the pliers. It is dead, squeeze down near the base with the metal snips. “You touched someone, but that belongs to me,” I say as I take his thumb off. He screams in pain. “S-sorry,” he murmurs through the sobbing.

I step back and look at him. Blood is oozing from his hand, his entire body is beaten to the point his eyes are swelling. I walk over and place the pliers on top of the cabinet, then open the third drawer and take one of the utility knives out. “Sorry doesn’t cut it in my world.” I drive the knife through his lower stomach, twist it and drag it up until it’s near his sternum. Standing behind him, I watch as his guts leak out through the wound. His screams are more painful as he’s losing his life. “Don’t fucking touch what doesn’t belong to me!”

Blood is oozing out of his body, and I stay rooted to the spot, watching him die in front of me. His thrashing diminishes as a calm washes over him. The pliers head lolls forward and he exhales his last breath. “I’m done with him. Thank you, Marco. Get Frank and clean this up.”

Marco extends his hand and waits for the knife. “I’ll take care of this for you. I’ll be with your girl.”

I give Marco a curt nod before wiping my hands down my pants. I walk out of the dungeon and up to my room. Alba is sitting on the sofa under the window when I enter. She takes in my appearance then looks over to me. “She hasn’t stirred once in the last hour, Mr. Sacco.”

“Thank you, Alba. I’m sorry to keep you so late, you can leave.”

She stands and walks over to me. She lifts her hand to place it on my shoulder. “I see all the blood and pulls back. “She’s important to you.” Alba looks toward the bed, then back to me.

“She is.”

She kindly smiles and looks over at the bed once more. “Good night.”

ers and Sacco.”

nothing “Good night, Alba.” She leaves and I hear her light footsteps  
floorboards outside the room. I look over to my Rosa and decide it’ll  
if she doesn’t see the blood. I head into my bathroom to take a show  
ire facewash all this blood off of me.

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Sacco.”

“Good night, Alba.” She leaves and I hear her light footsteps on the floorboards outside the room. I look over to my Rosa and decide it’ll be best if she doesn’t see the blood. I head into my bathroom to take a shower and wash all this blood off of me.

## Chapter Fifteen

Rose



**M**y eyes open and it takes me a moment to realize I'm not in my room. I push the covers back and sit on the edge of the bed. My head is heavy, and fuzzy. "Oh man," I say as I lift my hand to scrub my fingers across my eyes. The thick black carpet beneath my feet tells me I'm in Doan's room.

I try to push off the bed, but the wooziness keeps me down. How much did I drink? I turn to look out the window and I'm met with darkness. "What time is it?" I say to myself. What time is it?

My mouth is dry and parched, and I feel like I have a killer hangover. My gaze roams around the expansive room, and I see my dress draped over the back of the plush sofa. I look down at my body to see myself in a t-shirt and pull the hem of the t-shirt back and find I'm still wearing my bra and jockey shorts. "What happened?" I rub at the tension between my brows as I search for a memory of what happened and how I ended up here.

The sound of the shower supersedes my frazzled recall, and I make a dash for the door stand without falling. I head toward the door that's ajar. I look in

pushing the door open. I'm blessed with the sight of Dominic's back in the shower. There are no curtains disrupting my view. It's like one large room with a large tub to the left, and opposite it, a rainfall shower head. No glass separating any of the areas, and a toilet behind the door. The wall itself is black tiled with a crisp white tub, vanity and toilet all rimmed in gold. It's anything but gaudy, more stylish. This bathroom could easily be in any home magazine.

My eyes are drawn to the heap of clothes on the floor. The *bloody* sound of water. I bring my hand up to cover my mouth, but the squeak escapes before I can stop it. Dominic turns to look at me. My hand falls as I drag my gaze from his body to his semi-erect cock. *Jesus*. His cock is thick and veiny, *delicious* in my room. "Rosa," he says without leaving the shower.

"Um." I break the hard observation of his cock to meet his eyes. I swallow the saliva pooling in my mouth and try not to look at his cock again. "What happened?" I point down to his heaped clothes, and just as I regain my strength, I see a gun sitting on the vanity. "Why..." my voice trails off. I had much did attempt to make sense of everything.

"You don't remember?" He lifts a brow before turning to continue shaving himself. Dominic has a full back piece tattoo. It's of Jesus on the cross. My angels on either side of him. The tattoo also has other biblical pieces scattered over the bottom, and all are wrapped in barbed wire. "Rosa," he says, dragging his -shirt. I'm out of my fascination of his sculptured back.

"What happened? Did I drink a lot?" He turns the water off, and I reach for my pants. He wraps it low around his hips and I can't for the life of me stop staring at him. "Did we have sex?" I'm gonna be so upset with me if he says no. He says yes, because I can't remember a moment of it.

"No, Rosa, we didn't," he snaps with a hint of frustration.

“Oh.” My heart seems to slow with hurt. “Sorry.” Hanging my head, I try my best to not let the disappointment show.

“Rosa.” I shake my head and take a step backward. He walks over and places his finger under my chin and tilts my head up. “I would never have had the advantage of you in the state you were in.”

My brows pull in as I try to recall the chain of events at the club. “What happened? Why are your clothes bloody?”

Dominic gestures for me to leave the bathroom, which I do and he follows. “Sit.” He points to the sofa. I walk over and sit, while he enters his bedroom, goes to the closet and returns with a t-shirt and boxer briefs. “Your drink was spiked.” “What?” I shriek as I lift my hand to my mouth again. “I don’t remember.”

“That’s the whole point.”

“How? When? What happened?” My eyes dart around the room as I try to make sense of everything I’ve seen since I’ve woken. My mind is scrambling to piece together the events. “You and Adrian went upstairs while Eliza and I had a couple of French martinis.”

“Yes, you had two, your sister had one.”

“You knew how much we drank?”

“It’s my job to keep you safe, so yes.”

I let that sit for a moment. I look down and focus on my shoes sitting neatly next to each other close to where my dress lies draped over the

chair. “Wait, I think I remember Eliza wanted to dance, so we were on the dance floor.”

“Yes,” he confirms as he tears the towel off and dries himself.

Other than the full back piece, he has no other tattoos on his body. I look at my eyes over his torso drinking in every ripple and sculpted part

ad, I do Although he's a welcome distraction, I really can't recall anything  
dancing. "My head is fuzzy. I just remember dancing."

to me, "A guy had his hands all over you."

er take I scrunch my brows as I try to recollect, but my memory is hazy at  
don't remember."

"What "You pushed him off, then went to the bar."

"I did?" I slowly lift my shoulders, not being able to confirm or den  
ollows. he's saying. "I feel so hopeless, how can I not remember any of this?"

walk-in "Because of the drug he slipped you."

ed." I've never had my drink spiked before so I can only take his word  
mber." effects. "What happened after I went to the bar?"

"I was upstairs and I saw him slip something in your drink. Yo  
I try to down virtually instantly. By the time I got down there, he was dragg  
umbling toward the door."

za and I "Dragging?" I swallow the lump in my throat while my heart ha  
with force inside my chest. "Dragging?" I repeat, feeling so sick that  
I'm going to vomit.

"It looked like you had too much to drink and he was helping you o

"But he wasn't helping me, he was going to..." my voice trails v  
sitting knowledge of what *could've* happened if Dominic wasn't there.

back of "He got as far as the door, but we stopped him."

on the I'm not sure how to react to the trauma considering I have no reco  
of it. "I feel sick to my soul." One hand covers my mouth while th  
goes to my roiling stomach. I look toward Dominic, who's now c

. I drag "What happened from there?"

of him. He walks into the bathroom and returns with his gun which he pl  
the bedside table before joining me on the sofa. He pushes his dark, v

after us off his face, and it falls effortlessly back into the way it usually sits brought you home.”

Something doesn't add up. “I'm not an idiot, Dominic. How do I get best. “I being lead out of the club to here? I couldn't imagine that a man who the risk of spiking a person's drink would just abandon the idea of what he intended to do.”

Why what He cups my hands in his and squeezes them. “He needed persuasion.”

“Can you define ‘persuasion’?”

Well on the “It's best you don't know,” his reply is instant.

“The bloody clothes?” I break out of his hold and point to the bathroom you went “Did you hurt him?”

ing you “Yes.” His jaw hardens as do his eyes.

I have a feeling I know what he did. That much blood on someone's clothes means there's been a serious injury. “Fatally?”

I think “Yes.”

I chew on the inside of my cheek while my brain attempts to process it.” candid replies. “You killed him.”

with the “Yes.”

At least he's not attempting to hide the truth, or worse still, lie to me. He killed him because he spiked my drink and he was going to...” I can't bring myself to say that horrid word.

ie other “Yes.”

dressed. I know I should jump to my feet and flee right this moment, but

hate the fact he killed him. Actually, my own inner darkness bares her fangs as she lowers a hand between her legs to satisfy her hunger. “He's a vet hair whisperer, desperate for the details.

is. “We “Rosa.” Dominic tilts his head to the side, obviously not wanting to  
the specifics.

go from “Tell me what you did to him.” I lean forward, ready to drink  
o takesgruesome facts. Dominic arches a brow and straightens his shoulder  
hateverentire demeanor changes, from soft and careful to powerful and dan

My breath quickens as I watch him transform in front of my eyes. “I  
l somehumiliate him?”

“I had him chained to the wall,” he says as his power emerges. I nip  
lower lip wanting more. “I beat him until I heard his nose and cheek  
crack.”

hroom. Moisture pools between my legs and I find myself waiting for more  
he cry?”

“He was sobbing when I cut his fingers off.”

neone’s My pulse heats as I snicker. “What else did you do to him, Dominic?”  
He shifts and extends his arms on the back of the sofa confidently. “  
him.”

ress his I move to straddle his lap, feeling his hardness between my legs. “I  
grind once against his sheathed cock just so I can get the pleasure m  
darkness is chasing.

a. “You “I gutted him. Stabbed the knife into his stomach and dragged it up  
i’t eventook his last breath.”

“You didn’t shoot him?”

“No, he didn’t deserve a bullet.” He grips my hips and tightens his  
I don’taround my fleshy skin. “Is this turning you on, Rosa?”

er teeth My chest is heaving as I enjoy every single word escaping from his  
ow?” I Lips I desperately want on mine. “I’m loving every single word.”

He releases his right hand and brings it up to grip the back of my neck

As my fingers tighten, it's almost painful but the delicious sting is forcing me to come alive. "You're a dangerous woman." He pulls me down and slides his tongue into my mouth on his. His tongue forces its way between my lips, claiming me with a reckless demand. I try to pull back, but his strong hand keeps me exactly where he wants me.

Did you Our kiss is anything but gentle. Our teeth clink once but, it's not enough for him to give up control. Nor is it enough for me to want him to. He presses his tongue against mine and a small growl vibrates deep inside his cheek bones. My skin heats from his hunger, my own inner darkness aroused by his dominance. "Dominic," I murmur against his lips.

He pulls back and stares at me for a few seconds. "You're not scared?" I shake my head slowly. "The exact opposite."

A tiny smile lifts the corner of his mouth. "Get on your knees," he commands. Small pebbles instantly spread across my body. I lift off my feet and fall to my knees in front of him, eagerly waiting for whatever he wants from me, although I suspect I know. My inner darkness prowls back and forth between us crackles as I watch him staring at me. "The things I want to do to you?"

"Do them," I reply without a hint of hesitation.

He taps his finger to his smiling lips. "Take everything off," his instructions are fierce and deliberate. I stand in front of him and tear my shirt off over my head leaving me in my panties and bra. "All of it." I pull my bra, take it off and drop it to the floor next to his feet, then bend at the waist and pull my panties down my legs until I'm completely bare. "This." He sits back and tenderly runs his fingertip across my small tattoo of a rose. It's a dark mark. His notice his knuckles are split and inflamed, most likely from beating



my body who spiked my drink. I reach my hand out and skim my fingers across the evidence of what happened. "This was for you."

My pussy clenches at his pleasing words. "For me," I repeat and I drop my knees again.

"Don't move." He stands to his feet. "Eyes forward." My breath hits me. I hear him behind me. I want to look, but he told me not to. I want to touch, but I know better. Not because I'm terrified of him, it's because my inner darkness craves his. He returns to the sofa and sits by his gun beside him. He sits on the sofa and reclines backward. "The cock out." My eyes go to the gun, then back at him. "It's not loaded. Why did he get it?" "My cock."

His cock is straining inside his boxer briefs, the outline already making my mouth water. I reach into his briefs and wrap my hand around his thick tip. "Like this?" His cock thickens in my hand, I grip it with more force than I can smile.

"Suck me, Rosa."

I lower and take the tip in my mouth, swirling my tongue around the tip while watching him watch me. My eyes keep darting to the gun then back to him. The more I see it, the harder I suck on his tip. I pull my head away from the gun again before trailing my finger over my lower lip. "Your little sin," I say.

He lifts the gun from beside him and checks it. "Lift up." Dominick unclasp forward and sinks a finger into me. "Your cunt is soaking wet. Do you want me to fuck you?"

"Yes," I breathe as I steady myself on his lap.

"This pussy wants my cock, doesn't it?" I swallow the desire pooling in my mouth and nod once. He removes his finger and I miss his intrusion.

cross the body. Dominic moves the gun down between my legs. My pussy is so wet I can feel my juices rolling down the inside of my thighs. Is he going to blow me over to what I think he is? “Slowly, lower.” I look down and the butt of the gun is sitting upright. “Slow.” The intrusion of the gun is bizarre yet strangely intoxicating. I sink down until I’ve taken as much as I can. The stimulation is invigorating, knowing there’s a gun inside me. “Now, suck me.” He pushes his hand into the hair at the back of my head and forces me down on his cock.

My body is tingling from all the sensations. The gun feels different from a vibrator or a dildo. It’s wider and shorter so it’s not quite reaching the spot I need. But because I know it’s a gun the feeling is more illicit...*dangerous*. I try to take Dominic as far as I can, but my gag reflex won’t allow me to take his cock. “Swallow and relax your throat,” he croons with his fingers laced through my hair. “Take me all in.” I do what he wants, and find I can take him all in.

But I want more. I want my lips around the base of his cock. “Move your hips, baby. Ride that gun while I fuck your mouth.” Dominic moves his other hand to pinch and tug on my nipple. I want to get back to all of it. I moan around him while I keep my mouth on his hard cock. My nerve endings spark to life and just like a trail of gun powder that’s lit, you taste feel the fire growing more intense as every second passes.

“Such a good girl,” he praises me as I continue to work his cock. “Take me all in.” The tight coil in my stomach is about to erupt with unadulterated, guilt-free pleasure. “My good girl.” He releases my nipple from the pinch and wipes at the tears spilling from my eyes. “If only you could see how beautiful you look, riding my gun while fucking me with this gun in your mouth.” He wipes at the saliva dripping from my lips.

The coil inside me is tightening, my heart is racing, and I can feel

o wet moisture between my legs. My eyes close as I concentrate on holding to my own quaking body from exploding. Dominic suddenly pulls me. The gun is cocked, and I find myself groaning at the loss. "Up." He gestures with a crazily finger. I stand and allow the gun to tip over onto the floor. Dominic tetches his t-shirt and boxer briefs. "Come here." I climb onto him and he leans. He pushes me down, impaling me on his hard cock. I roll my head back as his hard stay still for a single moment, allowing my body to adjust to him filling me.

"Look at me," he demands.

It takes more than a second for me to take a deep breath and look at him. "Dominic," I whisper as I gather my wits.

He moves his hand between us and begins to rub at my clit. My body involuntarily rolls from side to side, back and forth. "That's it, baby. Push down, clench your pussy." I do and he groans. His thumb presses harder. His movements speed. "This belongs to me, Rosa." He pulls back and thrusts at my clit. I let out a small yelp and clench again. "Who does this belong to?"

He moves his head forward and takes my nipple between his teeth, applying a fierce pressure until I cry out. Dominic moves his head back and stares at me. "Who does this belong to?" He stills my thrusting hips and ardently strokes my pussy.

"You," the word tumbles from my mouth and I feel no shame or fear. "I want to belong to you, Dominic," I admit to him. To myself, too.

He smiles and says, "Good girl. Now ride me until you milk my cum from this perfect pussy." He leans forward again and takes my nipple in his mouth. His thumb strokes and coaxes every drop from me. My body attempts to react to all the sensations. Every single one of them.

My soul cries out for more, to be used and fucked until I can no longer think straight. Dominic's ownership of my body is making me into a

ing backslut who craves his rough touch. The blaze inside is taking over, driving off his closer and closer to my own release.

with his “That’s it, fuck me like you’re my good girl.” *Good girl* – hot. He bears offbreast, and applies hard pressure.

s us up. My body erupts with a desire I’ve never felt before. Dominic packs and hand away from my clit, painfully digs his fingers into my hips, and brings me up. He lifts a hand, wraps my hair around it and yanks my head down into his mouth. He muffles my cries with a hard kiss. His mouth is owning me. I try to own him. Every single part. “Take all of me.”

I happily take every drop he gifts.

My hips Our bodies relax against each other, and Dominic unwinds my hair. Sink his grip. My head had been tilted to the side where he was tugging under his hair, and I right it to look into his eyes. “It’s never been like that before.”

ing to?” He holds my jaw and turns my head so I’m facing him. His other hand applies snakes between us, cupping my pussy. His cock is still inside me, and his level of intimacy is crazy. Although I’m sitting on Dominic, he takes control. “From here on in, I’m the only man who will ever give you pleasure again.” My head is nodding in agreement. “Say it, so I know you heard me right.” “I heard.” Both hands tighten and I feel myself seeking this level of control. “You’re the only man who will ever give me pleasure,” I repeat with words slowly. His fingers relax, satisfied with me. “And I’m the only man who will ever give you pleasure again.” His hard grasp returns, but I refuse to let go. He gives me his intense stare. “If you want this, then I don’t share.”

The corner of his mouth lifts as he brings me in for another dominant, longer hungry kiss. I might not have gotten a verbal answer from him, but I want to own him, the way he owns me.

ring me    Shit, this is going to get complicated.

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Shit, this is going to get complicated.

## Chapter Sixteen

### Dominic



**M**y eyes open as the light breaks through the window. Rosa's naked body is curled nearly on top of me. Her leg is slung over my thighs, while her arm hugs me around the waist. My arm is under her, holding my girl close to me. I begin to draw lazy circles on her back causing her to moan and stir. Although she's asleep, she's responsive to me and my touch. I lean over and kiss her forehead before slowly moving my arm from under her body.

Rosa turns to face the opposite direction and I'm left with a perfect view of her back and ass. I look forward to being able to claim that part of her. But for now I need to get ready for work.

I head into the bathroom and turn the shower on, before stepping in. It doesn't take me long to shower, and head out to the bedroom where Rosa is still asleep. I walk into my closet and take one of my suits off the rack. When I return to the bedroom, Rosa is stirring. She reaches out for me, but when she finds the bed empty, one eye cracks open.

"Go back to sleep," I say as I watch her wake.

“Why are you over there?”

“I have work to do.”

“What time is it?”

I walk over to the bed, sit, and lightly sweep the hair off of her head.  
“Sleep. It’s early.”

“I’ve got things I have to do. I should head back to my room.”  
I stretch and yawns.

“Your room?” I ask.

“Yeah, I should go back.” Rosa sits up in bed and lifts the sheet to cover her exposed torso. My cock twitches when I catch a glimpse of her nips.

“This is your room,” I say as I stand so I can start dressing.

“No, I have my own room.” She turns to look at me, disgruntled. “No, I have my own room.”  
She clutches the sheet closer to her body as she attempts to stand without holding onto the bedding.

I unhook the towel and hear her gasp. I arch a brow as I see she’s staring at my body. In particular my cock, which responds to her attention by getting harder. “If you keep staring at me the way you are, I’ll think you want that’s the case, then get over here and bend over the bed.”

“What?” she says without lifting her eyes.

“Come here, Rosa.” Shamelessly she drops the sheet and walks over to me, naked. When she’s within reach, I grab and spin her around. I push her down on the bed, and kick her legs out so I have complete access to her pussy.  
“You made me hard.” I insert a finger into her wet pussy. This woman is sexually charged, that just looking at me makes her body respond. Her pussy clamps my fingers and squeezes. God, she sends me fucking crazy. She’s wet and ready for more than my fingers. I stand behind her, line my fingers with her greedy hole and sink into her until I’m buried deep inside. “C



sheets.” Her hands fist the bedding. I lean over Rosa’s body and she  
look at me. “Open.” I tap on her mouth. I shove my fingers into her m  
she can taste how perfect she is. “Lick them clean.” Her mouth and  
er face.fuck my fingers like she did my dick last night.

She’s going to be the death of me.

1.” She I close my eyes for a moment to feel how good she is around my co  
moans and groans send waves through my body. I take my fingers ou  
mouth and kiss her shoulder. “Play with your clit while I fuck you.”

o cover “Oh God,” she murmurs as she snakes her hand between her and  
ple. and begins rubbing herself. Her breathing increases as does the speed  
fingers.

1.” She My hand lifts and I connect it with her ass. Her flesh blooms w  
gettinghandprint, and I spank her in quick succession. Her groans grow wi  
strike, and her butt reddens from my hand. “Your my good girl, Rosa.”  
aring at “Yes, I am,” she agrees. Her scent assaults my senses, turning me w  
gettingfuck her. I lean back slightly and land a few spanks on her upper  
t me. If“More, please,” she shamelessly begs.

My lioness is insatiable. I spank her harder, causing her to jolt fr  
“Does my good girl like it hard?”

r to me “Yes, please. Harder.” Fuck me. I spank her ass then lean over an  
er headher nipple between my fingers. “I’m coming,” she moans as trem  
r body.through her body. I release her nipple, straighten and dig my fingers i  
an is sohyps.

r pussy My own release is only a few thrusts away. I close my eyes and f  
he’s sowith so much intensity I move the bed. I smash into her over and ove  
rself upuntil my balls draw up, my cock hardens, and my cum shoots inside of  
Grip the Once I’m done, I stand and lightly spank her ass a few times. “I

turns to reason, you'll be moving into my bedroom." I pull out of her and head south to the bathroom. When I return she's not in the room. I pick my towel and tuck it around my hips and go to find her. "What are you doing?" I ask.

I find her in her room already wearing a pair of leggings and a t-shirt.

"I'm..." She looks around the room attempting to find something to do. She crosses my arms in front of my chest as I wait for her weak excuse. "Could it not be here like that?" Rosa gestures over my body.

"Would you rather I remove the towel?"

the bed "Yes. No. Stop it!" She stomps a foot making me snicker. "All of her smirking." She lifts her finger to point at me.

"Get your stuff and come to my room."

with my "No." I walk over to her, grab her and sling her over my shoulder. "Both of us got to be kidding me, Dominic. You just picked me up like a damn rag doll."

"I'll have that room boarded up so you can't get back into it." I walk wild as I go to my room, and throw her on my bed. "Are you on the pill?"

thighs. "It's too late now if I'm not, isn't it?" She taps her finger to her

"Actually, no it's not. The morning-after pill."

forward. My body becomes rigid. "You're not on the pill?"

She stands from the bed and walks over to the door, where she tucks and pinches, "I am, but I'm saying that if I wasn't I'd have to purchase the morning-after pill."

into her "Get back here." I'm sick of chasing her around this damn house.

"You need to relax before you give yourself a heart attack. I'm just here to get my stuff."

or again She'll be the absolute death of me. By the time she returns, I'm buttoning my shirt cuffs. She stops just inside the door with her arms crossed. "For this all her worldly possessions. "Are you enjoying the view?"

had into She shakes her head and takes a sharp breath. “Go away.” She ac  
up and into the room and stands awkwardly staring at me. “Um, where shou  
k when this?”

Rosa has caught me off guard. I wasn’t expecting to move her in  
o say. I quickly as she has. “In here.” I walk into my closet and point to  
an you drawers. “Move whatever you want to make room for your things.”

“Considering this is all I own.” She dumps it all on the top of one  
benches and follows me out. My eye twitches when I see she’s left th  
nd stop heap. “I need to go back to the apartment and try to salvage whateve  
Maybe my car hasn’t been totally destroyed.”

“The apartment building is condemned. You can’t enter it. Whatev  
You’ve you had is now gone.”

doll.” She sinks against the bed and lowers her chin. “Everything?”

ilk over “Yes.” Rosa leans her elbows on her knees, lowers her head and cov  
face with her hands. I finish tying the tie then walk over to her. I sit  
mouth. Rosa and wrap her in my arms.

Just like in bed, she effortlessly turns toward me and buries her he  
my shoulder. “I’m sorry,” she whispers and pulls back. “I’ve ruine  
rns and shirt.” She wipes the tears away from my shirt. “You probably have v  
orning-do and I’m keeping you.” Rosa stares at the spot on my shoulder, h  
brimming with tears.

I do have two meetings this morning, but I’ll have Marco push the  
it going so I can take my woman out for breakfast. I stand and hold my hanc  
her. “Wear something nice.”

already Rosa scoffs and shakes her head. “Last time I wore something nic  
holding asshole tried to spike my drink and you ended up killing him.” H  
widen as she slowly lifts her hand to her mouth. “You killed a man.”

lvances “I’ve killed many.”

ld I put She lowers her hand and reaches for mine, running her fingers o  
bruised knuckles. I think I’ve broken one, but it’s not like I haven’t do  
here asbefore. “A part of me wants to run.” She flicks her gaze up to me then  
a fewmy knuckles. Rosa’s breath hitches and she worries her lower lip betw  
teeth. Her chest is rising and falling with intensity. Her body def  
e of thewords. “I discovered something about me last night when you had n  
em in athe butt of the gun.”

r I can. My cock strains inside my pants with her dirty mouth. “Language.”

“Do you want to know what I discovered about myself?” Rosa step  
ver it isand places her hand on my chest. My lioness thinks she has the upper  
It’s time I show her she’ll never lead. That’s not her job, it’s mine. I g  
wrist and place it behind her back, then take her other wrist and hold  
vers herthem in one of my hands. Her features soften and become almost drea  
: beside“What are you doing?” she whispers.

“This is what I do.” I cup her pussy in my free hand. A small gro  
ad intoout between her swollen, tortured lips. “You have one job here, Rosa.”  
ed your “What’s that?”

work to “To allow me to lead you.” I rub at her clit through her leggings a  
er eyeslike every other moment we’ve been together, her body responds to me

Rosa pushes her tits into my chest, as her eyes roll back and close. ‘  
m backknow what’s happening to me.” She grinds her hips on my hand, desp  
l out tofind another release. “I know I should run, but I want to stay.”

She’s most honest with me when I play with her body. “Do you cr  
e somehands on you?”

er eyes “Yes,” she whimpers without hesitation.

“Do you want me to mark you?”

“So much.” She licks her lips as she continues to roll her hips s  
ver mybring her to orgasm.

one that I lean into her and whisper, “You’ll fuck whatever I want you to fuc  
back to Her body tenses and she finally nods. “I like this darkness,” she wh  
een herbefore her breath hitches and she releases another low groan. She’s  
ies heredge. A few more strokes of her clit and she’s going to explode. I p  
ne fuckhand away from her leggings and her eyes snap open. I don’t rele  
hands though, keeping her hostage to me. “What are you doing?”

“You have one job,” I repeat. “To allow me to lead you.” With he  
s closerincapacitated behind her back, I grip her neck at the hairline and bring  
r hand.for a forceful kiss. She’s going to have to learn that everything is d  
grab herway, and she will love every moment if she just surrenders and trust  
both ofpull away from the kiss, and release her hands. “Get ready, I’m taki  
um like.out.”

Her wide blue eyes search my face. “What? What about me? Yo  
an rollsleave me like this.”

I glance down at her leggings and smile. “Yes, I can.” I turn her and  
her butt causing her to jump a little. “Hurry up, you have one minute.”

and just “I need more than one minute to get myself off because you stopped

a. I spank her ass again. “Touch yourself and you’ll have a month of n  
“I don’tin your mouth and no release for you.”

erate to Her shoulders inch forward as she takes herself to the closet to

While she’s changing, I head downstairs to find Marco in the kitchen.  
ave mykneading dough to make fresh bread. “You’re late,” he says as he si  
coffee.

I ignore his observation. “Push my two meetings back to this afterno

Without hesitation he says, “Okay.” He places his coffee cup

o I cancounter, and takes his phone out of his pocket. “Also, one of the rest  
was broken into last night.”

k.” “Which one?”

impers “Luciana’s.”

on the “Tell Frank to get the car ready.”

ull my He sends Frank a text. “Done.”

ase her I look to Alba then back to Marco. “And our guest?”

“Gone,” Marco replies.

r hands Rosa appears in the kitchen dressed somewhat more appropriately i  
g her inand a light sweater. “Hi Marco.” She walks over to Alba and leans aga  
one mycounter. “Good morning, Alba. What are you making?”

s me. I “Oh, Rose.” Alba stops kneading and lifts her hands to cup Rosa’s  
ng youbut lowers them considering they’re covered in bread dough. “A  
feeling better?”

u can’t Rosa looks to me in question. “Alba looked after you for a few hour  
Marco and I worked.”

l smack Realization crosses Rosa’s face, and a small smile appears. “I’r  
better. Thank you for looking after me, Alba.” She looks at the dough  
l.” counter. “Is that for bread? Or pizzas?”

ay cock “I’m making fresh bread to have with dinner tonight.”

Rosa places her hand to her stomach. “Yum. Thank you.” Her com  
change.causes Alba’s face to split into a large grin.

Alba is “Rosa,” I instruct and extend my elbow for her to take.

ps on a She walks over to me and laces her arm through mine. “Where  
going?”

on.” “We’re going to see a business that was broken into last night.” I c  
on themy words carefully. “Friends of the family.”

restaurants “Oh no.” Her brows draw in. “No one was hurt, were they?” I  
walking ahead of us and shakes his head. “That’s good.” Frank is  
with the back door open. Once we’re in the car, we head toward  
restaurant. “Exactly how many cars do you own, Dominic?”

“A few, why?”

“This is the third one I’ve seen.”

I smirk as I turn to look at her. “I have a few.”

Rosa’s face full of question. “Why do you have so many when you  
in jeans only drive one at a time?”

Instead I place my hand on her thigh possessively, lean over and give her  
kiss to the cheek. “Because I can.”

cheeks Rosa snickers as she shakes her head. “Of course.”

are you “I’ll take you to the garage and show them to you.”

“I’d like that.” She places her hand over mine and gently squeezes.

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## Rose

compliment

“Oh, I’ve been here before,” I say as the car pulls up in front of Luca

“Eliza and I love the Italian salad, and their mushroom risotto. Oh my  
are we it’s so good! Have you had it?”

Dominic extends his hand to assist me out of the car. “Yes,” he replies  
in a clipped tone. He closes the door, and pulls me back toward him. “Be  
girl and my mouth will fuck your pussy tonight.”

Marco's My mouth is instantly dry, but I do my best to gulp. Yeah, he'd be waiting for me an orgasm after this morning. "Deal," I say in a small, steady voice. Great, now all I'm going to be able to think about is his head between my thighs.

Marco walks ahead of us and opens the door to the restaurant. Dominic places his hand to the small of my back and steers me inside.

My heart breaks when I see an older woman, maybe in her late 70s sitting on a chair near the back crying. An older man, who I suspect is her husband, is rubbing her back while standing beside her. "Dominic," the man says with a definite Italian accent.

"Alonzo," Dominic greets. "Luciana." Both of them look at me, then back to Dominic. "This is Rosa, my soon-to-be wife." His fucking what? What the hell is this happen?

"Rosa," Luciana says as she slowly stands, grasps my cheeks between her hands and gives me two kisses, one on each cheek. "You are beautiful."

The tightness in my chest doesn't allow me to say more than, "Thank you." She releases my cheeks and sits again.

I hold my hand out to shake Alonzo's, but he shakes his head and takes a small step back. Shit, what did I do? Dominic turns and whispers, "No touching. Not allowed to touch you."

I'll have to lock that away for now – along with the whole wife thing. Luciana's, talk to him about that later. "Of course. My apologies." He could've said anything but God, that before I offered to shake his hand.

"What happened, Luciana?" Dominic asks as he drags out a chair for her. He lies in and offers it to me. I guess this is where I have to do whatever he tells me to do. I do a good dutifully sit and wait for whatever else I'm supposed to do. He's through.



atter, he into the deep end. Dominic sits beside me and possessively places his hand on my thigh.

etween “I don’t know, Dominic. We came in this morning to make the pasta and found the place like this.” Luciana sweeps her hand over the dining room, where chairs and tables have been overturned. “The cash register is gone, we can’t afford to replace it. They took food from the kitchen, too.” Luciana bursts into tears. “Times have been so difficult.”

It is her “It’s okay, *amore*, we’ll make it work,” Alonzo whispers to his wife. He rubs her back. My heart is bursting for the both of them. They’re so close together.

Then back to Dominic turns to Marco and says, “Who do we know that can recommend a better cash register for them? It needs to be more secure.”

Marco’s mouth twists as he thinks about it. “Bruno should be able to recommend one.”

” “Get him here today.” Marco’s already on the phone. “How did they break the window?”

“The bathroom window,” Alonzo says. “They broke it.”

takes a “Get the window replaced, and bar them all up too,” Dominic instructs. The man is Marco.

“Dominic, we have no money to pay for these things. Please, don’t worry about it, we’ll figure out another way.”

told me “You always look after me when I come here, and now it’s my turn to look after you.”

air and *Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.* This makes it harder for me to put distance between us. I know Dominic has a level of softness which I’m falling for, not to mention his hard, dominating ways.

“Please, give us some time and we’ll repay you,” Luciana offers.

is hand Dominic links our hands and stands, prompting me to stand with  
never want to hear you say that again. This is my gift to you.” He  
a sauce, around the restaurant. “Do you need anything else?”

g room Alonzo is furiously shaking his head. “No, no, no. You do too much  
ne, and already, Dominic.”

o.” She “If you need anything else.” *Stop it!* Stop being so damn perfect  
how he’s showing so much compassion for these two elderly people.

fe as he Luciana struggles yet again to stand. When she does, she wraps her  
dorable arms around his center and hugs him. Dominic’s uncomfortable st  
something I find amusing. “Thank you so much.”

nstall a He awkwardly pets her shoulder and attempts to push her away. “  
pleasure.” She releases him from her bear hug and steps back. This ti

e to do tears are of happiness, not sadness. Alonzo extends his hand to  
Dominic’s who’s more comfortable with this level of appreciation.

y come We head out of the restaurant and I want to say something ab  
generosity, but choose not to. Instead, I tone down what I want to say  
was a really nice thing you did for them.”

nstructs “They look after me, so I’ll look after them.” Frank is waiting w  
back door open. Once we’re in he says to Marco, “Get hold of their su  
t worry and take care of their bills for the month.”

*Stop it!*

to look “On it.”

We need to have a conversation about the whole *wife* thing, but t  
reen us. wait until we’re in a more private setting. The car merges onto the str  
ion his I sit staring out the window.

In these moments of silence, I’m forced to remember the conver  
had with Eliza at the club. I turn to Dominic and ask, “Is Eliza okay to

him. “I “She’s with my brother,” he replies curtly.

e looks I glance at Marco and Frank before nodding my head once. That’s comforting thought, knowing she’s with him. I have to figure out how to get away. Shit, this means we’re going to have to flee together.

I stiffen in the seat as I attempt to silence my head and my heart. I hate Dominic, but his brother is a monster who hurts Eliza. I’m going to break off whatever it is Dominic and I have, take Eliza, and leave.

chubby I can’t let myself fall for Dominic.

ance is I remain silent as I attempt to figure out how we’re going to get away. Adrian. “Rosa,” Dominic’s low voice drags me out of my own thoughts. It’s then I notice the car has stopped and Dominic has his time here extended while he waits for me.

shake Once out of the car, I look around and again see we’re outside a cafe. “What are we doing here?”

out his “We’re having breakfast.” Dominic takes my arm and hooks it around my shoulder, “That’s all right.”

The front of the café has large French doors that are partially pulled open to create a massive opening. Marco is already inside speaking with some of the staff. When he sees Dominic, he gives him a curt nod.

“Do you know everyone?”

“Most people know me.”

Marco and the waiter advance toward us. Marco breaks off and goes to get a table on the side. “Mr. Sacco, it’s nice to see you.” The waiter bows his head as a courtesy toward me. “If you’d care to follow me.” He leads us toward the back, where we’re secluded in an intimate section.

sation I “Thank you,” I say when Dominic doesn’t acknowledge him once we’re seated. The waiter gives me a tight smile and glances toward Dominic.

sees this exchange between us and cocks a brow. The waiter leaves not a Dominic sits back in the seat and lifts his chin. The air has changed but to get us, it's intense and strained. "What is it?" I ask, already frustrated.

Dominic looks over toward the counter then returns his steely gaze to me. I like me. "I'm not accustomed to this," he finally says as he gestures toward the waiter who seated us.

"Accustomed to what?"

"I want to fucking kill him."

Why from "Why?"

heavy "Because of the way he looked at you." His words should honestly be handed to me, but my inner darkness purrs with excitement.

"You can't kill every man who looks at me," I say with no conviction. He turns his head toward me and smirks. Dominic grabs my chair and pulls it toward him so our bodies are touching. He leans into me and whispers, "I can do whatever the fuck I want." Dominic glides the tip of his finger down my neck leaving behind a trail of goosebumps. I try my hardest not to lean back my eyes and lean into his touch, but my inner darkness sparks alive. His hand travels between my legs as I sit straighter and cup his hand, hoping no one can see. "Do you want me to gouge his eyes out, Rosa?"

I nip on my lower lip, absolutely turned on by the thought of destroying a man over me. I swallow the dryness in my throat and open my eyes. "If he tried to hurt me I'd want you to do whatever you could to hurt him." The words tumble out of my mouth shamelessly.

"I could slit his throat just for looking at you." Dominic's auburn eyes darken with his own desire. Is it his own bloodlust, or arousal for me? His hand slips into my jeans and I try to hide what he's doing to me under the table. "Spread your legs."

es and “Jesus,” I mumble as I look around the half full café, hoping  
between catches us.

“Always greedy for my touch.” He dips a finger into me and I cl  
toward eyes as he slowly fucks me with his finger.

ard the “Coffee with cream?” I suck in a breath and open my eyes. Shit,  
waitress see where his hand is?

“That would be mine,” I say, attempting to keep my voice even. She  
it in front of me. “Thank you,” there’s a definite break in my tone.

“One black coffee.” The waitress places Dominic’s down and t  
terrify leave.

“What are you doing?” I ask just as his thumb applies pressure to m  
m. “Fucking you.”

id pulls “In a café?”

pers, “I He peppers small kisses beneath my ear, then whispers, “This cunt  
r down to do whatever I want with, whenever I want.” He rubs at my clit and  
o close in the moan.

is other I grab hold of his hand, and look over to him. “Please,” I beg. I p  
ping no my body so I can use his hand to get myself off.

“What do you need?”

of him I swallow and lick my lips while trying to keep my control. “I v  
pen my come, but...”

o him,” “What is it?” His darkened eyes capture mine, refusing to allow me  
away. He moves his head forward, sealing his mouth over mine w  
rn eye thumb and fingers expertly bring me to the very edge of an orgasm.  
ne? His into his mouth, desperate for that extra pressure so I can finally rele  
ider the frustrations.

Suddenly, he stops and I pull back from his kiss. “What are you do

no one whispers harshly. My eyes are wide, my heart is racing, and a fine sheen of sweat is forming on the nape of my neck.

lose my breath. He removes his hand from my pants, and brings his fingers to his lips. Just when I thought he was going to lick, he coats his lips with my sweat. He leans over and passionately kisses me. He grips the back of my head, and I'm pressed to him for long moments. Dominic pulls back and licks my neck. He places his fingers on my lips. "Your taste makes me hard." He touches my lips with the fingers of his other hand. "I love your lips all swollen. Especially when you're crying." He turns to his knees, fucking me with them as tears cling to your cheeks."

I blink several times, totally turned on. My inner darkness is ready to take over. I want to get under the table and suck him, right now. I inhale a deep breath and shake my head, attempting to subdue my own carnal desires. I close my eyes for a moment and count to ten, refusing to give in to this darkness daring to take me through. "You have to stop," I whisper, barely able to speak a complete sentence.

When I open my eyes, I find the table holds four different dishes in different positions. Dominic's smoldering eyes are fixed on me. "I'll never stop." He pulls out a chair and looks at the food. Taking a set of flatware wrapped in a napkin, he hands it to me. "You need to eat."

want to get up. Hesitantly, I reach out for the cutlery, careful not to move too much on my seat or I might end up coming just from the friction of my jeans and the heat of the food. I look against my sensitive pussy. I have to pull myself together and stop letting his words distract me.

I groan. It takes me a few moments to compose myself, and once I do I take a deep breath. I use the pancakes and slide them onto my plate, then drench them in sauce. I heartily eat those while trying to think about how I'm going to broach the subject of "broaching?" I

been of difficult conversations with Dominic. “Before, at the restaurant, you  
was your soon-to-be wife.”

mouth. “Yes,” he confirms confidently.

desire, “Well, I’m not.”

keeping “You will be.”

his lips. My movement falters as my fork is midway to my mouth. “Th  
he had something you just make a decision over, Dominic. You need to ask,  
in your to accept, *then* you can claim me as a soon-to-be wife.”

He spears a sausage and shoves it into his mouth. “No, I don’t.”

to crawl “It doesn’t work the way you think it does,” I say.

take my “In my world, it’s the only way it works.”

is for a “You can’t claim me like I’m a lost puppy who needs a home.”

to burst “I can claim you, but not like the way you described. More like,  
complete world, we take what we want. And I want you.”

He speaks as if in the infinite. Like his word is gospel, what he say  
es, and “No, sorry,” I challenge. “I’m not in your world, which means I don’t  
lls back your rules.” I look around at the food and remember we didn’t order an  
e hands “How did they know what to bring out?”

Dominic lifts his cup to have some of his coffee and chuckles. “I  
h in the how you believe you’re not in my world when you’re so caught up in  
panties you have no chance of ever leaving.”

ing him I turn to look at him, my mouth open in shock. “That sounds like a t

He places the cup down and turns his body so we’re face to face  
: two of crave everything I give you more than you’ve ever wanted anything  
yrup. I does he know? “Beside the fact that I’d never allow you to leave, if y  
several away – which you wouldn’t – you’d never see your sister again.”

I stiffen in my chair and feel myself tearing up. “You’d kill her to

“I said I’m?”

“Your sister has done nothing to me. But there’d be no way Adrianna allow her to ever see you again.”

I grab hold of his hand while furiously shaking my head. Tears threaten to spill from my eyes. “You can’t let that happen.”

“Rosa, I’d never stop you from seeing your sister, but my brother won’t let me.”

This is the perfect opportunity to lead into what’s been eating away at me.

“He’s not good for her. He beats her, and she’s holding in some secret about her relationship with him that she won’t tell me.”

Dominic stiffens in his seat and lifts his chin. “He’s my brother. How could you tell me he beats her?”

My shoulders sink as I stare at him. “Domestic violence victims are often the most forthcoming about the abuse. She’ll hide it and not tell me a single thing.”

“Then you don’t *know* he hits her.”

“I saw the bruises, that’s enough for me to know. Not only that, but she’s retreating into herself, and barely talking to me.” I look down at my hand.

I lift my head to hide the tears welling in my eyes. “We used to do nearly everything together. Then suddenly, your brother shows up and the next thing I know she’s marrying him.” I lift my chin to look at Dominic. “You have to tell me he’s not a good man.”

“He’s my brother,” he instantly repeats.

“Who beats my sister,” I attempt to use reason to show him this isn’t just about me. “How is life for anyone?”

“Until she says that’s what he does, then there’s nothing I can do about it.” My forehead crinkles as the side of my lip lifts with disgust. I push the plate away.

“I’ll get to



and abruptly stand to my feet. “What are you doing?” Dominic asks  
I would move around him.

“I don’t feel well, I’m going outside for air.” I head toward the  
eaten to where Frank appears and stands beside me. “I don’t want you here.”

“I’m to keep you safe.”

ould.” “I want to be alone.” His simply shrugs as if to say, *too bad*. “What  
at me grumble and walk down the sidewalk. I cross the street and find  
at about decrepit old park nestled toward the back of two buildings with a  
running between them. There’s a dilapidated bench that I walk to and  
as Eliza. It’s clear this park is used by the local drug addicts, because I see  
abandoned needles on the ground. Thankfully, there are no kids play  
s aren’t there.

It says a Eliza must feel completely alone and isolated. I hate knowing that  
have enough money yet to be able to help her escape. I have m  
thousand dollars in the bank, but with no car and no place to go, I f  
at she’s I’m stuck, which means she is too.

wer my I close my eyes and exhale a long sigh as I try to figure out a way  
rything my sister. “Rosa,” Dominic’s low, taut voice forces me to open my e  
I know, look up at him. “This is filthy, get up.”

o know My shoulders sink in as I exhale a frustrated breath. I look to Mar  
Frank, who are both a distance back though close enough in case a  
happens for them to be here in a nanosecond. I don’t move. Instead I  
t a way and shield my eyes from the sun beaming behind Dominic. “My s  
being hurt and I can’t do anything about it. Do you have any idea how  
o.” My hate myself for that?”

ite back Dominic looks back to Marco and Frank, then sits beside me. He  
his mouth up with disgust as he looks around. “I’ll speak with Adrian.”

when I I guess that's a start. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Of course."

the front, "Do you condone domestic violence?"

Dominic clears his throat and takes a moment before he answers, 'course not.'" He adjusts his tie as he stretches his neck. "I'll speak to him later," I stand and offers his hand. And just like that I'm supposed to let it go.

a tiny, I will for now, but there's no way I'm not going to step in if I see an alleybruises on my sister.

I sit on. "Rosa," he adds as he helps me up.

several "Yeah."

coming out He looks around once again before shoving his hands into his pockets.

"I..." Dominic stalls, clearly uncomfortable with what he wants to say. "I don't don't like the way my brother treats your sister either. I will speak to him maybe a I want to scream that he should do more, but at least it's a step in the right direction. It also tells me Dominic knows more than he's telling me does he know?"

to help "Good," I reply. Until I can save more money and make an exit plan for Eliza and myself, I'm going to have to try and keep the lines of communication open with her.

Marco and This is a fucking mess.

nothing

look up

sister is

much I

screws

”

I guess that's a start. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Of course."

"Do you condone domestic violence?"

Dominic clears his throat and takes a moment before he answers, "No, of course not." He adjusts his tie as he stretches his neck. "I'll speak to him." He stands and offers his hand. And just like that I'm supposed to let it go.

I will for now, but there's no way I'm not going to step in if I see more bruises on my sister.

"Rosa," he adds as he helps me up.

"Yeah."

He looks around once again before shoving his hands into his pockets. "I..." Dominic stalls, clearly uncomfortable with what he wants to say. "I don't like the way my brother treats your sister either. I will speak to him."

I want to scream that he should do more, but at least it's a step in the right direction. It also tells me Dominic knows more than he's telling me. What does he know?

"Good," I reply. Until I can save more money and make an exit plan for Eliza and myself, I'm going to have to try and keep the lines of communication open with her.

This is a fucking mess.

## Chapter Seventeen

### Dominic



“Mr. Sacco,” Jackie greets as she opens the door. She steps as allows me in. “Mr. Sacco is in the office.”

I give Adrian’s young house keeper a nod as I head down to his c open the door to find Adrian doing a line. He lifts his head and sits b the seat. “What are you doing here?”

I close the door and head over to pour myself a drink. “Why is you keeper working so late?”

“Because that’s her job. Anyway.” He leans forward and inhales line. There are several more waiting for him to snort. “Here.” He h rolled up bill out to me, and I shake my head. “You’re so fucking soft.”

“We sell it, not use it, Adrian.”

“What’s the fun in that?” He snorts a third line. He lifts his head and his nose. “What do you want?”

I look around the room as I lift the drink to my mouth. “Where’s Eli

“I don’t fucking know. She’s had a pretty good workout, so she’s p asleep, why?” He lifts his arms and places his hands on top of his head

wanna borrow her? I don't mind sharing with you as long as I can get of that fucking pussy you have at home." My fingers flex around the "We can trade for a night."

"No." My teeth grit together. If I don't calm down I'm going to lay down on his ass.

Adrian laughs. "You scared she won't want to return to you because she prefers a real man?" He clears his throat before leaning forward and saying yet another line.

My pulse quickens as my muscles strain beneath my dress shirt. "I need to see her sister more than she does."

Adrian lifts his head from his drugs and raises his brows at me. "What the fuck is this, Dominic?" He squares his shoulders ready to leap over the desk and try to fight me. "Did you come here to check up on *my* wife?" He slams his hands face down on the desk, ready for a fight. "She's my property. I can do whatever the fuck I want with her. What's she doing? Running away from Rose and crying about shit?"

"What would she be crying about?"

He lifts a finger and points it at me. His face is reddening as he baring his teeth. "She's fucking mine." Spit flies from his mouth.

"Calm the fuck down, Adrian."

"Don't tell me to calm down!" He smacks his hand on the desk, the desk slightly jumps and the white powder escapes the perfect lines he had cleared. "You come into my home and start questioning me about my property. Who the fuck do you think you are?" Adrian puffs his chest out, attempting to intimidate me.

I give him a few moments. "Are you done being a fucking prick? I came here to talk to you about the inventory at the club. I also wanted

at a taste you to allow your wife to speak to her sister. But I can see the drug  
e glass. fucked you in the head and there's no use in talking to you."

Adrian brows clamp tightly together. "What about the club?  
him outhappening?"

"Expenses are still high, and the income isn't supporting what  
use shespending."

mortoring "I told you, I checked it out and everything was fine."

"I'll have to look into it. I'll speak with Ruben."

."Rose "I'll do it." He drags his disgruntled gaze over me. "I'm the unc  
you're just a capo."

What the I slam the glass on the table and stand to my feet in one mov  
he desk "Whatever the fuck is going on in your head, fix it. What is this? I  
: places high school? Get over yourself, Adrian. You're being a fucking dick."

y and I Adrian roars with laughter and too forcefully stands to his feet. "Yo  
back to a problem with me?" He rounds the desk and squares his shoulders.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?" He takes a swing at me, but I  
and manage two jabs to his guts. "The drugs have fucked with you  
ares his man." I step back and fix my hair.

"You're fucking dead." He points his finger at me, his eyes are wi  
rage and his jaw is tight with anger.

: mirror The door flings open and both Marco and Tony – Adrian's right-ha  
ad cut. – barge in with their guns drawn. Marco looks directly at me, then to  
fucking He sees the lines of coke on the table, the powder on Adrian's no  
rest out positions himself closer to me.

"Boss," Tony says.

Because "Get this fucker out of my house." Adrian points to me as he's pacifi  
d to tell and forth. He grabs the rolled up note, bends and snorts yet another lin

gs have I jerk my head to the side, quietly telling Marco to leave. Tony  
toward me, and I give him a warning look. “Wait outside,” I say to him

What’s Tony hesitates as he looks to Adrian. Adrian juts his chin toward th

Once Marco and Tony leave, Adrian glares in my direction. “You cou  
t we’re my home and disrespect me. Do you have any idea what I can do to yo

“And here I thought we were brothers,” I say as I pour myself  
drink and throw it down in one gulp. “What the fuck has gotten in  
Adrian?”

lrboss, “You disrespect me!” his voice elevates.

“Lay off the fucking drugs.”

vement. Adrian scoffs as he continues pacing. “Just remember this, the only  
fucking you’re alive is because we’re brothers.”

I leave the glass on his desk, and walk over to the door. “We’ve go  
ou have to do, so when you’ve come down from your high, call me so we can c

I open the door, exit the room and close it. Tony and Marco a  
duck it waiting. We walk out of Adrian’s house without speaking. Once we’r  
ir head, car, Marco says, “I just got word there’s a problem with one  
shipments.”

de with “Which one and what’s the problem?”

“Cocaine shipment coming up from Mexico.”

nd man I know the one he’s talking about. “What’s the issue?”

Adrian. “It arrived fine, but sixty pounds has gone missing.”

se, and “Missing? How did it go missing?” Marco lifts his shoulders. “It’  
warehouse?” Marco nods. “Frank.”

Frank turns the car, heading toward the warehouse. I’m going to  
ing back speak with Ruben, but first I’ll get answers before I let him know  
e.

y stepshappening. No use in telling Adrian about it, especially in the drug  
1. craze he's currently in.

ie door.

me into

u?"

another

to you,



## Rose

The constant sound of the phone ringing stirs me from my sleep.  
reasonout to touch Dominic but find the bed is empty. Sitting up, I scrub m  
over my face. I look around the dark room and try to gain my bearings  
ot workto look at my phone, and see there's maybe a dozen voice calls. I p  
lo it." phone up and while trying to wake myself, I squint to see who's been  
re both My heart jumps when I see Eliza's number.  
e in the I fumble as I call her back. I'm met with a busy signal, so I try to  
of theagain. "Fuck," I grumble as fear overcomes me.

As I hang up, the phone rings and I answer it immediately. "Rose?  
whispers in a small voice.

"Eliza, are you okay?"

Eliza sobs into the phone. "I don't know where to go."

"What? What's happening?"

s at the "I left."

She sounds like she's running. "Where are you?" I leap out of the b  
have tostart pulling my clothes on.

what's "I had to leave, Rose. He..."



;-fueled I wait for a second, but she doesn't say anything. "I'm coming where are you?"

"I snuck out, he doesn't know I'm gone."

"Tell me where you are so I can come and get you."

"No, you shouldn't be involved with this."

"You're my sister, Eliza, I can't *not* be involved. Where are you?"

"I shouldn't have called." She hangs up, and when I try to dial her her phone is switched off.

I keep trying her phone over and over again as I dress. But it keep I reach to voice mail. Once I'm dressed, I rush downstairs to search for Domi y hand he's not here. "Fuck it," I say as I head to the garage and scan the hool s. I turn all the keys are. I grab the keys to the BMW and press the fob. Th ick the headlights ignite as it unlocks, and I run over to it.

calling. Now, I need to get past all the guards Dominic has guarding the pr Getting out won't be easy, but I don't care. I need to find a way to ge call her sister.

The car's engine roars to life and when I approach the garage door "Eliza for the pressy-down-thingy that opens the door. When I locate it, I and wait for it to roll up.

One of the guards is stationed by the garage door, he's already wai it to lift and indicates for me to drive up to him. "Mr. Sacco hasn't ap this."

"I have to go," I say with urgency.

ged and "I'm sorry, Miss Hopkins but unless I get approval from Mr. Sac answer is no."

"Fuck this." I plant my foot to the gas and head toward the gated know they're not going to let me through, so I dial Dominic.

to you, “Rose, are you okay?” Marco answers as I approach the gate and  
inside.

“I need Dominic.”

“He’s busy at the moment.”

“I need him now,” I shout.

There’s a rustling noise as Marco hands the phone over to Dominic.  
“Rosa, are you safe?”

“I need to leave, but they’re not allowing me to go.”

“Why? What’s wrong? Are you hurt?”

I can feel myself about to burst into tears. “No, I’m not hurt, but  
I need to find her. Please, Dominic, let me go find her.”

“Rosa, it’s not safe...”

“Then it’s not safe for Eliza, either! I need to find my sister,” I yell  
at my phone. My emotions are spilling over, and I’m becoming hysterical.  
“Please, let me go find her.”

“Which car are you in?”

“What?”

“Don’t worry,” he says.

“You’re worried about your stupid fucking car while my sister  
knows where? You know what? Fuck you, Dominic!”

“Wait,” he says sensing my fear and frustration. “They’re opening the gate  
now.”

The gate rolls open, and I tear through it. “Thank you.” I hang up  
and dial Eliza’s number again. Thankfully, she answers. “I’m on my  
way. Where are you?”

“I’m just walking, trying to stay hidden.” She’s not crying anymore.

and stop can hear how breathy her voice is, as if she's running or hastily walking

"Has he called you at all?"

"He doesn't know I left. I snuck out, but it's only a matter of time he discovers I'm gone."

"I'm coming to you, Eliza. Tell me where you are."

"Rosa, "It's best if I don't involve you, that way he can't hurt you to get to

"Hurt me? He wouldn't want to fucking lay a hand on me."

"You have no idea how dangerous he is, Rose. Please, don't come me."

I think I know she's doing what she thinks is best, but she can't do this by  
ominic, "If you don't tell me where you are, I'll be forced to go to Adrian, and  
want to do that because I hate him." Eliza sighs but doesn't respond. "let me help."

into the "There's an all-night gas station up near the interstate. I'll be there  
l. "Tell can hitch a ride and get the hell out of here."

"No! Don't go, not yet. Let me see you first. I need to make sure  
okay." If she's going to go anywhere, I'm going with her. She's too fr  
do this by herself.

"I'll wait as long as I can, but if I see him, I'll need to move. I prom  
is God call when I can."

Fuck this. She's not going anywhere without me. I put my foot do  
he gatehead to the gas station she's talking about. "Promise you'll wait." I'm  
and she's on foot. There's no way she'll get to the gas station before  
and try need to beat her there, so I can help her before she does something irr  
way to like leave without me.

The drive to the gas station doesn't take me long considering it's  
e, but Itwo in the morning and the streets are reasonably deserted.

g. I'm on high alert though, looking at every passing car, in case figures out that she's gone and comes looking for her. I don't care what before I won't let him take her. There's a heaviness sitting on my chest piercing pain in the back of my throat. I should've stopped the man before it happened.

me." If I had just stood up for her at the church, she never would've been in position. I didn't do the right thing then, but I'm sure as hell going to find now.

My stomach knots and I feel sick to my very core as I pull into herself station. I park the car around the back, away from prying eyes, before I don't inside. There are two sets of tables and chairs where people can grab a 'Please, and maybe a donut and rest before they need to leave again. I look over if she's already arrived and is sitting there, but it's empty. "Hey," I say until I attendant.

She smiles at me and lifts her brows. "How much?" you're "No, no gas." I wave my hand to her. "Has a woman come in the last agile to minutes?" She shakes her head once and I let out a relieved breath. *I missed her.* "Can I get two coffees please?"

use, I'll "Sure thing." She pours two coffees and returns. "Three dollars."

My eyes widen. "Crap, hang on." I pat down my pockets and run down and don't have a cent on me. "I might have something in the car, give in a car second." I run out to the car, unlock it and rifle through the glove box I do. I center console. "You've got to be kidding me." Nothing, not a single rational, run back in, and apologize profusely to the attendant.

"Rose," Eliza's voice is the sweetest thing I've ever heard. I turn to nearly see the hood she's wearing nearly covers her entire face. She looks completely concealing her face.

Adrian “Eliza.” I’m grateful she made it here. “Oh my God.” I throw myself into her arms, but Eliza winces causing me to step backward. “Eliza,” I whisper in a low voice.

She turns to look out the window, but I still can’t see her face. “I can’t see her face,” she whispers. She turns again, and I reach out to push her hood back. “No, don’t.” Eliza grasps my hand, stopping me. “Please, don’t do it.” Despite that, I manage to flick her hood back. The attendant gasps as we see Eliza’s beaten face. “We have to go to the hospital.”

“No!” Eliza calls. “We can’t.”

“I’m calling the police,” the attendant says as she moves toward the door.

“Please,” Eliza pleads. “Don’t. I beg you, please, don’t dial the police.” She holds her hand up, stopping the attendant.

The attendant looks confused. “Please,” I implore.

“Here.” She pushes the two coffees over to us.

“But I don’t have any money,” I say to her.

“It’s on the house.” She looks to Eliza and says, “You can’t stay here. You haven’t met the person who did that to you.” She points to Eliza’s swollen eye, fat bruised cheek.

I take the coffees and offer her a kind smile. “Thank you.” I turn to Eliza and pointedly look at the empty seats. “Come sit with me.”

“I can’t stay,” Eliza says.

“You can sit down for five minutes so we can work this out.”

Eliza’s shoulders slump forward and she pulls the hood back over her head. “Five minutes.” At least I can get her to sit long enough so we can work out a plan. She takes the coffee out of my hand and sips on it, wincing down when the hot coffee hits her split lip.

“What happened?”

elf into We sit huddled together, but Eliza's frantically looking through the  
say in a searching for her dick of a husband. "I was sleeping and he flew in  
room, grabbed me around the throat and started beating me."

n't stay "How long has this been going on for, Eliza?"

d away "Since before the wedding."

e." "Why did you marry him? He's a fucking prick." Her entire body  
s when "What aren't you telling me?"

Eliza lowers the coffee to the table and she sits on her hands. It's c  
reason is something she's ashamed of. Her body is trembling wh  
phone. refuses to make eye contact with me. "This has been a mistake," she s  
police." small voice. "A misunderstanding, that's all." Her entire demeanor cha

"No!" my voice is strong with assertion. "You're not going back  
No fucking way." I reach for her, but she startles backward. "Why  
think you have to stay with him?" She turns to look outside and  
several times to hold back the tears welling in her eyes. "If you don't  
with the then I don't know what to do to help you."

lip and "I just can't," she whispers. My phone vibrates against my hip  
contort to the side to remove it. I answer it when I see Dominic's  
o Eliza, Eliza's eyes widen and she leaps to her feet saying, "Please, don't ans

"Dominic." I look to her and gesture for her to calm down.

"Is she safe?"

"For now."

ver her "What happened?"

we can "Your brother beat her."

winning "I'm coming to you."

I look to Eliza, who's now truly afraid for her life. Not because D  
will do anything to her, but because he'll tell Adrian where she is, and

e glass, will drag her back home. And if that happens, I'm sure Eliza won't s  
nto the "How far away are you?"

"I'm about five minutes from you."

I hang up and look to Eliza. I should've known he'd know where  
"You need to leave, now." Eliza is on her feet in a matter of one he  
tenses. "Hide until the morning. I'll go to the bank and withdraw everything  
and we'll run. Both of us."

lear the "No." Eliza shakes her head. "I have to do this on my own."

ile she I take her hands into mine, and squeeze them. "We do it together.  
ays in a now, you have to leave."

nges. Eliza steps in for a hug. "I'm sorry, Rose. I should never gott  
to him. involved."

do you "Promise me you'll hide until tomorrow. I'll go to the bank as soon  
. blinks open."

tell me "I promise," she says. Her body trembles against mine. She gives m  
on the cheek, turns, and runs out of the gas station.

, and I I watch as she disappears into the darkness, my heart breaking f  
; name. "Are you okay?" the attendant asks as I sit and stare through the windo  
ver it." leg is bouncing and my heart is racing. Her hand on my shoulder su  
me. "I'll call the cops."

"No, please, don't. I'll be fine." In truth, it's not me I'm worried  
With a thumping heart and a twisting in my gut, I take the coffee cu  
head outside. "Thank you," I say to the woman, who's now back beh  
counter. I tip out the rest of the coffees and place the cups in the trash  
heading around the back to the car.

Domonic The headlights of a car approaching shine straight onto me. '  
Adrian Dominic calls when it pulls up beside me. I wrap my arms around m

survive. lower my head and walk to the car. He's out of the car and places jacket over my shoulders. "Rosa."

I turn to look at him and catch the blood down the front of his shirt. "I was. you hurt?"

heartbeat. "No."

I have "Whose blood is that?" I look at the suit jacket to see if it has blood. It doesn't. I stop walking and turn toward him. "Whose is this?" I point to an angry red stain splashed on his shirt.

But for "it doesn't matter."

"You're not hurt?" He shakes his head. "Good, because I'm not even you could've dealt with any more pain tonight."

He looks around and takes his cigarettes out of his pant pocket. "What about Eliza?"

"She's gone."

He gives me a kiss. "What happened? Where did she go?"

"He beat her. Her eye..." I bring my hand up to touch mine, then I look down for her. "Jesus, her eye is swollen shut. And she has a swollen jaw. My hand bruising. So much bruising."

surprises "What did she say happened?" He puffs on a smoke as he listens.

"She said she was asleep and he went into the bedroom, choked her about. started beating her." I lean against the BMW and look down at my hands. "Why is he like this, Dominic? Why does he want to hurt her so much?" I find the Dominic looks over to Marco and lifts his chin, as if he's silently giving an order. Marco pulls his phone out of his pocket and brings it up to his ear.

"What's going on?"

"Rosa," "Where is she?"

My torso, My skin prickles and I shake my head as I push off the car. "No"



his suitfucking way. If you're telling Adrian where she is, there's no way I'm  
to tell you anything about her."

rt. "Are "Rosa, this..."

"It's fucking Rose." I walk around Dominic and open the driver's  
and he slams it shut before I can get in. "I can't believe you."

d, but it "Give me the keys." He holds out his hand waiting for the fob. I take  
t to the out of my pocket and slam them in his hand. "Get in the car."

I walk around to the passenger side and slide in. My pulse is speeding  
cross my arms in front of my chest. Dominic slides into the driver's seat  
: sure I starts the car. "I can't believe you're prepared to hand her over to  
fucking asshole brother."

Where's He flicks his cigarette out of the car and takes off with so much force  
car goes sideways on the gravel out to the road. "I had no intention of  
her back to him. Not after what I saw this evening," he replies with bit

"Wait, you saw him? Did you see Eliza? Did you see her the way I  
move it you left her there? Why did you do that?"

split lip, "No, I didn't see your sister. He said she was asleep." Dominic  
tightens on the wheel as we head back to his house.

I get the feeling he's not telling me something. "What aren't you  
ier, and me?"

ly feet. He stares out the window, his jaw clenched while he grinds his teeth  
much?" not your concern."

ving an "Why is everyone hiding shit from me?"

his ear. He turns to glimpse at me. "Eliza's hiding something?"

"Yes, and now you are too. Why? What do I need protecting from?"

"What did Eliza say?"

ope, no "Nothing. She said nothing! And you have no idea how frustrated

n going because she won't tell me what her secret is, and now you won't tell n  
you're hiding," my voice is growing in frustration. There's a splitti  
relentless pain behind my left eye while my arms are protesting fro  
s door, tightly balled up my fists are.

"Have you thought that perhaps we have these secrets because we  
ce them protect you?"

"I'm not a fucking child, Dominic. I don't need protecting."

ing as I "Watch your tone," he warns.

eat and "Why? Are you going to channel your inner Adrian and hit me?"

to your He slams the brakes on and the car comes to a complete stop. He t  
me and says in a low voice, "I've never raised my hand to a womar  
orce the life, and I never will." He grabs his cigarettes and lights another  
f giving starting back toward his house.

terness. Dominic has never raised his voice, let alone scared me, and in m  
did and know he'd never do anything to hurt me. The tension rolling off both  
making the air thick and stifling. "I don't want to start a war with y  
's grip your brother, Dominic, so tomorrow I'm going to walk away from  
this."

telling "No," he says flatly.

"I'm not asking for your permission. I'm telling you that my siste  
th. "It's only family, and I'm not going to leave her to fend for herself, esp  
considering she's going to need me now more than ever. Your brot  
done a wonderful job fucking her up, and now I need to mend those  
for her to have even the smallest chance to survive."

"No," he repeats in his low tone.

"She can't survive in this world, Dominic."

ed I am "Yes, she can."

ne what I shake my head, adamant. “I’m leaving.”

ng and “No. You’re not going anywhere.”

m how “Eliza isn’t strong enough to heal without me, and I’m not going to to even try. Your world has ruined her, and I have to leave before it ru want totoo.” I lower my eyes and stare at my hands wringing together. “You will destroy me. If you don’t let me go I’m afraid I’ll end up hating yo Dominic’s hands tighten around the wheel. “No,” he repeats. “I’ll something out.”

I turn to look at his dark features. “Eliza isn’t like me at all, Dor turns to look at the blood on your shirt and it doesn’t frighten me. Actually, n in my being honest, it kinda makes me hot.” I hate having to admit somet before dark to him, but he has to understand that Eliza won’t survive this wor

“You’re not scared by this?” He gestures toward his bloody shirt.

ly gut I “As long as it’s not your blood, then no, I’m not. But Eliza is ger of us is sweet, and clearly, I’m not or I’d be terrified.” I lift my hand to place i you and chest. “But she can’t do this by herself, and I wouldn’t want her to. Sl n all of only family I have and I can’t leave her on her own. You understa important this is to me, don’t you?”

His jaw tenses as he stares at the road ahead of us. The beam of th r is my headlights shine brightly on the road. The silence between us is thi pecially many unspoken words. “I know she’s your sister...”

her has “Please don’t say but.”

pieces He chews on the inside of his cheek and finally gives me a small he “On one condition.”

Of course there’s to be a caveat. “Which is?”

“You tell me where you are.”

“No, I can’t do that. I can’t risk Adrian busting down the door to

Eliza.” *And me.* “It’s best if I don’t put you in the middle of it.”

“I’m already in the middle of all of this.”

ask her “Don’t make me run away from you, *please.*” I swallow the hurt sprints  
down my throat. “Just let me go.”

world He lifts his chin as he drives, refusing to look at me. We both know  
it’s not to end. My inner darkness coils in the corner. I hate having to give up  
myself I’m just discovering in order to protect my sister, but that  
has to happen for her to survive.

Dominic. I It’s the sacrifice I have to make.

, if I’m “Where will you go?” Dominic’s voice is hard.

thing so “I honestly don’t know.” And I wouldn’t tell him if I did.

ld. He pulls up to his house and the gates open to let us in. Dominic  
turns around to the extensive garage and parks the car. My heart is heavy as I  
get out of the car, but I quietly walk inside, head upstairs and get my clothes from  
my room. I walk down to the room I was in, and plunk everything on the bed.  
Taking my phone out of my pocket, I call Eliza. “Rose,” she says and  
how heavy puffs.

“Are you safe?”

the car’s “Yeah, I’m hiding out. Are you okay?”

click with “I am.” My throat tightens with my lie. “I’m going to the bank  
tomorrow. Can you meet me?”

“I’ll be there.” Neither of us says anything for what feels like ten  
seconds. “Rose?”

My eyes well with tears. “Yeah,” I try to keep my voice even so she  
doesn’t hear the sadness choking me.

“Thank you.”

to get to “You never have to thank me, Eliza. I’m your sister.”

“I’ll see you tomorrow.”

I hang up and throw my phone on the bed. I sink to the floor and collapse in a heap with my arms outstretched as the tears begin falling. I hate how I’ve fallen

Dominic, but mostly, I hate having to leave him.

But family comes first.

part

’s what

drives

is I exit

from his

the bed.

through

in the

forever.

so she

“I’ll see you tomorrow.”

I hang up and throw my phone on the bed. I sink to the floor and cover my head with my arms as the tears begin falling. I hate how I’ve fallen for Dominic, but mostly, I hate having to leave him.

But family comes first.

## Chapter Eighteen

### Dominic



#### One week later

I slam my fist into his jaw and hear a definite crack. I step back and hit the ground. “I don’t know who,” Johnny whimpers.

I slam my fist twice more, one to the same spot on his jaw, the other on his nose. “Another sixty pounds has disappeared from here, Johnny. You’re the last one to touch the shipment.”

“Dominic, you know me. I’ve worked for your uncle for ten years and I’ve never had sticky fingers.” I smash him in the jaw again so he can’t even fucking pleading look off his face.

Marco steps in and places his hand on my shoulder. “Dominic,” he murmurs under his breath.

“What?” I turn to square up with Marco, who takes a small step back.

“I swear to you, check the ledger,” Johnny begs. “On my Martha’s life.”

“Your daughter can’t help you.” I reach behind me to retrieve my phone, which is jammed under the belt of my pants. Marco lifts his phone and nods.

holding it out to me. I stare at Johnny as I snatch the phone out of his hand and walk away. “What?”

“Where are you?” I find myself sneering when I hear Adrian’s voice.

“The chapel,” I reply knowing Adrian knows exactly where I am.

“Good. I’m on my way.” He hangs up and I stay still for a moment turning to Marco and handing him my phone.

“Everything okay?” Marco glances over at Johnny, then back to me.

“Adrian’s on his way.”

Marco takes a deep breath and nods. “What do you want me to do?” He juts his head toward Johnny.

“Cut him loose, he doesn’t know anything.”

I pace back and forth, waiting for Adrian to show up. Johnny slinks and returns to his job. I head outside and take out my cigarettes, light up as I lean against the building. I know something is off, I just have to figure out whose fingers are sticky and chop the head of the snake off before it wreaks any more havoc.

Problem is, there a lot of people in the organization. But they aren’t trusted, or they’d be dead. Two cars approach as I puff on my smoke and I’ve watch them. The first pulls up in front of me, the second closely behind. Tony gets out of the car and opens the back door while looking at me.

Adrian exits and straightens his suit jacket. He advances toward me and glances at my bloody shirt. His nose has white powder on the tip. I hand and wipe at mine before I take out my cigarettes and offer him one. “A hundred and twenty pounds,” he says referring to the missing cocaine. “I’ll take my lighter and sparks up the smoke.”

“I know.”

“What are you doing about it?”



Marco's "Trying to figure it out."

He looks me up and down and shakes his head. "You're fucking  
Dominic." I know he's talking about Eliza and Rosa, not the missing  
grit my teeth, holding onto my own anger. "Have you heard from that  
before The muscles in my arms strain as I stop myself from smashing n  
into his smug face. "Who?"

"Eliza, or her fucking sister."

"No." I shake my head, stomp out my smoke, and start inside.  
with..." "I didn't even get to fuck her sister before they took off."

I turn and shove him up against the wall. "Don't talk about my Ro  
that." He straightens as a smug sneer covers his fucking ugly face.

is away "If I had her, she'd be on her knees all the time."

ing one I step back and adjust my shirt sleeves before pointing to him and  
o figure "Shut the fuck up."

efore it "What are you gonna do? Kill your own brother?" His la  
condescending as he shakes his head and walks away.

can be Marco places a hand on my shoulder, prompting me to turn and  
ke and him. "Don't do it, man," he urges.

ind the I shrug out of Marco's grip and head toward Adrian. "Johnny,"  
round. booms.

me and "Mr. Sacco," Johnny says as he lowers his head.

lift my "Leave, Johnny," I say because I know what's about to happen.

one. "A Adrian whips his gun out and shoots Johnny in the head. Adrian tu  
ine. Hearches a brow. "Every single person who's put their hands or  
shipments will end the same way Johnny did."

"Adrian, what the fuck are you doing? He had nothing to do with it."

"Then he wasn't good at his job."

I walk away from Adrian before I do something drastic and have my fist soft, breathing down my neck. I head upstairs to find the ledger and look for drugs. I sit. As I search the office, I hear several more gun shots. Adrian is getting rid of everyone who works here. Once I find the ledger, I shove my fist into the back of my pants and head back downstairs to retrieve my suitcase. Adrian's angry, and in his wrath, he's willing to kill everyone. This Ruben will need to step in soon. And the only way I'll be able to calm down is if I find out who's been stealing from our businesses and take it before Ruben deals with Adrian.

Rosa like As much as Adrian is a total asshole, he's still my brother.

Marco and I walk out to find Frank waiting by the car. I slide into the car and throw the ledger beside me so I can look at it once I'm home. "I'm saying, say it, but your brother is a dick," Marco says once we're away from the building.

Though is "You don't have to tell me." I close my eyes and rub at the building across my forehead and behind my eyes. Flashes of my Rosa look at me making it difficult to push her out of my thoughts.

She's never coming back.

Adrian I just need to focus on my work, and forget about her.



runs and

1 those

”

**Rose**

Ruben “Are you okay?” I ask Eliza, who’s laying in a fetal position on the floor through we’re sharing.

indeed “I’ll be fine.”

I reach out to rub her back, and when my hand makes contact, she flinches. It’s been three days that we’ve been in this shit hotel room. But it’s not what Eliza needs. The hotel itself is clean, yet dated. Thank God Adrian was able to rent a room by the month here, so at least I know we have some care over our head for a month.

“I need to go to work, Eliza.”

“Okay,” she murmurs.

“I won’t go if you need me to stay.”

“No, I’ll be fine.”

No, she won’t be. She’s been in bed since we arrived, and I doubt she’s getting out of it today. “Can you take a shower before I return, please?”

“Yeah,” her voice is weak.

There’s no way she’s going to move from the bed unless she needs to use the bathroom. I head into the small kitchenette and turn the faucet on to get her a glass of water. I return to the bed, and sit on the edge. “Here.” I hold the glass out to her.

“I’m not thirsty.”

“I don’t care, I need you to have a mouthful before I leave.”

She blinks up at me, and releases a long breath before sitting up and taking the glass from me. “I don’t want this for you, Rose,” she says.

“The glass?” I ask, confused.

“No.” She lifts the glass and takes a sip. Lowering it, she looks around the room. “This. You deserve so much more than this shit hellhole I’ve convinced you into.”

the bed “Stop it,” I say in a warning tone. “You’ve gone through a lot, but it  
be a massive help if you’d tell me why you married him to begin with.”  
shoulders tighten as does her jaw. She’s not telling me anything. I’ve  
linches. asking her since the day we got here, but she’s stubborn and is refusing  
s quiet, me. “I wish Mom and Dad were here, they’d be able to help you.”  
fully, I “Yeah, right,” she says sarcastically as she rolls her eyes. “Mom  
a roof Dad?” Eliza sneers now whenever she speaks of them.

“Hey, what’s that about?” I feel my forehead crinkle with concern.  
not the first time she’s shown any annoyance toward them. “Do you  
something that you’re not telling me, Eliza?”

She places the glass on the rickety bedside table and sinks back in  
Eliza turns on her side, her back to me. “No,” she finally replies.

he’ll be I know Eliza is hiding something, I just wish I knew what it was. I  
” a frustrated sigh and stand. “Okay, I need to get to work.”

“Love you, Rose,” she says in a small voice.

to go to “I love you too.” I grab my sweater and head out the door. I slip  
1 to getsweater on as I walk down the motel stairs and head toward the bus  
old the down the road. I keep my head down as I cross the street, but I notice  
black car parked. “Interesting,” I murmur to myself and make a mental note  
of the tags when I pass it. I try to look in, but the windows are tinted  
that it’s impossible to see who’s inside.

I taking Discreetly, I keep an eye on the car as I wait for the bus. Once  
arrives, I get on and sit toward the middle. The bus departs and I turn to  
the black car is following. Thankfully, it doesn’t. “I’m going crazy,” I  
und them murmur to myself and relax when we turn the corner and the black car  
dragged By the time I arrive at work, I’ve talked myself out of the conspiracy  
theories that have been circling in my brain.

It would be just that black car stuck out and didn't belong in the area where the hotel is. Shit, what if Adrian's found Eliza and he's waiting for me to come back so he can kick in the front door and take her?

What if it's Dominic who's found us? Would he tell Adrian? No, he wouldn't do that. Would he? No, I don't believe he'd betray me like that. And anyway, not considering he knows what his brother is capable of. But Adrian and his brother and Dominic owes Eliza and me nothing.

"Hey, Abbie," I say as I walk into the café.

She acknowledges me with a smile as she's taking a customer's order at the coffee machine and when he sees me, his eyes light up. His smile fades as he scans me. "Are you alright?" he asks as he froths the milk.

I plaster a fake smile on my face and stop beside him before heading to the back to speak with Evelyn and put my stuff away. "Yeah, why?"

"You look tired."

"Great, thanks," I say sarcastically.

"Sorry, I didn't mean anything by it." His entire body tenses as he looks at me. "How's your boyfriend? I haven't seen him around here." "I'm not doing this with Finn." "Good." I point toward the back. "I'll be right back." I put my stuff away.

"Sure."

I turn to see him looking at me as I walk away. *Weird*. I head out to the back staffroom and sling my sweater over one of the chairs before I go to see if Evelyn's office. "Rose, take a seat." Evelyn gestures toward the office opposite her poky little office.

My heart skips a beat. "Am I in trouble?" I sit and wring my hands together. My pulse quickens and I feel sick to my stomach.

"God, no. I just wanted to see how you're doing?"

ere the A relieved breath escapes past my lips. “I thought I was in trouble.”  
o leave “Not at all.” She smiles kindly. “I know the fire really screwed wi  
and I wanted to see if there’s anything more I can do to help.”

no, he “If there’s any way I can have any more shifts, I’d appreciate it.” I  
hat. Nohand to clarify what I mean. “I don’t want you to take work away from  
drian isthe others. But if someone can’t make it to work, then I’d be really ;  
for the hours.”

Evelyn tilts her head to the side as she studies me. “Is everything ok  
er. Finn I shift my gaze to the side so I’m not looking directly into her kin  
s smile “Define okay,” I whisper, hating myself for even saying anything.

“What’s going on?” Evelyn relaxes back in the chair as she waits fo  
g out to give her something.

*Everything.* “I’m in the need of money, that’s all. I’m having so  
gulp the lump in my throat down. “...difficulties,” I finally say.

“What can I help with?”

ooks at “I just need to make more money in order to get out of the probl  
und.” have.”

etter go “We? Who’s we, Rose?”

I look around the office as I try to say as little as I can, but still  
enough so Evelyn knows I’m on the brink of desperation. “The thin  
back to start as I intake a sharp breath. “I didn’t have insurance on anything  
go into fire has destroyed everything. And, I’m living in a seedy motel, and I  
e chair take the bus to work.”

Evelyn opens the bottom drawer of her desk, reaches in and takes  
r hands checkbook. “Will a thousand dollars tide you over? Two thousand?”

“No!” I wave my hands at her. “I don’t want your money, Evelyn  
need to find extra work. I had a little over a thousand dollars saved, but

to pay for the motel, and I still have some but it won't last."

With you, "Let me give you some money."

"No, thank you. But, if any shifts can't be filled for whatever reason, can I lift my have them?"

"You can." She closes her checkbook. "Actually, I have a cleaner who comes to my house once a week. She cleans the bathrooms, vacuums, and mops. I pay her a hundred dollars a week to do so. But she can't come next three weeks because she's going to Europe with her family, and I'm looking for someone. Would you be interested?"

My answer is instantaneous. "Yes." The excitement is quickly replaced for me with deflation when I remember I have no equipment nor am I able to go there. "Thank you for the offer, but I can't," I say as I slump down in defeat.

"Why not?"

"I don't have anything to use to clean, or mop, or vacuum."

"I have it all. My cleaner uses all my things which keeps her price down."

"A hundred dollars to clean your bathrooms, vacuum and mop is reasonable?" I'm in the wrong business.

"That's what I pay her."

"I have to wonder if a hundred dollars is what she pays her cleaner for; so that's what she's offering me to do the work because she knows I need money. I think it's the latter, but at least I'll be doing something for money and I won't be taking charity. "How many bathrooms do you have?"

"Three. Two full bathrooms and a half bath. It should take you about two to three hours to clean them, and do the floors."

Seriously, three hours for a hundred bucks. I offer Evelyn a kind of bribe. "Thank you, I appreciate it. When do you want me to do it?"

“Let me see.” She opens her laptop and clicks on it. “You have tomorrow, but not the next day. How about then?”

n, can I “Yes, thank you.”

“I’ll give you my address tomorrow. There’s a bus stop about er whominute walk from my house.”

ms and I already feel so much better. That’s an extra one hundred dollars for thefor three weeks. I can do this for Eliza and me. I stand to my feet and I wasbroadly. “Thank you, Evelyn.”

“You’re doing me a favor, since it means I don’t have to do it. S eplacedyou.”

to get A part of my soul is rejuvenated. Perhaps this isn’t as hopeless a vn withconvinced myself. “Thank you,” I repeat before leaving so I can s shift.

Abbie is at the counter, Finn is making coffees, and we have a smal of five people waiting. “Rose,” Abbie calls me over.

own.” “Do you want me on the counter, or do you want to stay and I can nop isI look behind me toward the kitchen passthrough, and see there ar plates sitting there waiting.

“I’ll stay if you can serve.”

er, or if “Sure thing.” I walk over to the pass-through and see Brendan and I needthe kitchen. “Hey,” I greet them as I grab the three plates.

for the “Hey, Rose,” Brendan acknowledges. Jack is on the grill and no ave?” listening.

out two I look at the table these plates are going to, and begin to walk ove

I’ve placed all the food down, I see two tables that are dirty. I stack th l smile.and glance out to the road. The black car is back, but it’s down the rc



a shift can't be sure it's the same car from the motel. My throat constricts as I  
myself leaving the tables and walking outside to see if the tags match up.

"What the fuck is going on?" I ask myself as I look for traffic  
a five-jogging across the road to check out the car.

"Rose!" Abbie calls from the door. I turn to see her motioning for  
a week return. I look to the car, then back to Abbie. I abandon the idea of conf  
d smile whoever it is and return to work. "You can't just leave," she says.

"I'm sorry, I thought I saw someone I knew," I lie.

o thank "It doesn't matter." She points to the dirty tables. "It's not fair to us  
to just leave."

s I had *Whatever*.

tart my I head in to clean the tables, but keep a careful eye on the car. The  
goes by fairly fast, and just when it begins to get quiet, we get another  
I queue people. "Rose, can you take over on the coffee machine, I need to go  
bathroom," Finn says.

serve?" "Yeah, give me a minute." I finish wiping down the table I've just c  
e three and look up to see the sleek car still sitting across the street. I'll wait u  
quiet and go out there. I need to know who it is. I wash my hands an  
next to Finn.

Jack in "Thank you. I'm just finishing this latte."

"Sure." He hands the jug over to me to finish frothing the milk.

t really I'm lost in the coffee orders when Finn returns. "Thanks for that."

"You're welcome." I return to the pass-through and find several  
r. Once dishes ready to go out. I take them out to the customers, and as I'm  
e plate the dishes down my skin prickles. I take a sharp breath, knowing he's c  
oad so I I close my eyes for a few seconds before I turn and see Dominic  
Marco enter the café. Dominic looks like a damned god. He's dressed

s I find of his delicious dark gray suits, and his sinful auburn eyes are locked c  
ip. I tuck some of my loose hair behind my ear as I glance down to th  
before before walking over to his table. “Rosa,” his thick, throaty voice slid  
my body causing my stomach to flutter.

r me to “What are you doing here?” I ask as I bite on the inside of my cheek  
fronting “I want a coffee.”

“You didn’t have to come down here to get one.”

“Too bad.”

for you I lower my chin to give me a reprieve from his beautiful features s  
gather my thoughts. “This isn’t a good idea, Dominic.” The words sti  
attempt to hold on to my conviction. I look over to see Marco  
he shift ordering, while Frank waits by the car, smoking.

rush of He shoves his hands into his pockets. “How is Eliza?”

o to the Okay, Dominic’s not asking about me. Good, he’s not making it pe  
“She’s hurting,” I reply earnestly.

cleared, “Where are you staying?”

until it’s My shoulders soften as I look up to him and tilt my head to th  
d stand “Really?”

“What?”

“The black town car that’s been following me, you’re going to tell  
not one of yours?”

Dominic’s eyes harden and he looks over to Marco. “It’s following  
il more his voice matches the tension of his eyes. “Since when?”

placing “I saw it this morning.” My throat begins to close. “If it’s not yo  
close. that means Eliza and I need to leave. Shit.” Panic takes over as I n  
nic and begin to prepare for where we can go.

l in one “I’ll take care of it,” Dominic says.

on me. I “No, this has nothing to do with you.” Marco approaches us, and the  
ie floorwalk away so I can’t hear them. I see Abbie and Finn both looking at r  
es overI try to push all this to the side while I’m at work. But how can I no  
about that black car knowing now that it’s not Dominic?

“Rose, are you okay? You’ve gone white,” Abbie says.

“Yeah, of course,” I say in an unusually high pitch. No, I’m no  
doesn’t have a phone so I can’t even reach out to warn her. Dread is c  
through me as every scenario plays out in my head. With shaky h  
so I canreach for the coffees to take to the table. “Get it together,” I whi  
ing as I myself. Abbie is staring at me with concern. I pull my shoulders ba  
is nowsmile. “I’m good.” The vomit sitting at the top of my stomach tells  
far from fine.

I take a second to compose myself before once again reaching  
ersonal.coffees. I take them over to the table and as I walk back, I can’t h  
search for where Dominic and Marco are. I see them across the  
Dominic is on the phone while Marco is beside him having a smoke.  
ie side. Dominic’s gaze has been firmly on me, and when he ends the  
walks over and back into the café. I’m nervously chewing on my n  
wait. “Rose,” Finn calls. Dominic rubs his hands up and down my ar  
me it’s seagerly wait for him to tell me what’s happening. “Rose,” Finn repea  
more force.

g you?” Dominic arches a brow and turns to stare at him with a stiff unim  
scowl. “Give me a minute,” I say as I walk away from him. “Do  
u, then please.”

ientally “I’m waiting for my coffee.”

Marco and Dominic sit together and I go to grab the two coffees  
for me to take to the table. “Where do these go?”

ey both “To your boyfriend,” Finn snaps with disgust.

ne, and My lips thin with my own irritation as I tilt my head and run my  
ot thinkover my teeth. Finn ignores me and returns to making coffees. I slide t  
off the counter and head toward Dominic and Marco. I give Domi  
coffee first, then Marco’s. “Who’s following me, Dominic?”

t. Eliza “I don’t know.”

reeping “What? How can you not know?”

ands, I “You need to return home.”

esper to “No, I can’t. You know this.” Marco stands, takes his coffee and  
ick andover to another table. “Dominic, I’m not coming back.”

me I’m “It’s the only way I can keep you safe.”

I wrap my arms around my torso, hugging my elbows close to my  
for theLooking around, I’m suddenly hyperaware of everyone in the café. M  
elp butis weighted as I take a hesitant step backward. “We’re not safe?” Alth  
street,sounds like a question, it’s more like a dread filled observation. “We  
get away from here.”

call, he “No, you’ll return home.”

ail as I I shake my head as I take another step backward. “Yeah, sure. An  
ms as Iwill go back to your brother where he’ll kill her. Sure, not a problem a  
its withsay with venom.

“No, he won’t. He gave me his word that he won’t hurt her.”

pressed I lift my brows as I shake my head. “You told him where we are?” M  
n’t go,pebbles as ice tears through my body. “Do you know where we’re s  
Dominic?” He sits staring at me, not confirming or denying it. “Right.  
as my throat closes. “How long have you known?”

waiting “Rose!” Finn’s irritated voice drags my hurt eyes away from Dor  
walk over to the counter, grab the next two coffees and take them

diners.

tongue I walk back to Dominic and whisper, "You need to leave. And he cups don't come back. We're done." I have to return to the motel, pack c  
inic his and find somewhere else to go. Somewhere Adrian can't find us. I h  
idea what's happening. What I do know is staying here is no longer s  
Eliza, or me.

"We're not done," Dominic says as he stands, advances toward m  
the back of my neck and passionately kisses me. God, I've missed  
I headsmuch, but this can't happen. He pulls back and searches my eyes.  
never be done, Rosa." He kisses the tip of my nose before leaving the c  
My inner darkness sparks alive. I want him, but... *Adrian.*

y body.

[y chest

ough it

have to

id Eliza

it all," I

My skin

staying,

." I nod

ninic. I

to the

diners.

I walk back to Dominic and whisper, “You need to leave. And please, don’t come back. We’re done.” I have to return to the motel, pack our shit and find somewhere else to go. Somewhere Adrian can’t find us. I have no idea what’s happening. What I do know is staying here is no longer safe for Eliza, or me.

“We’re not done,” Dominic says as he stands, advances toward me, grips the back of my neck and passionately kisses me. God, I’ve missed him so much, but this can’t happen. He pulls back and searches my eyes. “We’ll never be done, Rosa.” He kisses the tip of my nose before leaving the café.

My inner darkness sparks alive. I want him, but... *Adrian.*

## Chapter Nineteen

### Dominic



“**W**hat have you found about the car?” I ask Marco before I has a chance to pour himself a drink.

“Well.” He pours two scotches, walks over and places one on the table. “The Fallen.”

“What about them?”

“They’re expanding.”

“The Fallen MC are expanding into the East Coast? They’re still at the West Coast. Why are they here?” Marco lifts his glass and takes a sip while slowly shrugging. “Hmh,” I groan as I sit back in my seat. “What do they got to do with my girl?”

He cocks a brow as he brings the glass to his lips. “Word is they’re dealing with someone.”

“In what way?” My shoulders tense as I wait for Marco’s reply.

“Someone is feeding them information about the business, or selling them.”

“And you know this how?”

“I might have one of the road captains down in the dungeon.” His pulls up into a small smirk.

“*Might* have?”

Marco stares at me with a cocked brow and slight snicker. “What say? He accidentally fell into the dungeon.” The snicker turns into a chuckle.

I throw the rest of my scotch back and stand from my seat. “It was rude to let our guest wait.”

“I thought you’d feel that way.”

I shrug out of my suit jacket, sling it on the back of my chair, and rolling my sleeves up as we head toward the dungeon.

Once inside, I walk over to see the guy pacing back and forth behind the bars. He sees me and stops pacing. “Do you have any idea who I am? I’m sick of these pricks throwing that line around.”

I shove my hands in my pockets and lean against the wall opposite to him. “I hear my organization has a rat.”

He sneers at me as he mimics my posture. He carelessly shrugs his shoulders. “I wouldn’t know.” His snicker indicates the opposite.

I remain quiet for a moment, letting the silence fuck with his head. “That’s a shame.” I turn to look at the cabinet in the corner, then lift my eyes to Marco. He walks over and opens the cabinet. His hand lands on one of the knives. I shake my head once. He lowers his hand to touch one of the ropes. I shake my head again. I shake my head. Marco smiles as he lifts the rope. I shake my head again.

The Fallen road captain can’t see what I’m shaking my head at from where he is, though he tries to remain calm while craning his neck to see.

“This?” Marco holds a two-foot metal pipe. My smile is confirmation he needs. He walks over and hands it to me.

The road captain’s face blanches as he takes his hands out of his pockets.



mouth “Like I said, such a shame.” Marco unlocks the cell and holds the door open. I don’t move, and the road captain assesses his chances of being able to get out of here alive. “You’re free to go.”

The road captain’s beady eyes dart around the room as he scrubs his hands over his scruffy beard. “You’re letting me go?”

“You told me you don’t know anything.” I smack the pipe once against the wall.

He moves toward the open door of the cell. “Just like that?”

“Sure,” I say with a smirk. “Why not.”

He takes a step out of the cell and without moving his eyes from me, he side steps toward the stairs that lead up and out of the dungeon. “I’m carefully moving one more step toward the door, overly cautious. “I

think this is a scare tactic? Standing there with a metal pipe?”

With snake speed I turn and smash the pipe across his gut, winding around and causing him to double over in pain. “You can go,” I say in a steady voice. “I don’t know anything!” he screams as he holds his stomach.

“No? Then leave.” He staggers as he attempts to stand, I smash the pipe across his back and he falls to the ground. “Why aren’t you leaving?”

His heavy groans and cries are like music to my ears. “I don’t know anything,” he says between gasps.

“Then leave. Why are you still here?”

He tries to combat-crawl toward the stairs. I swing the pipe and smash it down across the back of his knees. The cracking of the bones makes me smile. “Stop!”

“Who’s the rat?”

“I don’t know.”

“Next one is on your skull.” He’s still trying to get away from me.

or open. there's no chance he's leaving with a heartbeat. "A quick bullet, or  
e to get smashing your bones." He extends his hand to grip the bottom step.  
the pipe and break his hand.

is hand "Wait, wait, wait." His breathing is heavy as a line of spit falls fr  
corner of his mouth. "All I know is someone is trying to wipe out your  
in my "My boss?" That could be either Adrian, or Ruben.

"That's all I know."

"Why?" His breathing is rough as he tries to continue moving.  
backward and smash the pipe across his calves.

yes off "Fuck, man." He bursts into tears, and I snort at the pathetic trembl  
on. He voice.

Do you "Why are they trying to get rid of my boss?"

He lowers his head, and takes several deep breaths. I look to Mar  
ng him lights up a smoke and shakes his head. "All I know is if they can't ge  
y voice. the boss, then they'll make them hurt."

"How?" I swing the pipe again and smash it over his hamstring  
he pipescreams out in pain and I hear Marco chuckle.

"Cutting drugs, money, whore houses, even the woman. He doesn't  
t know My back straightens as I crack my neck and look down at the

"What woman?"

"All I know is he asked us to go after the woman."

bring it *My Rosa.*

kes me I lift my chin in defiance as I glare at the fucker who's still trying t  
his way out of my dungeon. I clutch the pipe in my hands as I con  
explosion within my body. There's a pain shooting through my jaw fr  
tense it is. Anyone who touches my girl is going to fucking die. I'll te  
ne, but limb from fucking limb before they have the chance of even looking

I keep “Dominic,” Marco says and gestures toward the biker who’s manning the door. I swinghoist himself up on one step.

I walk up to him, swing the pipe over my head and slam it down on the back of his. Blood sprays out, but my rage takes over and I keep delving. “Boss.” blow after blow on his head until it’s nothing but mush.

I step back and drop the pipe. “I’m done with him.” I look to Marco. “Frank down here and clean this shit up.” I take the stairs two at a time. I step up to my office to call Adrian.

My hands are covered in blood. My clothes have been sprayed with the biker’s blood too. I dial Adrian and put it on speaker. “What?”

“We have a problem.”

“What is it?”

“I had one of the road captains of the Fallen in my dungeon.”

“And?” He moans and I roll my eyes. “Suck my dick, slut.”

“Call me when you’re finished.” I hang up and shake my head.

Adrian returns my call instantly. “Don’t fucking hang up on me, Dominic,” he warns.

“You’re getting your dick sucked. This needs attention, not your fucking load into some woman’s mouth.”

“They’re fucking temporary until I get Eliza back. You asked me to take her, and I’m doing *you* the favor by not.” I run my bloody hand through my hair in frustration. “So until I get that bitch back, I’ll have my dick on whoever the fuck I want!” Adrian’s losing it. “Come here, get your ass in the chair,” he says to someone. “Stay still.” I then hear the familiar sound of snorting. “Right, what do you want?”

“The road captain said someone from our ranks is going after my boss.”

“Where is he now?” Marco appears at my door and I hold a finger to my lips.

aged to him. "Yeah, deeper. That's it."

My annoyance is growing by the second. "Not here."

on the "He was probably saying whatever he wanted to save his ass."

livering Adrian isn't taking this shit seriously. The drugs have impacted  
thoughts. "You're probably right." It's no use speaking with him while  
o. "Get in his drug-addled state.

e, head "If you have something concrete, then call me, if not, I've got shit to  
Adrian's descent into hell is rapid, and if he keeps snorting that shit  
with the he's going to end up useless to the organization. Which also means,  
will exile him, or worse.

I hang up and lay my phone down on the desk. "What is it?" Marco

"He's..." I tap my temple a few times as I consider what my next step  
"Fucked."

"What do you want to do?"

I don't want to undermine Adrian, but I think in this case, I'm going  
: again, have to go to Ruben. "Put another four men on Rosa and Eliza." He  
crosses his arms in front of his chair as he leans against the door  
saying "Frank?"

"He's taking care of our biker problem."

: to not "Okay." I look down at my phone and stare at it. Adrian's drug p  
through has made him sloppy. There's a mole within the Sacco family organ  
sucked and Adrian has no interest in finding out who it is. "Fucking Adrian," I  
our ass "What's your brother done now?"

of him I look at him, but decide it's best I keep this to myself for now. I  
speak to Ruben and let him know everything that's going on. "I'm taking  
ss." shower."

er up to Marco moves out of my way as I leave my office and head toward

bedroom.



led his  
en he's

do.” Frank navigates the streets toward Ruben’s house as I sit in the back a  
it, then the report the men have sent me on my Rosa’s movements. She’s l  
Ruben work and then returned to the motel. She ordered pizza for her and Eli  
they stayed in for the rest of the night. The car she thought was taili  
asks. was indeed from the Fallen MC, but they disappeared the moment n  
eps are. came on the scene.

My men are on the lookout if that car returns, and they know wh  
have to do if it does. I want whoever is inside in my dungeon, so I car  
oing to them. I’m surprised my Rosa hasn’t called me, but I’m trying to g  
ods and space although I have six of my men there at any one time.

r jamb. Frank pulls up to the gates, and the guardhouse opens the door  
Frank pulls up in front and stops the car. Marco opens the back do  
waits for me to slide out. I do and button up my suit jacket before wal  
roblem. the front door.

ization Maria opens the door and steps aside. “Mr. Sacco is in the game  
I groan. sir,” she says and signals down the hallway on the left.

I give her a curt nod and head toward the game room.

need to “Uncle,” I say as I approach him.

aking a Ruben is setting up the pool table and looks over at the wall wher  
are six cue sticks lined up. “Dominic.” He racks up the balls, grab  
ard my

stick and breaks. “How are you, son?”

“There’s a problem.”

“Which is?”

“Earlier today I had a Fallen road captain in my dungeon.”

Ruben takes his next shot, and lifts his eyes to look at me. “Maria calls. Within a few seconds Maria arrives. “Two coffees.”

nd read “Yes, sir,” she says with a smile and leaves the room.

been to “What happened with the road captain?”

za, and “He gave me useful information. He told me someone in the ranks  
ing her, my boss, and whoever this person is has been dipping their fingers in  
ny men businesses.”

at they “Your brother isn’t here telling me this.” Ruben’s wording is carefu  
warning me about the hierarchy of the organization.

talk to “He isn’t,” I agree as I take my shot on the pool table.

ive her He arches a brow and lifts his chin. “Where’s the road captain now?”

“No longer with us.”

for us. Ruben’s smile is slow, but he nods his acknowledgement. “And Adri

or and “He’s preoccupied,” I too am cautious with my words.

lking to “Not with Eliza considering she left him.” He stares at me, waiting  
expression, but I don’t give him one.

room, “You know?”

Maria enters the games room carrying a silver tray with two coffi  
biscotti. “Freshly made,” she proudly announces.

re there “These are perfect, thank you, Maria,” Ruben replies. “You can re  
the evening.”

s a cue She smiles brightly at him, and if he wasn’t thirty years her jun  
suspect there’s something going on between them. But Maria is like F

nonna with the way she fusses over him. “Have a good night, signor looks to me and grants me the same smile. “Mr. Sacco, a good night too.”

“Good night.” I lift my coffee and take a sip.

ria,” he We wait until she leaves before Ruben lifts a biscotti and dunks it in coffee. “Your woman left you too.” Again, it’s not a question, more a statement.

“She did.”

is after “Adrian knows how I feel about lifting an angry hand toward a woman.” He looks to me and watches me for a moment. “Did your woman leave for the same reason?”

il. He’s “God, no,” I say taken aback by his question. “She left because she was afraid for her sister, and Eliza is afraid of Adrian.”

” Ruben sweeps his tongue across his teeth as he lifts his chin. “You need to feel safe, Dominic.”

ian?” “I know, which is why I’ve increased the number of my men on the street.” Ruben sets the cup down and picks up the cue stick. “And the drugs?”

I shouldn’t be surprised that Ruben knows. “At the warehouse or Acropolis?” His jaw tightens and he cocks a brow. “Both.”

“Adrian’s...” I pause as I think about the words I need to convey. “I should’ve thought this through.”

ees and “I see,” Ruben says as he dips another biscotti into his coffee.

“We also have a problem at Heaven.”

rtire for He lifts his brows as he stares at me. “About time you came to me.”

Fuck, he knows about that too. Jesus. My heart pounds hard in my chest, but I need to stand my ground. “I’m going to go in and look at it myself.”

Ruben’s “Because you sent someone else?” He crosses his arms in front of him.

e.” She chest. Ruben’s voice is always low and calm, but when he crosses his arms, it’s the sign that shit is about to happen.

“No, I didn’t send anyone else. Adrian and I were at the club, and I went to investigate, but came back saying everything was fine. But it’s not in hisis Adrian fucking skimming from our uncle? Surely not. He wouldn’t be like aHe knows what would happen if he did.

Ruben straightens as he inhales a long breath. “Interesting,” he says in a low voice. Fuck, did I just sign my brother’s death warrant? “Keep an eye on the girls, and I need to look at the ledger from the warehouse.”

I gave for “I have it at home.” I purposely left it there, because it’ll give me time to investigate it more before I need to hand it over to Ruben.

I’m afraid “Tomorrow,” he says in his controlled voice. He unfolds his arms and moves to take a third biscotti. “How badly did he hurt Eliza?”

These girls “She hasn’t been seen, so I don’t have any documentation, only what she told me.”

“Which is?”

“He choked her and beat her.” Ruben crosses his arms in front of his chest. “Adrian?” yet again. His entire posture is rigid. “She called Rosa in the middle of the night, and Rosa stole my car to go to her.”

He’s...” He snickers. “Your woman has balls.”

“She does,” I confirm. “But all the cars have tracking, so finding her is pretty easy.”

“You can’t let that one go, Dominic.” The arms unfold again. “Women like your Rosa are rare.”

I lean against the pool table and run my hand through my hair. “She’s amazing.” I look down at the table and slightly shake my head. “She’s amazing.”

“Then don’t be a fucking coward.” I lift my chin to look at him.



s arms,her.”

I snicker as I shake my head. “She’s a fucking bull in a china shop.”  
He walks over and claps a hand to my shoulder. “They’re the o  
.” Shit,don’t let go. Has she seen you with blood?” I nod. “And?”  
’t dare. “Rosa belongs in this family.”

Ruben chuckles as he steps back. “She’s got you by the balls, son.”  
“You have no idea,” I say on a sigh.  
“Good. Marry her and get it over with.”

“Rosa? Marry me?” It’s my turn to laugh. “She doesn’t want me an  
time tonear her.”

“We don’t give them a choice. Our job is to keep them safe, prov  
andthem, fuck them to within an inch of their lives, and if we’re lucky th  
us fall to our knees in devotion. We don’t ask, we tell. We worship  
at Rosafucking walk.” Ruben clicks his tongue to the roof of his mouth. “  
our women. Rose is *your* woman. She belongs to you, Dominic, not  
her.” He looks at the biscotti then to me. “If you don’t eat one, Maria  
is chestupset.”

“I wouldn’t want to offend her,” I say as I reach for the biscotti and  
in the last of my coffee.

“I want that ledger tomorrow, Dominic.”

“Of course.” But first, I need to return home and go over it myself.

men like

e’s...” I

“Claim

her.”

I snicker as I shake my head. “She’s a fucking bull in a china shop.”

He walks over and claps a hand to my shoulder. “They’re the ones we don’t let go. Has she seen you with blood?” I nod. “And?”

“Rosa belongs in this family.”

Ruben chuckles as he steps back. “She’s got you by the balls, son.”

“You have no idea,” I say on a sigh.

“Good. Marry her and get it over with.”

“Rosa? Marry me?” It’s my turn to laugh. “She doesn’t want me anywhere near her.”

“We don’t give them a choice. Our job is to keep them safe, provide for them, fuck them to within an inch of their lives, and if we’re lucky they’ll let us fall to our knees in devotion. We don’t ask, we tell. We worship or they fucking walk.” Ruben clicks his tongue to the roof of his mouth. “They’re *our* women. Rose is *your* woman. She belongs to you, Dominic, now show her.” He looks at the biscotti then to me. “If you don’t eat one, Maria will be upset.”

“I wouldn’t want to offend her,” I say as I reach for the biscotti and dunk it in the last of my coffee.

“I want that ledger tomorrow, Dominic.”

“Of course.” But first, I need to return home and go over it myself.

## Chapter Twenty

Rose



Eliza stretches out on the bed and turns to face me. “How do you feel today?” I ask as I tuck my hands under the pillow and stare at her bruising, which is still obvious, but there’s small tinges of yellow around the edges of the dark that indicates healing.

“In truth, I’m struggling.”

“You’re free from him.”

“Am I? Don’t think I’m living in a world where he doesn’t know who I am.” I avert my eyes. “He knows, right?”

“I didn’t want to say anything, but yes, he knows.”

Eliza’s eyes redden, but she holds the tears back. “He’ll come soon.”

“No, he won’t. I won’t let him take you.” Eliza is trying her hardest to keep it together, but it’s clear to see she’s not coping. “Besides, I don’t think Dominic would allow him.”

Eliza sits up in bed and scrubs her hand over her face. “You have the power he wields.”

“I know he’s Dominic’s boss, but, they’re brothers, and...”

Eliza looks over to me and takes in a sharp breath. “He doesn’t care he’d upset his brother. Adrian is so evil. He’s cruel and heartless. A psychopath, Rose. He has no empathy for anyone at all.”

I mimic her position, but cross my legs on the bed. “It would help if you tell me why you married him, Eliza.” Her shoulders stiffen and she shakes her head vehemently. “Come on.”

“No!” she snaps at me. “Stop asking. I won’t tell you.”

“How am I supposed to know how to help you?”

“Stop.” She holds up her hand. “Look...” Eliza’s shoulders soften and she purses her lips together. “I’m going to go back to him, I just needed a few days.”

I leap to my feet and run my hand through my messy hair. “The hell are you! Are you insane? He’ll beat you to death.”

Her face drains of color as she stares toward the door, as if she’s waiting for Adrian to break it down, charge in here and take her. “It was my fault, my voice cracks. “I should’ve been a better wife.”

Eliza is terrified of something more than Adrian. But she’s stubborn and won’t tell me what it is. “Like fuck. You said it yourself, he’s evil and doesn’t give a fuck about anyone but himself. You’re not going back.” She stands in front of the door as if she’s trying to escape.

“You don’t understand.” Eliza looks down at her wringing hands and fidgets with the tips of her fingers.

“Then explain it to me.” This is so frustrating, and she’s giving me nothing.

Eliza lifts her chin to look at me, her face drained of color, her eyes brimming with tears she’s holding back. “I can’t.”

I let my head loll back and groan in aggravation. “I’m working at t  
are that and I need to get ready.”

He’s a “You should go to work.”

I walk over to the bed and sit on the edge. I take her hands in m  
f you’d look her dead in the eye. “Promise me something.”

shakes “Anything.”

“That you’ll stay here and will *not* leave.” She blinks twice and w  
lips with the tip of her tongue. “Promise me you’ll stay here until I  
and then we can talk about everything.” She gulps. “Promise,” I push.

as she “I promise.”

a break I release a relieved breath. I don’t want to leave Eliza by herself,  
don’t go to work then we can’t afford to live here or eat. I squeeze  
tell you hands before leaning over and hugging her close to my body. “We ca  
this work, Eliza, you don’t ever have to go back to him.” I feel her tre  
waiting my arms. “Please, don’t do anything today. Let’s get through the day  
r fault,” can see what’ll happen.”

My world has been slowly imploding for a while now. I thought  
orn and hard when Mom and Dad died, but this is something else. Twenty-o  
vil and olds are supposed to have the world at their feet. I feel like everyt  
I stand closing in and suffocating me.

“I promise I won’t go anywhere today.”

id plays I pull back and give my sister a small kiss on the cheek. Standing,  
into the bathroom to get ready for work.

ing me

er eyes

he café



ine and

As I walk toward the café, I see Dominic, Marco and Frank all c  
rets her Dominic is leaning against the car, Marco and Frank are both a f  
return, away, their hands in their pockets as they keep guard.

Marco sees me first and says something making Dominic turn tow

The man is serious eye candy, but I'm in no mood to see him tod  
but if I pushes off the car and begins to head over to me.

Eliza's "What do you want, Dominic?" He reaches for my hand and place  
n make in it. "What's this?"

mble in He glances over his shoulder to the other side of the street. "Th  
and we you."

I follow his line of sight, and see a shiny new Mercedes parked at th  
: it was "What is?"

ne-year "The car."

thing is I lift the fob and see the Mercedes symbol. "Is this some kind of jok

"I've said before that I don't like the way my brother treated you.

but neither of you should suffer because of what he did. I don't li

, I head catching the bus to and from work, nor do I like you travelling by bus

boss's house to clean it."

"You know about that?"

"I know everything."

I look at the fob, then the car. “I can’t accept this, Dominic.” I extend my hand for him to take the fob. “Besides, I don’t want your charity. I just want your brother to leave my sister alone.”

Dominic glances toward Marco, an unvoiced question passing between them. “Has he contacted you?”

“No, he hasn’t. But Eliza told me this morning that she’s going to get the car from outside. I’ll be waiting for you with a few feet to him.”

“Why?”

I throw my arms up in frustration. “I don’t know, she’s holding some secret and refuses to tell me what it is. He’s got something on her, and she’s not telling me. Every time I ask her, she shuts down and refuses to tell me. I don’t even know if this secret has anything to do with me.” If only she would open up. “Look.” I glance toward the café and point. “I’ve got work to do here. But here.” I hold the fob out to him. “I’m not taking this.”

Dominic steps into me, clutches his fingers onto my nape and squeezes. He lowers his face until our mouths meet. Claiming me, he pushes his fingers between my lips and deepens the kiss. When he pulls back, he kisses my forehead. “You’re taking the car so I know you’re safe. Then we can negotiate.”

“You can’t do this.” I try to shove the fob back into his hand, but he doesn’t take it.

“I can do whatever the fuck I want with you, *Rosa*.” He winks at me and turns, turning to leave.

My inner darkness falls to her knees in anticipation of his toxic possession. “This isn’t healthy,” I say to myself as I head into work. Dominic was waiting for me. I’m inside before he gets in the car and they leave.

Once in the café, I walk out the back to find Evelyn. She’s sitting

end my desk in the office working on the laptop. “Hi,” I say and wait for her to nod her head.

“Rose, how are you?”

“Um.” I crinkle my brows as I think about her question. “Good, I think I’m doing well.”

She smiles as she sits back in her chair. “You’re not sure if you’re going to go back to work?” I look at the fob still wrapped in my fist then back at Evelyn. “Thank you for allowing me to clean your house yesterday. Did I do an okay job?”

“It was great, I’m happy with it.”

I smile proudly. “I know I’m not a professional, and the woman you hired probably does a much better job, I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate you for this,” my damn voice shakes.

“Is everything alright?” I look at the fob again and shake my head. “Yes, it is. What do you need to do?”

I want to tell Evelyn everything but I can’t, it’ll put her in danger and she doesn’t want to. I’m not willing to introduce her into the mafia world. Evelyn is good at keeping her tongue and she does things because she’s kind and generous. The mafia world will use her and then spit her out. “I um...” I look at the fob like it’s buried in my hand. “I have a car now, so if you don’t want me to clean your house anymore, I won’t.” Eliza and I still need the money, but I want to give her the chance to find someone else if she wasn’t happy with what I did.

Evelyn’s forehead crinkles as she intently stares at me. “If you don’t want to do it, then you don’t have to. But I still need someone to clean my house until my regular cleaner returns.”

A small relieved breath passes by my lips and I smile at Evelyn. She looks like a good and kind person. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. Now, don’t you have work?”

“I do.”



r to lift She de-escalated whatever was going through my head, and I li  
about her. In my world of insanity, Evelyn's kindness keeps me sane.

I walk out of her office feeling somewhat calmer.

ink." At least, for now I can push my craziness aside and focus on work.

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She de-escalated whatever was going through my head, and I like that about her. In my world of insanity, Evelyn's kindness keeps me sane.

I walk out of her office feeling somewhat calmer.

At least, for now I can push my craziness aside and focus on work.

## Chapter Twenty-One

Dominic



“Tomorrow, we need to go to Heaven, Lust, and the Sunset H say as I look at the inventory of Lust. “That’s three now.” I at the ledger and know this is going to be a death sentence for who helping themselves to our money. Ruben will slice their throat when out who’s doing this.

Marco reaches into his suit jacket and takes his phone out. He look screen and narrows his eyes. “Shit,” he says.

“What is it?”

He scrubs his hand over his chin and glances at me before return attention to his phone. “Shit,” he repeats.

“Marco.”

“Hang on.” He rolls his eyes and shakes his head. “We have to go.”

“What’s happening?”

“Heaven, Lust, and the Sunset have all been hit simultaneously.”

“What the fuck?” I close my laptop. “I just said the two clubs a brothel. What do you mean they’ve been hit simultaneously?”

“All three had the safes hit at the same time last night.”

“The hookers, are they okay?”

“As far as I know, only the safes have been targeted.”

I pick my phone up and dial Adrian’s number as I stand to my feet. I shrug into my jacket. The call rings out, and I look to the phone. “What the fuck is Adrian?” I try him again, but to no avail. I’m forced to call Marco. “Tell Frank to get the car ready,” I instruct Marco who’s heading out to the office.

“Dominic,” Ruben answers on the third ring.

“I’m heading to the club, what time will you be there?” When I speak into the phone we always need to be cautious.

“I’m leaving in a few moments.”

“God will always bless us,” I say giving him the code for which we always meet at.

“God always looks after us.” He knows which one I need him at.

I slide my phone into my pants pocket, take the ledger, and walk toward the front door. Marco is waiting by the idling car. Frank is already in the driver’s seat, waiting on me. “Did you get a hold of Adrian?”

“Not Adrian.” I shake my head. “I called Ruben.” I slide into the idling car and Marco closes the door. I try Adrian again, but he’s not answering the phone. “Something’s wrong. Adrian’s not picking the phone up.”

“Fuck, has he been pinched?” Marco turns to face me from the front seat.

“I don’t know.” I lean my elbow on the side of the door and stare out the window. Scrubbing my hand against my stubble, I should be thinking about finding Adrian, but I’m more worried about my girl. “Call the men and the boys and have them looking after Rosa and Eliza. They need to stay vigilant.”

Marco nods, lifts his phone and makes several calls.

My teeth grind together as I keep an ear out in case something's happened to my girl. "The girls are safe," Marco says.

The thoughts going through my mind are murderous. I'll kill anyone who dares try to take my woman. I'll set the world on fire if I have to. I don't care where the Frank pulls up in front of Heaven. It's unusual for me to be here so early in the day. What's more unusual is how quiet the street is. Once out of the car, I get out of my head inside and up to the office. Ruben has yet to arrive. I sit at the desk and log into the computer so I can pull the security feed up of where the safe is. I rewind from now until I find what I'm looking for. A masked figure enters the room, unlocks the safe with the code, opens a duffel bag and sweeps money into it. They close the safe, and leave. They knew exactly what they were doing, and did it without hesitation.

"Dominic," Ruben's voice is low although it carries authority.

"Uncle." I stand and gesture toward the chair next to the desk.

"Problems?"

"First, I can't get a hold of Adrian."

Ruben's brows draw in and he turns toward Dante and lifts his hand.

Silently, he gives the command before turning back to me. Ruben has contacts all over the country. "And?"

"Lust, Heaven and Sunset Hotel have all been hit."

Ruben crosses his arms in front of his chest as he takes a deep breath. "Are the girls okay at Sunset?"

"Only the safes have been targeted." I rewind to where the thief came in and stole from Heaven. "Here." I roll the footage. "I haven't had a chance to check who are have a look at the other two places. But, give me a moment." I log into the security system of Lust, and rewind to the same time stamp as when Heaven was hit. Ruben and I watch the same thing, almost like they're a carbon copy.

ppened of what happened here. “They’re wearing the same mask, and same clothing. They’re even of a similar build.” I shake my head and log in whose security of the Sunset Hotel. Ruben and I watch and find the same thing. I don’t care. the hotel. “They were in and out without any hesitation.”

early in “It’s someone close. Someone who knows the business and who has the car codes.”

ask and “Mr. Sacco,” Dante announces once he returns to the room. We both go over to him, and he shakes his head.

waltzes What has Adrian done? “Fuck,” I murmur and shake my head.

all the “My nephew seems to have disappeared.”

what they I lift my arm and lean my elbow on the desk as I rub at the temples, thumping behind my eyes. “Adrian might be behind all of this.”

“Why?” Ruben unfolds his arms and stands. He remains calm as he goes over to the large window that overlooks the normally packed dance floor. He peers down. “Dominic?”

“The ledger.” I slide it over toward the edge of the desk. “I was going to bring it to you this morning, but all this happened, so I have it here now.” Ruben turns and sees it sitting on the desk. “What’s in it?” He picks it up and flicks to the last page.

“The two cocaine shipments that each had sixty pounds go missing. And Tony were there for them.”

“Of course they’re going to be there, because that’s his job,” Ruben says, still in a controlled, low tone.

ance to “This club, Lust, and Sunset Hotel have all had problems with books getting into the books.”

Heaven Ruben continues to flick through the ledger, stopping on certain pages and running his gaze down them. He stops and lifts his eyes toward me. “I

ie dark “I knew of Heaven, but not of Lust and the Sunset. I found that c  
into themorning.”

hing at “I know everything that happens, Dominic.” He runs his tongue c  
teeth, and places the ledger on the desk. “The only thing I didn’t know  
s all theyou were in on it too.” Shit, so I’m right. Adrian is doing someth  
shouldn’t be. “That wasn’t a question.” My brows draw up as I :  
th lookRuben. He turns to look at Dante. “Get over to his house.”

“Yes, sir,” Dante responds before leaving the office.

“Dominic, I’ll be...”

My phone rings and I take it out of my suit pocket. Rose’s number  
tensionon the screen. “It’s Rose,” I explain to Ruben.

“Take it.” He returns to the window, and with his back to me he lo  
e walksat the empty club.

oor and “Rosa,” I say.

“He’s trying to get into the room!” she frantically cries into the phor  
going to I’m up and on my feet within a second. “Adrian?” Ruben spins ar  
n.” look at me.

ks it up “Yes. He’s bashing on the door. He’s trying to break it in.”

“I’ll be there in a minute.” Ruben and I run out of the office with  
Adrianfollowing.

“He’s over at the motel,” Ruben yells to Dante as we run down th  
n says,toward the car.

“Dominic, I don’t know what to do. What do we do?” I can hea  
lancingcrying in the background and then a gun shot. Rosa yelps then says in  
voice, “Shh, it’s okay, Eliza, I won’t let him take you.”

ges and “He’s shooting at the door,” I relay to Ruben and Marco. Ruben an  
know.”into the car and Frank takes off up the street with a screech of th

out this “What’s the bathroom door like?”

“He’s nearly in.”

over his “Push everything you can up against the door, Rosa.” My heart is  
v was if and my hand is clenched around the phone. If he lays a hand on either  
ring hethose girls, I’ll fucking kill him myself. My ears are pounding with m  
stare at pressure.

“I’ve got everything I can move up against it.”

“How long?” I yell at Frank and Marco.

“Two minutes,” Frank responds.

flashes “In two minutes they could be dead.” Rosa gasps and weakly m  
something. “Do you have a lighter?”

oks out “A what?” she frantically asks.

“A lighter? Do you have one?” Where the fuck are my men? Why  
they there?

ie. “Um...” the tremble in her voice is telling me she can’t think s  
ound to “What?”

“A lighter? Do you have one? Search the bathroom, your things. L  
one.”

Marco “I have one,” she says. “I bought a candle, and, um...” Rosa is ba  
she’s going into shock.

ie steps “Do you have an aerosol can of some type? Hairspray, deo  
Anything?” I’ll slit his fucking throat if he does anything to my girl or

ir Eliza “Ahh!” she screams.

a small “Where’s my fucking bitch?” Adrian’s voice echoes through the  
“Open the door, Rose, and I won’t take you too.”

id I pile “Hurry up!” I yell at Frank.

ie tires. Ruben is on the phone shouting orders to his men.



“My little bitch can’t hide forever. Come out, come out and play.”

“Adrian, we need to go,” I hear Tony say.

is racing “Not without my sluts.”

one of My body vibrates with fury and I shoot Ruben a look.

ounting “Dante is close,” Ruben says.

“Now, Adrian!” Tony yells. “They’re nearly here.”

“Fuck!” Adrian screams. “I’ll be back for you bitches.”

“He’s stopped,” Rosa whispers.

“Stay where you are until I’m there.”

urmurs “We won’t move.”

“Is he really gone?” Eliza voice trembles with fear.

“He’s gone.”

y aren’t “Don’t move,” I say to Rosa.

“We’re not going anywhere. I promise you, Dominic.”

straight. The plan is already forming in my head. I’ll find him, and slit his t  
should never have left the girls on their own. I should’ve moved the  
ook formy house. I’ll fucking kill him. He’s a dead man.

“Dante’s there. Adrian is gone,” Ruben says.

ibbling, Pain shoots through my tight jaw. I turn to Ruben. “He has to die,”  
Ruben. He lifts his brows, not giving me a definitive answer.

dorant? “Dominic,” he says in his controlled voice. I make eye contact ar  
Eliza. “He’s done.” That’s Ruben’s way of saying Adrian is now excommuni  
Adrian is no longer Sacco family. He’s not for us; he’s against us.  
phone.must die.

Frank pulls the car up outside the motel. “Rosa, I’m here. Stay wh  
are.”

“I will,” she says between the sobs.

I'm out of the car in a heartbeat and run toward their room. The door is destroyed, but Rosa managed to push the dresser up against it. I ease the old piece of shit out of the way. "Rosa," I call once we're inside.

She runs out of the bathroom, tosses the phone on the bed and then wraps her arms around me. "He was going to kill us." She sobs uncontrollably in my neck. "Eliza's a mess. She's in the bathroom."

Ruben walks into the room and heads straight to the bathroom. Eliza is clinging to me as she cries. Eliza is sitting in the empty bathtub, her hands over her ears and she's rocking back and forth. Ruben kneels down and slowly extends his hand to place it on her shoulder. Eliza cries out in pain and he jerks his hand backward. "Eliza, you're safe now," he croons to her. I've never seen Ruben so tender with anyone in my entire twenty-nine years.

"Did he hurt you?" I pull back to run my hands over Rosa, pushing her away from her face. Her eyes are red and puffy and her chin is quite swollen. "Did he hurt you?" I repeat as I stare into her hurt eyes.

"No," she says as she shakes her head.

"Dominic," Marco says to gain my attention.

With my girl in my arms I look at him, but he flicks a look to Rosa. I say to Eliza, "Ruben shakes his head, silently telling Marco not to deliver the news he was going to." Marco nods and backs out of the room. "I didn't want to wait. I found the lighter, and we had some deodorant." Rosa pulled it out of her pocket and with shaky hands she holds up the lighter. "I was going to burn him." She blinks several times and stares at me. "I'm so sorry."

I kiss her forehead and wrap her in my arms again. "Good."

"I was going to hurt him, Dominic. I'm sorry."

"You have nothing to be sorry about. He came after you." Her burn is

door might have slowed him down enough until we got here, but the cocky pushbastard ran instead.

“There were other people here. I heard Tony but there were others,” Rosa says with a trembling voice.

“Who? Have you seen them before?” Every fucker involved in this is going to die.

Rosa is “I only heard them. I didn’t see them.” Ruben and I exchange a quick handshake. He’s on the same page as I am.

“You’re safe now,” I say to Rosa as I hug her tighter. “Marco,” I call and he appears at the door jamb and quickly assesses the room. “Is there anything else. I’ve got you where you want?” I ask Rosa. She shakes her head. “Ruben,” I call. He comes over to me. “The girls need to leave.”

“Yes, they do.” He sits on the edge of the bathtub and envelops her in a warm embrace. “Come on, sweetheart. We need to get you home.”

“No!” Eliza shrieks. “Rose.” Rose breaks out of my arms and runs to her sister. “I can’t go back there. Please, don’t let him send me back to *him*!”

“You’re not going back to Adrian’s,” Ruben says as he gently strokes her hair. “You’ll come back to my house.”

She bursts into tears while vigorously shaking her head. “No, please don’t know where Eliza goes, I go,” my woman says.

Ruben lifts his chin and nods. “The girls can come back to my house. I’ll take care of them.”

Ruben scrubs his hand over his stubble and nods. “Of course,” he says. “Dante,” he calls in a low tone.

“Mr. Sacco,” Dante announces when he’s in the room.

“Increase security around Dominic’s house.” Dante acknowledges my order with a nod, and leaves the room. “Dominic, I want to see you o

wardly girls are comfortable.”

We both know what this means. Ruben and I need to discuss what we’re going to do about Adrian. “Rosa,” I say.

Ruben stands and backs away from Eliza. He stands tall and crosses his arms in front of his chest as he watches my Rosa coax Eliza up, bundle her arms and lead Eliza out of the bathroom.

“Take the girls home,” I say to Marco.

Rosa offers me a small smile and mouths *thank you*. They leave the room surrounded by a slew of my and Ruben’s men. Ruben and I have nothing in for the report from Dante. We watch the girls be taken into my car, and she looks away surrounded by another four cars all filled with our men.

Dante stands to the side and he too watches. “Talk to me,” Ruben says. Eliza releases a small, frustrated breath.

“All the men Dominic had stationed are dead.”  
“There’s no way Adrian would’ve been able to take them all out, even with Tony’s help,” I say. “I had four cars with three in each stationed outside.”  
“He had to have help.”

“Cameras?” Ruben asks Dante.  
“No.” “Disabled about ten minutes before Rose called.”

My teeth grind as I look to Ruben. He’s calling the shots here, but I want to get my hands on the fucker who disabled the cameras. “Dominic,” I say. I look to him and wait for the okay. “Go home to the girls, and when they’re settled, come to my house.”

I run my hand over the back of my neck and look over to Dante. I want to challenge Ruben in front of his men. He is, after all, the Dog. I want to be the one to rip out the vocal chords of the fucker who turned me into the

cameras off. I step into Ruben and say, "Let me go down there and  
it we're fucker. Someone here was paid off, and I want to be the one to kill him

Ruben places a hand on my shoulder. "You will. Go home to th  
esses his make sure they're okay, then return to my house." The smile in his ey  
e her in me he's allowing me the honors.

"Dominic." Dante holds out the key to the car I gave Rosa. I sh  
surprised that Ruben knew about the car, but I'm not.

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Ruben places a hand on my shoulder. “You will. Go home to the girls, make sure they’re okay, then return to my house.” The smile in his eyes tells me he’s allowing me the honors.

“Dominic.” Dante holds out the key to the car I gave Rosa. I should be surprised that Ruben knew about the car, but I’m not.

“I’ll be an hour.” I take off down to the car to get my ass home.

## Chapter Twenty-Two

Rose



Eliza and I head into Dominic’s house. She’s like a walking zombie. She’s managed to calm her sobbing, but now she’s blatantly unemotional.

“Come on,” I say as I lead her up the stairs toward my old bedroom. “I’ll run the bath for you.”

“O-okay,” she meekly whispers.

I lead her to the bathroom, and start running the bath for her. Her shoulders are slumped, her eyes are dead and she’s just staring at no one. I duck my hand in the water and move it around, adding some hot to her. “The bath will be ready in a couple of minutes.”

“O-okay,” she repeats. I’m not even sure she can hear me. She’s a completely different person I once knew, and it all started changing after she got engaged to that animal.

I turn the faucets off once the water is warm enough and the bath is ready. “Eliza, you have to take your clothes off so you can get in the bath.”

“O-okay.” Robotically she undresses with absolute no modesty at her sister so it doesn’t bother me, but what I see are all the scars on her. But, now’s not the time to ask about them, she’s already traumatized by what happened at the motel.

“Here you go.” I hold my hand out to her, which she takes and I push her into the bath. I grab a wash cloth from on top of the vanity unit. “She’s staring blankly at nothing.”

“O-okay.”

My heart breaks for her. Eliza’s gone through so much more than I can ever imagine. “I’m going to wash you, is that alright?”

“O-okay.”

zombie. I kneel beside the tub and she sits forward, hugging her legs to her chest. I dunk the wash cloth into the tub and bring it up to gently rub on her back and

Eliza winces when I touch her. “It’s me,” I say in an attempt to ease her pain. “I’ll

“Rosa,” I hear Dominic call. A small yelp of pain escapes from her mouth. I jump to my feet and head out of the bathroom so Eliza remains comfortable and safe in the bath. I close the door behind me and lean against it. I

Eliza’s sweeps me into his arms and kisses my mouth with a gentle softness. “Nothing. I’m Eliza?”

at it up. I look at the bathroom door and intake a sharp breath. I push my hand through his, linking our hands and tug him outside of the bedroom. “

shell of a mess. Did you know what your brother was doing to Eliza?”

aged to Dominic’s features harden. It’s clear he didn’t. “What was he doing to her?”

s filled. “She has scars all over her body.”

He runs his free hand through his hair as he shakes his head. “Scars?”

“All over her body. I told you he was beating her, but this.” I love



all. I'm chin and stare at the floor. "No one could've known."

er body. He leads me over to the banister and leans against it, taking me in his arms. "I didn't know."

I step backward putting distance between us. "Dominic, what's happened? Help her with Adrian? Why would he do that?"

Eliza?" "I need to speak with Ruben."

"No!" I point my finger at him. "This involves me and my sister. You need to tell me what's going on."

I could "I can't, not yet," he says. He crosses his arms in front of his chest and stares at me. "It's not something I'll tell you."

I point to him, then myself. "We'll never work if you keep me in the dark. I need to know what's going on with Dominic."

er back. "You have to understand. This is something I need to talk to Ruben about."

"Why?" I pace back and forth, becoming frustrated with his evasive response. "This has got to do with my sister. That fucking maniac beat her down, fucking door down to get to my sister. Not to mention what he would've done to me." I'm trying my hardest not to become hysterical and overwhelmed. "How's it going with everything that's happened. "The moment your brother put a ring on your sister's finger, our lives started imploding," my voice wavers with frustration. "This has to be..."

She's a "No!" I cut him off and stop pacing in front of him. "I can do whatever you do. When you come home covered in blood, I don't question anything. I'm going to have to admit something I wasn't prepared for. I'm going to sound fucking insane and there has to be something wrong with me for feeling this way, but when I see your shirt covered in blood, and your hands are bruised from beating someone up, I find myself wildly attracted to you." I swallow my fear and try to steady my voice. "I need to know what's going on with Dominic."

that. But when it comes to Eliza and me, I..." I step closer and place my arms to his chest. "I don't want to be kept in the dark about us."

Dominic runs his gaze down to my mouth then slowly back up to my eyes. "Opening" "I'm going to see Ruben now."

"Tsk," I huff and step back from him. "Please, just tell me what's on your mind."

"You tell me," Dominic straightens and holds his chin up to me. "You'll stay here until you won't move until I get home." He grips my chin and smashes his lips against mine. Something is wrong with me, because in these hours of constant chaos, my body still reacts to his possessiveness. My inner darkness is completely dependent on his tight rein on me. My mind struggles with the contradiction.

He pulls back from the kiss and tilts my head up so I can look straight at him. "Hungry auburn eyes." "Know this, *Rosa*." My heart pounds inside my chest. "I hang on every word he says. "There's nowhere you can go where I can't find you. You think you were hiding in that motel? I knew exactly where you were every moment of every day." In my gut I knew he was always watching. "You belong to me." He grips my chin harder causing me to gasp on my sharp breath. My brain wants to argue that I don't belong to any man, but my inner darkness and body both respond with a deep thrill.

My mouth says the words my brain is thinking, but my body isn't cooperating. "You don't own me."

His mouth claims mine hungrily. "Yes, I do, my lioness. Yes, I do." "This is do." He kisses me once again before releasing his possessive grip on my neck. The delicious pain from his fingers is instantly missed. "Now, get in bed and take care of your sister. I'll be home soon."

I want to argue, but I don't have the energy. Nor do I want to. He leaves via the stairs, and I'm left standing outside the bedroom, overwhelmed.

my hand and in a daze. I take a moment to clear my mind before heading into the bathroom to find Eliza.

My eyes. She's still huddled in the bath, staring at nothing. "Eliza," I say.

She turns to look at me, her blue eyes filled with tears. Her cheeks are glistening from where tears have already fallen. "Are we safe?" she asks in a small voice.

Yes, and fuck. Are we? I have no idea because I don't know if Adrian will show up here and take her. "Yeah," I say as convincingly as I can. Eliza doesn't complete the small flutter in my voice, because if she did, she'd be up and out of the bath within a heartbeat. Or maybe she's simply too exhausted to try. I go to find you some clothes, and ask Alba to cook something for me. Eliza lays her head on her knees and stares at me. "I won't be long."

She forces a small smile as I stand and head toward the door. "Rosario, I won't," she says in a tiny voice.

"What is it?" I reach for the handle, but turn to look at her.

"I'm sorry I haven't been a good big sister to you. I thought I was supposed to take care of you and protect you when I married him."

I've always known there's more to this than she's ever told me. "What are you talking about?" I ask as I move closer to her. Eliza's eyes glaze over. She simply smiles as she turns her head to face away from me. Whatever

has to be bad or she wouldn't be so closed off about it. I walk over and give her a soft kiss to her head. "I just wish Mom and Dad were here to help me." My chuckle is almost diabolical. "What's that mean?" I'm met with a head tilt and silence, and I take my cue from her to just leave this alone. *For now*

I walk out and head down to find Alba.

Dominic What a fucking day.

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## Chapter Twenty-Three

Dominic



**R**uben stands back with his arms crossed in front of his chest. My knuckles are protesting in pain but this fucker isn't giving us what we need.

"Who paid you to cut the feed?" Ruben asks in a low voice.

The guy from the desk at the shit motel is holding onto this piece of information. Ruben flicks his gaze over to me. With clenched hands he punches another two into his ribs. The guy is hanging by chains and has no idea how much pain I can bring. "I like it when they don't talk," I say as I walk to the back and lay into his side close to his kidneys.

"Please," the guy pleads. "They'll kill me." *They?*

"I'll kill you," Ruben says with controlled anger.

"Who's they?" I ask as I step back and roll my shoulders, ready to hit him.

The guy lifts his head to look at me, his eyes wide with terror. "I know *he'll* kill me."

I look to Marco and crick my neck to the side. “Get his family,” Ruben cocks a brow as Marco begins to leave the shed at Ruben’s.

“No!” the guy shouts. “Not my family. Please,” he shamelessly look to Marco, then back at the guy in chains. “Alright, alright,” he s bursts into tears.

“Who paid you to disarm the cameras?” Ruben asks.

“Promise me you won’t hurt my family.”

“You’re in no position to negotiate,” I say. Marco is already out th  
“And he’s now gone.”

“No! I’ll tell you! Please, don’t go after my family.”

“Better speak fast,” I say.

“They’re a motorcycle club.”

ving us I look to Ruben. We exchange knowing looks. Fucking Adrian is the Fallen. Fuck. “What club?”

ertinent didn’t ask. But the emblem had a bird with a broken wing.” He look  
ls I lay “Please, not my family. I told you what I know.”

ea how Ruben relaxes his arms and looks to me, then back to the guy  
around done,” he says and turns to walk away. I walk over to where my sui  
and gun are, lift my gun and put two in his head. I catch up to Rub  
shrug into my jacket. “Stop Marco then come to my office.”

I head past him, and stop Marco before he can get to the family. “N  
to end to leave. Get Frank to clean up,” I instruct Marco.

“I thought he was going to die without saying a word. Who was the  
[ meant loyal to?”

“The Fallen.” Marco stops walking and turns to me. “Adrian ha  
working with them.”

' I say. "He's just signed his death warrant," Marco says.

"Until we know what his plans are..."

begs. I "My loyalty lies with you." He claps a hand to my shoulder. "I'n  
ays andman, but your brother is as good as dead."

"And I'll be the one to kill him." Marco clicks his tongue and nods  
going to find Frank. I go to wash the blood off my hands then head  
Ruben's office. The door is open, and Ruben has already pour  
ie door.scotches.

He looks to the glass, waiting for me. "This calls for more than coff  
relaxes in his dark red leather sofa, and glances to the armchair o  
where he's sitting. He lifts the glass and takes a sip before balancing i  
edge of the sofa. "Your brother," he starts.

in with "Needs to die," I finish his sentence with what I know needs to happ

He lifts the glass and just as it touches his mouth he says, "You're r  
know, Iunderboss." I wasn't expecting that. "How are the girls? Eliza?"

s to us. "She's traumatized. Rose told me her body is marked by scars."

"From Adrian?" I nod. Ruben shakes his head and looks away. "  
. "He'she's doing worth dying for?"

t jacket "Uncle, if I may speak freely?" Ruben glances toward me and nod

en as I "He went after my woman, and just for that he has to die. But I ask i  
my hand, and my hand only." Ruben's throat tightens and a vein pr

Jo needdown the column of his neck.

"Killing your own brother is difficult."

: fucker "He's not only betrayed the family name, he's betrayed me too."

"Dominic, as underboss, your responsibilities change. You need to  
s to behandle on this entire area. Adrian let everything slip. I suspect gre  
drugs are the components of his betrayal."

“He once told me that when he steps into your position, he wants to take away with the way you run the brothels and churn out the women.”

I'm sorry, Ruben throws back the rest of his scotch and places the glass beside me.

“Greed for power.”

Just before “He obviously didn't want to wait.”

He turns over to “No, he didn't,” Ruben says with a low voice. He runs his tongue across his teeth as he stares at me. “What do the girls need?”

“I'll get them sorted.”

“Increase their security.”

“Of course,” I nod.

“I can't tell you what to do with your woman, but I suggest you make it clear to her that working isn't a smart idea.”

“I've been considering that.” A small smile stretches my lips. “She's now going to like it.”

“She's your woman, but now that you're the underboss, things are going to change.”

“I know,” I say. Standing, I leave the now-empty glass on his desk.

“Somewhere I need to be.” I remember my shirt is covered in blood. “Do you have a shirt?”

Ruben narrows his eyes at me. “Should I ask?”

“I need to make a stop before I return home.”

Ruben stands and leads me toward his bedroom where he takes a new shirt with the tags still attached out of his walk-in closet and hands it to me. It's white, like the one I'm wearing. He also gives me a new tie, a similar one to the one I had pre-blood splatter. “I take it you have a plan.”

“For my woman, yes.”

Ruben chuckles as I tear off the bloody shirt and put his on. “She



d to do like a handful.”

“My Rosa is exactly that and more.” I button the shirt before tying it around his waist. “A wise man recently told me that we don’t give them a choice. That is to keep them safe, provide for them, fuck them to within an inch of their lives, so, that’s exactly what I’m going to do.”

Over his shoulder, Ruben laughs aloud as I finish fixing myself and look into his mirror to make sure there’s no blood visible anywhere. “Perhaps it’s in my best interest to look for a new underboss. Your Rose may end up smothering you in your sleep.”

Not before she chokes with my cock deep down her throat. “Wow, you really make it say as I lift my shoulders. “It’s quite probable that’s precisely what I’m going to do.”

He’s not kidding. Ruben barks out a relaxed laugh as we head out of his room. “I need you to keep me up to date about Eliza. Whatever she needs, let me know.” My mother-in-law appears particularly fond of Eliza. “She deserves the best, not what Adrian did to her.” I nod my agreement. “And for God’s sake, put a stop to it. I have your woman’s finger.”

Do you want to know? It’s my turn to laugh. “I’m getting there,” I say. “Rosa is demanding answers about everything.”

“Business is business. Give her what she needs to know about Adrian and nothing more.” He claps a hand to my back as we head to his office.

Now shirtless, “Adrian isn’t stupid enough to go after the girls, or us, for a while. I don’t believe he’ll lay low.” I sit in the armchair, and Ruben leans against his desk.

blue to “If he knows what’s good for him, he’ll disappear forever.” And just like that, Ruben’s transformed back to his straight, deadly self. “I’m sorry about your brother.” I avert my eyes for a moment as I consider his words. “I’ll see you soundstaked after your father.”

“I remember he was cruel.” In all honesty, I looked up to my uncle more than I ever had to my father.

our job “Very. He and I didn’t agree on a lot of things. Including how he treated your mother, and in what direction we should take this business. Our grandfather was cruel, our grandfather was worse. We come from a long line of ruthless men. And, that’s perfectly fine for business, but not when it comes to our women. They’re not like us.”

in your “Women can be cruel.”

“Absolutely, but not *our* women. They need to be cherished. Which is why I killed my father, because of how he treated my mother for decades until she’d say she would lose a piece of herself until she killed herself to escape his abuse.”

I told you to Everyone knows Ruben Sacco took a butcher’s knife and chopped off my uncle grandfather’s hands before he slit his throat. Violence against women has never been tolerated by Ruben. Once there’s violence, he ends it. Quickly. I know also why he killed my father. I don’t even hold it against him, my father was evil. “Well.” I stand and hold my hand out to Ruben to shake. “I have nothing to do.”

He shakes my hand. “Good luck with that firecracker of yours.” He looks at me, and “I’ll start the interview process,” he jokes.

Asshole.

While I sit at my desk. I don’t just like my father, but I know why he’s so cruel. “He



le more “How is she?” I ask Rosa when she comes downstairs and finds me  
office.

treated “A complete and utter mess. She’s asleep now, though.”

r father I push back in my chair, and beckon her to come sit on my lap. Hes  
brutal, she sits and drapes her arm over my neck. I rub my hand up and do  
comes back. “And how are you?”

Rosa’s eyes widen as she shakes her head and lifts her shoulders. “  
know.” I wait for her to add something to that. “Did you find him?”

is why “No, why would you ask?”

. Every “Your tie is different. It’s a lighter shade of blue, which made me  
end his your shirt, and although it’s the same as the one you normally wear, it  
embroidered on the pocket here.” She runs her fingertips over the whi  
off my haven’t even noticed. “It’s not yours. I’ll bet it’s Ruben’s.”

ien has Ruben gave me permission to tell her what she needs to know. “The  
kly. It’s Ruben’s. And no, we haven’t found him.”

her was “If I was Adrian, I’d be staying well away until there’s a vulnerabili  
work to I’d strike. But, there’s only one thing that would stop me from attackin

“Which is?”

smiles. “Manpower. If he doesn’t have a following or backing from  
organization that could take on the Sacco family, then it would be su  
try and take you guys down.”

My woman thinks like we do. “Perhaps he’ll stay away.”

She snorts with a sarcastic laugh. Rosa peeks her tongue out to  
lips. *Those lips.* I could fuck them into next week and it still woul  
enough. “I know you don’t believe that.”

I run my hand through her soft hair several times, before push  
fingers through to the base of her head and gripping her hair. I br

and I lean in my down to kiss her forehead. “You don’t have to worry about him.”

“I might not, but Eliza does.” She pulls back and smirks. There’s a glimmer in her eyes. “I want a gun.”

Instantly, “No chance,” I say.

“Teach me to shoot. I can protect my sister and myself. If he’s anywhere near us, I’ll kill him.” She stares at me with all the seriousness of the world. She’s not joking.

“No, I’m not giving you a gun, nor am I teaching you to shoot anyone.”

Rosa clears her throat and clicks her tongue. She’s so cute when she looks frustrated. “How am I supposed to protect Eliza and myself if you won’t teach me? You know what?” She abruptly stands and takes a few steps. I stare at her with a cocked brow and bemused look. “Don’t you dare lecture me.” She lifts a finger and aggressively points it, making me snicker. “You’ll get in a lot of trouble when you do that.” She continues ferociously pacing, as if she’s about to explode. “I want a gun, Dominic.”

I nestle back into my chair, and continue to stare at her. “Rosa, stop.” I stop her from the rant I know I’m about to listen to.

“What?” she snaps.

“Shut the fuck up, get over here and get on your knees. You’ve made me hard.” I palm my cock as I watch Rosa’s entire demeanor change. Her brilliant blue eyes lock onto mine, a small deviant smile tugs at her lips, and her breath quickens.

I fucking own her.

She straightens and lifts her chin. “I just went through something traumatic, and you want me to suck your cock?” I lift my finger and beckon her. “Come here.” Shamelessly, she drifts toward me. Her legs touching my knees. “I want you to suck my cock.”

Rosa pretends to be tough, crossing her arms in front of her chest and deviating her head to the side. “What?”

I can't help but smile as our eyes are glued to one another. “Uncross your arms.” She relaxes them by her side. “Such a good girl.” She gulps and comes to look away trying to deny what we have. More importantly, trying to deny the pleasure in what she desperately wants. “I want you to...”

“Yes, I know. You want me to suck your cock.” Rosa is trying to hide her irritation, but it's being replaced by her hunger to do what I want her to do.

I won't “I want to taste you.”

She goes away. “Well...” she pauses. “Whatever.”

I laugh at “One finger, inside you, now.” Her lips part and she worries her bottom lip between her teeth. “Lift your right hand, slide it into your pants, and push one finger inside you.”

Rosa's eyes darken to a smoldering hunger. “Oh.”

” I say “Now.” She moves her hand until it's inside her pants, and she gasps as she follows my instructions. “You're wet, aren't you?” She gulps and finally nods. “Stand up straight, Rosa.” She takes a step back, and I make her chin. I too stand, and walk behind her, pressing my body against her back. Her “You're a Sacco; my lioness, and you will always be protected. Own your power.”

“I'm not a Sacco,” she whispers.

“You will be soon.” I push her hair from her shoulder and skim my hand down the column of her throat. I grab her right wrist and lift her hand over her pants. “You'll never leave again.” I take her glistening finger and taste her moisture. Rosa moans and pushes her ass into my cock. I grip her cheeks and squeeze tight. “Has this been fucked before?” She shakes her head.

tilting head. “Good.” Knowing she’s been with others before me makes me  
find them and put a bullet between their eyes. “I’m going to give  
your choice, my lioness. My cock in your mouth, or your ass?” She pushes  
and turns back into me silently giving me her answer. “I want your words.”  
to deny Rosa leans her head back on my shoulder and turns to look at me  
takes in a sharp breath, and smiles. “I want your cock in my ass.” The  
old and beautiful woman.

to her to I kiss her nose. “Such a good girl. You like pleasing me.”

“I like how you make me feel.”

“Tell me.”

She rubs my cock through my pants. “Like I belong to you,” she  
admits between short, shallow breaths.

place “Because you do.” I pull away from her. “Strip.” Rosa tears her t-shirt  
her head, and rips her pants and panties down. She stands completely  
in front of me. My eyes travel the length of her body. “I’ve missed  
you when you admit.

again but Her cheeks begin to turn pink as a little smile tugs at her lips. “My  
admits hershe admits.

er back. I shrug out of my suit jacket and begin to unknot my tie, before turning  
you off. “See this.” I fall to my knees and kiss her little rose tattoo. “My  
will mark your beautiful skin soon.”

“You want me to tattoo your name on me?” I skim my nose across  
her mouth pussy. God, she’s fucking heaven. Everyone will know she’s mine.

out of “Yes.” I kiss her lips then look up to her. “Lean on the desk.” She  
licks off her back and leans on it. I grab her right ankle and lift it to hook it over  
her ass shoulder. I look up to her, and see how she’s watching me. Her eyes  
keep her from greed to something else. *Power*. “My name will be on your skin.

want to my tongue out to lick her glistening lips. Her clit is beautifully sensitive. You are desperate for pleasure.

her butt “As long as my name marks you too.”

My woman is fucking lethal. I bury my face into her pussy and lick her. She and I swirl my tongue until she's on the brink of coming. Her hips rotate as my fingers scrape against my scalp. I stand and wipe my mouth while kissing her.

Rosa kisses me, licking her tasty juices off my face. “Turn around, Rosa, does, and I push her face down on my desk. “Open.” I kick her leg. “Don't fucking move. Wait here.”

finally I take off out of my office and head up to my bedroom to grab a vibrator and lube. My woman is going to be shown that she does indeed belong to me. Once I return to the office, I close and lock the door. Rosa hasn't moved. I walk around behind her and find she's still soaking wet. “What are you, a girl you are.” I run my hand over her back, and she shivers. “Are you coming?”

She shakes her head. “Turned on. Excited. Waiting.” I can't help but smile. “Good.” I run my hand down over the curve of her ass cheek to between her legs, dipping my finger into her. She moans as my thumb scrape over her sensitive clit. God, I'm such a lucky man. I pull my hair and she instantly mewls and turns to look at me over her shoulder. “For god's sake, Rosa, close your eyes and don't open them.”

“Okay,” she breathlessly agrees.

“It wasn't a question.” I slap her ass and she jolts forward. “Open for me.” I tap on her legs. She's beautiful as she follows my instructions. Her body craves my directions. I push the tip of the vibrator into her making her moan. Turning it on, I make sure only the part inside her is vibrating, and then

wollen, part is simply on her clit. I don't want her to come before I can bury n  
in her ass. "I'm going to go slow."

She nods but I see her arms and legs tense.

k, suck I unzip my pants, and take my straining cock out of it. I squirt lube  
e while my cock, then rub some on her asshole. She's completely naked, a  
before nearly fully dressed. She needs to remember, I own her. She's mine i  
sense of the word. We do this my way, because my way is what he  
d." She craves.

s open. I rim her asshole with my finger and Rosa groans. "Nice and slow,

She nods. "Hold the vibrator." She moves her hand between her legs.  
vibrator girl." I line my cock up with her ass and press the head at her entrance.  
g to me. "Oh God." She gasps.

oved at "Slow."

a good "Slow," she repeats. I push in a little further, and nearly lose n  
cold?" control. She's tight and so fucking warm. I need a second to get n  
brain right so I don't lose it and just slam into her, essentially hurt  
e of her lioness. I push a little more so the tip is inside her. "Wait." Her b  
as I let heavy but within only a few seconds she pushes back, making my c  
I have a further into her.

nd back *Fuck*. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to hold on if she pushes any  
orehead "You feel so good."

"It's different, but I think I like this."

"I'm going to push in further."

urther." "Yes, please."

er body I take several breaths to calm myself, then grip and open her ass cl  
er gasp. advance further, and I'm just over half in. I look between us where  
ie other joined. "So beautiful," I say.



my cock “More,” she shamelessly begs. I push into her, and before I realize Rosa’s ass has taken all of me in. “You feel amazing,” she groans. She moves her hips just a little, and groans again.

all over This is where I know she’s ready to be fucked. I grip her hips and grind I’m mine, watching my cock slide in and out of her ass. It’s not going to take long if she keeps moaning. My heart rate is jumping, and my balls are ready to release my cum into her ass. She grinds against me. We continue at an aggressive tempo and I fuck her with equal ferociousness.

baby.” While buried deep inside her, I lean over and turn the clit stimulator on. “Good.” “Do you want me to fuck your ass harder?”

“Yes!”

“Hold on to the vibrator.” I straighten, and use Rosa for her pleasure. “I want all your sounds.”

my own With a high-pitched cry she says, “I’m coming!” Rosa’s hips are moving under my fingers are digging into her. My balls draw up, and a burst of energy goes through my body as I cum deep inside her ass. Rosa’s hips are still moving underneath she hasn’t orgasmed yet, so I lean back and spank her ass. “Yes, more!” she moans. “I’m coming!” she begs. I spank her again, my dick is still inside her, while her cheeks immediately redden from my hand prints. The spanking continues, and she moans every one she groans then moans. “I’m coming,” she whispers. Rosa trembles beneath mine, jerking while I spank her. She throws the vibrator on the floor and grips the edge of the desk.

Rosa bursts into tears. I pull out of my girl, turn her around and drape her over to sit on my lap on the chair. I reach for my suit jacket and drape it over her shoulders. My woman sobs in my arms as I gently kiss her and we’re hands over her back. She lifts her knees and cuddles into me. I hold her to ensure my body heat warms her. I kiss her forehead. “You enjoyed that,”

alize it, “I’m sorry, I don’t know what came over me.” Rosa wipes at her tears.  
: moves “Never apologize for enjoying sex.”

“That’s never happened to me before.” She lays her head on my shoulder  
d moveas she stares at me. “I think I needed that. It’s like nothing I’ve ever  
ake mebefore. I was so full, and overwhelmed. It sounds completely stupid.”

already “No, it doesn’t. With everything going on, you probably felt safest in  
find an moments.” She looks up at me, her blue eyes filled with question. “Can  
it?” I hug her closer, silently telling her by my actions that she can  
ator on anything.

She lowers her gaze and chews on the inside of her cheek. “I feel  
have this inner darkness that sparks alive whenever you treat me  
re, and plaything. In saying that,” she takes a shaky breath. “I feel like it’s wrong

“Hey, what we do is *not* wrong.”  
moving; “When you take over like that, I crave it. I need it. My body wants  
rgy rips wrong that I like being treated like your plaything slut?”

moving, “No, never.” It’s good for me to know. I’ll push her further and force  
re,” she inner darkness to the light. I kiss the top of her head. “Don’t feel ashamed  
cheeks wanting this.”

nd with “Easier said than done.”

’s body “How does your ass feel?”

rator to “Deliciously sore. But I want to go again.”

“No, not for a few days.”

rag her “You’re no fun,” she protests.

: it over I lean down and nuzzle into her neck, then suck and bite on her ear  
run my She giggles and tries to squirm away from me. “Now, get up, put my  
r closer on, and go take a shower. My bed is empty without you.” She jerks her  
hat.”

rs. to look at me. Her wide eyes and rapid breathing are obvious signs of  
“What?”

houlder “My sister,” she whispers.

ver felt Shit, that’s right, She’s upstairs in Rosa’s old room, asleep. “Tonigh  
stay with her. But as of tomorrow, you’ll be with me.”

n those She gulps but nods. “I can do that.”

What is “Again, it wasn’t a question.” Her face lightens. I pinch her hip. “C  
tell mego.” She stands and wears my jacket that is way too big for her slender

“I’ll be up to tuck you in.” A smile erupts on her face before she leans  
I like Iplaces a kiss to my lips and heads out of my office.

like a My woman needs a firm hand in the bedroom.

ng.” And I’m just the man to provide it.

it. Is it

orce her

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earlobe.

/ jacket

er head

to look at me. Her wide eyes and rapid breathing are obvious signs of worry.  
“What?”

“My sister,” she whispers.

Shit, that’s right, She’s upstairs in Rosa’s old room, asleep. “Tonight you’ll stay with her. But as of tomorrow, you’ll be with me.”

She gulps but nods. “I can do that.”

“Again, it wasn’t a question.” Her face lightens. I pinch her hip. “Off you go.” She stands and wears my jacket that is way too big for her slender frame. “I’ll be up to tuck you in.” A smile erupts on her face before she leans down, places a kiss to my lips and heads out of my office.

My woman needs a firm hand in the bedroom.

And I’m just the man to provide it.

## Chapter Twenty-Four

Rose



“**W**here are you going?” Eliza asks when I stand from the bed. Her body is a delicious reminder of all the wonderful things I did and I did last night. And I can’t wait to see what other things he does to

“I need to go to work. Besides, I need to buy us clothes, and try to get our life back on track.” Especially considering how our life keeps getting ended. But in this case, the only person to blame is Adrian. He’s demonic and I can’t let him get his hands on Eliza again. She’s *because* of him.

“I’ll be ready soon.”

“You can’t come with me, Eliza.”

Her body begins to tremble. “What?” her voice is meek and brittle.

“You have to stay here, you can’t come with me.” Eliza’s eyes reddening, her chin quivers as she purses her lips together. “You’re safe here.”

“Does the door have a lock?”

“It does,” I confirm. “I’ll ask Alba to come up and bring you some water. I’ll ask if I can cut my shift short so I can be back to be with you.”

Eliza rapidly blinks as she lowers her chin. “No, please don’t.” She holds the sheet between her hands while she keeps her head down. “I’ll be okay.”

I should stay with her, but I also need to move forward. I feel like a sister for not staying when she’s so vulnerable and damaged. “I should be able to come back early. I’ll see if Tilly or Abbie can cover for me.”

She lifts her head to look at me and gives me a strained smile. “I’ll be okay. I promise. Go to work.” She lifts one of her hands and shoos me away, then lowers her hand to rub her fingers against the hem of the sheet, but she pushes her shoulders back and smiles. She’s trying to be strong, but I know that she’s not. “I’ll be okay.” Her smile tightens. “I promise.”

I scoot over to hug her; the moment my arms are around her, she flinches. I hate what *he*’s done to my sister. “I shouldn’t be too long. I need anything you can call Alba. She’ll help you.”

She pats my arm awkwardly. “I think I can sleep for a week, but I probably stay in bed for most of the day.” The second I pull back, she’s already slinking down between the sheets.

“I’ll ask Alba to bring you some food.”

“Thank you.” Eliza tucks her hands under the pillow and closes her eyes.

Guilt overtakes me because I really shouldn’t leave her alone. But I go to work. “I’m going for a shower.”

“I’ll be fine, I promise.”

I head into the bathroom, heavy with guilt because I can’t stay with her, her



the food.

wrings. “Where are you going?” Dominic asks when I walk into his office.  
kay.” “Work.” He lifts a brow and I wait for the argument. “Nothing?”  
e a shit “What are you talking about?” He pushes his chair back and taps hi  
ould be. “Are you expecting me to forbid you from going into work?” I head o  
sit on his lap and drape my arm around his neck.  
be fine, “I’d like to see you try.” I bend and give him a kiss. Memories  
y. Eliza erotic time in his office floods my mind.  
ie pulls He chuckles and shakes his head. “When will you learn?” He ang  
ie truth. torso away from me, lifts his phone, taps out a message to someon  
places it face down on the table. I narrow my eyes at him. “What?”  
za, she “You’re up to something.” I place my hand to his taut chest. “What  
. If you up to?”

There’s a knock on the door, and I instantly move but he grabs r  
so I’ll and keeps me sitting on his lap. Two guys walk in, dressed in suits.  
k she’s older, maybe in his fifties. He has salt and pepper hair, and is stocky i  
The other is younger, maybe in his thirties with dark eyes. So dark th  
even be black. “Mr. Sacco,” the older one says.  
eyes. “Rosa, this is Varo.” Dominic indicates to the older one. “And Orz  
have to other gives me a curt nod.

I smile to them awkwardly. “Hey.”

“They’re your security,” Dominic announces proudly.

Eliza. “Seriously?” my voice elevates as I slowly turn to look at Domir  
brows are lifted, and a fake *what-the-fuck* smile is plastered on my face  
“Thank you, gentlemen.” Both of the men leave, closing the door  
them.

“Bodyguards? Really?”

“Eliza will have security too.”

“She’s curled up in bed, I don’t think she’s ready to go anywhere in a hurry.”

“Well, you need to understand that as part of this family, your security is my priority.”

I stand and walk away from him. “Next you’re going to tell me that I can’t work.” I jut my hip out and place my hand on it. “I don’t want to lose my security.” He turns to open his laptop, completely disregarding my opinion. “Dominic.”

“You don’t have an option. Wherever you go, they go with you.”

“No, they won’t.” I shake my head at him, frustrated that he’s not listening to what I want.

He snorts with sarcasm. Dominic sits back in his chair and arches a brow at me. “What’s the problem, Rosa?”

“You didn’t ask me.”

“No, I didn’t. Nor am I going to when it comes to your safety.”

I clench my hands together, ready to stomp my foot like an angry teenager. “You should’ve asked me.”

“No.” He shakes his head and stares at me with an amused grin.

“Stop it.” I point to him. His smile grows. “You’re treating me like a child.”

“Stop acting like one and I’ll treat you appropriately.”

“Ugh,” I groan as I turn to leave his office.

By the time I reach the door, Dominic is already up and out of his office. “Stop.” He grabs hold of my arm and pulls me into him. “Calm down,

I hate that he’s taller than me and it forces me to look up at him, giving him the damn advantage. “No. I won’t stop. You can’t boss me



all the time, Dominic.”

re in a “Shut the fuck up, and sit your ass down.” He turns me around and then grips my butt. My inner darkness sparks to life causing my clarity to become hazy. I hate that he has this hold on me. “Sit.” He spanks me and my body reacts with a shameless shiver.

hat you I try to hide the desire by sitting and crossing my arms in front of me. “I don’t want.” “What?”

nion on “Adrian is out there, and at any moment he can come after you.” He places his hand on my thigh and squeezes. “You’re too important to me to not have you protected.”

stening My shoulders relax and my arms fall out of the fold. “I just want to talk to me instead of telling me.”

brow at “When it comes to your safety, I’m never going to ask. That’s something you’re going to have to live with. I was fool enough to allow you to do that once. That won’t happen again.”

I lick my lips before pressing them together. “You have no choice.” “Many of my men died because I underestimated Adrian. I won’t let that happen again, especially when it comes to you.”

“What do you mean many men died?” What happened for these people like me? “Did they die because of me?” I lift my hand to place over my mouth. “Did I kill them?”

“Adrian killed them because they worked for me.”

“He’s not going to stop, is he?” I stare down at the floor, thinking about the possibility of that cruel beast getting his hands on my sister.

Rosa.” “We’ll get to him before he can get to us again.”

already “Again?” I lift my chin to stare at Dominic. “What has he done?”

around Dominic stands from his chair and comes to sit beside me on his seat.

drags me into his arms and kisses my head. “Do you trust me?”

spansks “Absolutely,” I reply without hesitation.

rain to “Then you need to trust that when it comes to your safety, and Eli: e again,do everything in my power to make sure nothing ever happens to e

you.” I turn to look at him, and he presses a kiss to my forehead. “I y chest.whole brat thing you have going on, stops, right now. If I tell you tl

have two security men, you don’t fucking argue with me. If I tell you e placesgo somewhere, again,” he pauses and stares at me. “...you don’t : ot keepargue.”

“I’ll try not to, but you can’t bubble wrap me, either, Dominic. you togoing to happen in life.”

“Not to you, if I can help it.” He tightens his arms around me. “N nethingarguing, Rosa.”

o leave “I’ll try.”

He snickers before standing and holding his hand out to me. I take he pulls me to my feet. “Especially now.” Dominic lowers his he let thatcrushes his lips to mine, forcing his tongue into my mouth while posse clenching his fingers into my waist. He’s easily convinced me w men tohungry to give in to my desire. I palm his cock through his suit par y heart.love how his erection is growing all because of me.

If I don’t pull back, I’ll lose myself in him and end up being late fo I gently push on his chest until he pulls away. “You’re a deviant. I sw out thewant me naked and tied to you.”

“Naked and tied to me. Hmmm.” He taps his finger to his lip and

“I have a position available for someone on her knees to take my cochl mouth. Interested?”

ofa. He “Is that all you think about?” I can’t help but smile, because in tr

sexual hunger has increased since I've been with him.

"You make me hard just thinking about you."

za's I'll "Good, so I should." I head toward the door, but stop and turn as a  
ither of pops into my mind. "I have a question."

But this Dominic's pained expression makes me want to laugh, but I hold  
hat you "What is it, Rosa?" He pinches the bridge of his nose and exhales, as  
I not to given him a headache.

fucking "Mafia men usually have more than one..." I pause as I try to phr  
question in a way that won't hurt me. But truthfully, I'd be gutted if  
Shit is he has someone else. "Am I...um?" Shit, am I the other woman? "  
not..." His pain has morphed into pure amusement. "Do you know w  
o more trying to ask?"

"No, please, continue." He gestures with a wave of his hand.

"It's hard enough for me to think that there could possibly be so  
e it and else, but to force me to actually say it, that's just plain cruel." I wr  
ad and hands together, feeling self-conscious and like a total loser.

ssively "No, there isn't anyone else. I have no interest in anyone but you, R  
with his I lift my head to look at him, my own satisfaction radiating throug  
its, and pull my shoulders back and raise my chin with arrogance. "Don't you  
it, buddy. I'm the only woman you need." I point to him in a playful v  
r work way.

ear you Dominic runs his hand through his hair as he watches me leave his c  
hear him groan as I purposely sway my hips.

smirks. What a morning! Now to find Varo and Orzo so I can get to work.  
k in her

uth my



thought

d it in.

if I've Varo parks the car outside the café. The café itself is having all the w  
replaced. "I wonder what's going on," I say once I'm out of the ca  
ase the follows me inside. "You need to stay outside."

he said "Sorry, ma'am, I'm under Mr. Sacco's instructions to stay in he  
'You're you."

hat I'm I crinkle my forehead as I stare at him. I'm going to have to take  
with Dominic, because Evelyn is going to lose her shit if she knows I  
body guard staying with me when I'm on shift. "Can you please c  
omeone Rose? And sit over there." I point to our least busy table.

ing my "I go where you go, ma'am."

This is going to get old really quickly. I'm already frustrated wit  
osa." following me and it's been less than an hour. Let's not even ment  
h me. I whole ma'am thing. "Hey," I say to Finn, who's at the counter taking  
I forget He smiles at me, flashes a quick glance at Orzo then back to me. "  
varning Orzo," I'm forced to say. "He's um-"

"I'm Mrs. Sacco's security," Orzo says in a hard no-nonsense tone.  
office. I "Mrs. Sacco?" both Finn and I say.

"It's Rose," I say under my breath to Orzo. Man, I really need to  
Dominic, this is a bit too much. I understand the security, but they c  
outside. "What's going on?" I ask Finn and point to the workmen re  
the glass frontage.

“No idea, but Evelyn said she wants to see you when you get here.”

Shit, what have I done? My stomach twists and my heart pounds with anticipation. Did I do something wrong? Did I mistakenly charge someone too much? Shit, has there been a complaint made about me? Or has Adrian’s done something. That fucker is a snake in the grass. It would surprise me if he’s done something to screw me over. I know I should try to forgive him, but fuck that shit. I hope Dominic finds Adrian and that he hurts him.

I walk to the back where Evelyn’s office is and knock once. My hands are shaking and there’s a massive lump sitting at the base of my throat. “Come in,” she calls.

I look to Orzo and silently plead for him to stay out here. He stands on the side, his chest out, his shoulders back. “Thank you.” I open the door and smile. “Hi, Evelyn,” my shaky voice gives away how I’m feeling.

“Good, you’re here.” She points to the seat opposite hers. “Sit.”

“Did I do something wrong?” I sit on my hands to stop them from sliding.

“No, not at all. Why would you think that?”

“Finn said you wanted to see me. And I just thought I was in trouble.”

Evelyn laughs as she shakes her head. “You’re not in trouble, and you’re quite the opposite.”

My lips part as I stare at her. “What’s going on out there?”

“Well, I’m glad you asked. The windows are all being replaced, and in about an hour we’ll have a new security system installed.”

“What was wrong with the old windows?”

“They weren’t bulletproof.” Huh? “And I need to teach you the business.”

“Why?”

“The café has been sold.”

I sit staring at her for a moment before it dawns on me. “Serious with a grumble as I sink down in the seat. “Is the new owner Dominic Sacco?”

Someone “No, it’s not.”

Maybe “Shit, could this be Adrian?” “Who?”

Couldn’t “You.” She smiles at me.

Preach “Did I hear that right?” “Me?” My hand comes up to my chest. Evelyn’s massive smile on her face is one of pride and happiness. “I bought the café?” my voice comes out as a squeak.

Hands are “You did. The money was in my account last night.”

“Come “You know I didn’t buy the café.” I sit back and slump my arms on the sides of the chair. Deflated I stare at Evelyn.

As to the “You’re not happy about this?”

For and “Did you want to sell it?”

“The money was too good for me to pass up, Rose.”

“But I thought you loved it here.”

Making. “I do, but, like I said, the money was significantly higher than I could imagine.”

“.” “And what will you do after you’ve trained me?”

Actually I feel sick to my stomach. “I’m not sure, but I’ve signed a non-compete clause, so I can’t open another café within a fifty-mile radius.”

“Fifty miles?” Ludicrous.

and in “He was adamant.”

“*He?* As in Dominic?” Her smirk is all the confirmation I need. “I’ll see you.” I stand and head toward the door. “Actually, do you mind if I come by for a moment in your office? I’m sorry,” I apologize at the ridiculousness of me throwing her out of her business *and* her office.

“It’s *your* office now.” I grumble my concern. “I need a coffee anyway.”

isly,” I wait until the door is closed to call Dominic. “Rosa,” he answers  
” first ring.

“Really? You bought the café?”

“You don’t sound happy.”

“Maybe because I’m not. You’ve just thrown Evelyn out on her ass.  
n nods, “I hardly take what I paid her as throwing her out on her ass. She  
ght the handsomely compensated.”

“Dominic, I don’t want this.”

“Close the doors if you don’t want it. It’s yours to do what you want  
ver the My jaw grits together as I close my eyes and shake my head. “I’m  
one, what do I know about running a business? Not only that, I don’t  
run one. I just want to live my life and have fun while coming to a job  
I don’t want the responsibility of having to take care of something e  
hands are full with helping Eliza get back on her feet, I can’t do this to

“Then keep Evelyn there to do everything she’s doing to manage the  
ld ever and just work when you want.”

“This is an example of not talking to me.”

“And what would you have said if I told you I was buying the café?  
ompete “I would’ve told you that you’re out of your mind. Not to mention  
proof glass! I get updating the security because that’s nice knowing I  
to work and there’s better security, but bulletproof glass? Isn’t that  
overkill?”

Excuse “Not at all.”

ou give “Ugh.” I roll my head back and groan. “It’s too much, Dominic.”

ness of “Then close the doors.”

“No, I can’t do that, and you know it. So many people will be out o  
vay.” if I do that.”

son the “You have your choices. Make them.”

“Fine.” I hang up without any further conversation. His over-protective ways can send a girl crazy. But my inner darkness rubs her hands together and jumps for joy.

” *Shut up, what would you know?*

’s been

t with.”

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“You have your choices. Make them.”

“Fine.” I hang up without any further conversation. His over-protective ways can send a girl crazy. But my inner darkness rubs her hands together and jumps for joy.

*Shut up, what would you know?*

## Chapter Twenty-Five

Dominic



The knock on my door takes my attention away from the laptop. “I call as I scrub my hand over my eyes. The door squeaks open. Eliza gives me a small smile. I stand and button my jacket. “Eliza, how help you?” I walk over to the door and hold it open for her.

“Um.” She looks around my office and nibbles on her lower lip hunched over and her eyes dart around my office. “Can I um... I mean okay if... um.” She shakes her head and takes a step backward. “I’m shouldn’t have bothered you.”

What the fuck did my brother do to her? “Can I help you with some I gesture for her to enter into my office. “Please. Take a seat.” I sw hand toward the sofa. “Would you like a drink?” Hesitantly she tip-to my office. Her arms are wrapped around her torso and when she sits sofa, she tries to make herself as small as possible. “Water? Coffee?”

“Um, no, thank you, sir.”

“It’s Dominic, Eliza. Not sir.”

She lowers her chin and gives me a small nod. “O-okay,” she stutter

I sit at my desk, close the laptop before I turn to face her. “What can I do for you? Do you need something?”

Eliza brings her legs up to the edge of the sofa and she wraps her arms around them, drawing them closer into her chest. Her behavior is childish as if she’s in trouble and doesn’t know what to say. Did my brother do something to her? “Um.” Her breath quickens and her eyes flutter as she stares down at the top of her knees. “Is *he* dead?”

My brother has completely screwed her. “No, he isn’t.”

“Oh.” She’s trying to hold onto her sadness. “Did you know?”

“About what he was doing to you?”

Her eyes snap up to me and she takes in a severe breath. “Not about that. ‘Yeah,’ but the other things.”

“What the fuck is she talking about? ‘Like what?’”

“All of it? Do you know why I had to...” she pauses and smashes her hands together. “M-m-marry him?” Again, what the fuck is she talking about.

“About the other m-m...” She shakes her head. The other what? “He never told you, did he?”

This is something both Ruben and I need to know. “Why did you tell me?”

Adrian, Eliza?” She presses her lips together and shakes her head. “What? Finish the sentence.”

Eliza’s eyes widen as she shakes her head with force. “He never told me.”

She lowers her chin to balance it on her legs. What kind of secret shit is he doing? “Do you know where he is?” she asks in a small voice.

She’s looking at me. She struggles to keep eye contact. My brother has broken her heart.

“No,” I reply honestly.

“I have a small favor to ask you, Dominic, but you can’t tell Rose.”

I’m not agreeing with anything until she asks the favor. “Which is?”

an I do “Please, promise me you won’t tell Rose. This’ll break her if you tel

My arms strain beneath my jacket as I stare at the fragile girl si  
er armsfront of me. “The only promise I’ll keep is that I’ll do everything  
ld-like, power to ensure you’re safe.”

o this to Eliza’s eyes redden and tears quickly roll down her cheeks. “Will yo  
n at the Rose safe from *him*?”

“He’ll never get his hands on either one of you again.”

She takes a moment but finally nods. “When you find him, he’s g  
want me back. Can you please kill me before he takes me?” My har  
into fists. “I can’t live another day with him.”

ut that, I try to regulate the anger pulsating through my body. I don’t want t  
Eliza, by sounds of things she’s been through enough fear and traum  
hands of my fucking brother. “No, I won’t kill you, because when I fi  
her lipshe’s dead.”

about? She looks up at me, tears flowing and her chin quivering. “I don’t  
e never come between you and your brother, Dominic. Don’t kill him bec  
what he did to me.”

o marry I choose my next words carefully, because I don’t want Eliza to f  
“Othershe’s responsible for what Ruben and I will do to him. “Adrian’s  
problems for us. If anything happens to him, I can assure you he’s br  
d you.”upon himself.”

was he Eliza composes herself and slowly unwinds from the crumpled m  
withoutwas. She still won’t look me in the eyes though, but I suspect that has  
en her. do with the way Adrian treated her. “You’re not like *him*,” she whispe  
she’s not sure if she should speak the words.

“No, I’m not.”

’ “I’m sorry, but I need to ask you something else,” she meekly says

l her.” yet to lift her chin, but at least she’s finding the confidence to speak with  
tting in “What is it?”

in my “You don’t hurt my sister, do you?”

“Not now, not ever.”

ou keep Eliza swallows and her head moves in a small nod. “Rose is  
stronger than I could ever be, but please don’t hurt her.” Eliza is  
stronger than she believes.

oing to “I won’t.” I keep my attention focused on Eliza, taking my cues from

ids curl “Did you know about our parents?”

“They died before you married my brother,” I reply, genuinely cur  
to scareto where this is going.

a at the Eliza lifts her chin to finally meet my eyes and marginally tilts her  
nd him, the side. “You don’t know about the…” her voice trails off as she w

my reply. “You don’t know.” She unwraps her right hand and lifts i  
want to mouth.

ause of “Know what?” I ask with authority as I sit straighter.

There’s a long gap of silence as Eliza again lowers her chin and s  
eel like the floor. “You don’t know,” she says in a barely audible voice.

created “Eliza.” She slowly looks up to me. “What don’t I know?” How  
ought it secrets was Adrian hiding from the family?

She shakes her head and purses her lips together. “It doesn’t  
ess she anymore.” Tears fall from her eyes and she wipes them away. She  
a lot to her body and stands from the sofa. “Thank you for your time.” Eliza  
ers as if so clinical and formal.

“What aren’t you telling me?”

“Nothing.” She shakes her head furiously. “Nothing at all.”

s. She’s “I’ll ask Rosa.”

ith me. “You can, but she doesn’t know anything. And if you do, she’ll ask I’ll be forced to tell her, then she’ll hate...” Her hand flies up to her mouth if she’s given away too much already. “Please don’t.”

Adrian has something on Eliza, but whatever it is it’s enough to silence strong, for Rosa’s sake. I’ll find out what it is, but first Ruben and I need to have much conversation about Eliza and what she knows about Adrian’s dealings might help us find where he is.

n her. “I won’t speak with Rosa about this.” She smiles weakly and heads to the door. “If you need anything, you let me or Rosa know.” The previous as needs to heal from whatever my fucking brother did to her.

“Thank you.” She leaves and closes the door softly behind her.

head to Fuck. What has Adrian done?

waits for

to her



tares at

My phone dings and I see a message from Varo. *Enroute ETA 10 minutes* v many Rosa will return home soon, and seeing as I’ve only had one conversation with her this morning about the café, I expect she’ll come in with a matter blasting.

unfolds Good, because she makes me hard when she’s so insolent. Gives sounds makes me hard all the time, but I do enjoy watching her rant then silence by playing with her body.

I finish what I’ve been working on and close the laptop. Tomorrow is gone for most of the day, as I have a few shipments to oversee as the

me and the country.

mouth as I stand and stretch, rolling my neck from side to side. I loosen my head over to pour myself a scotch. I bring the glass to my lips as the nurse herflings open. She brings a smile to my lips, but I conceal it with the gl have arch a brow. "How was your day, dear?" I ask, knowing she's a is. This become a sexy tsunami.

"How was my day?" There she is, my lioness.

toward "Was it productive? Learn anything new?"

oor girl My Rosa stands in my office, one hip jutted out, her hand placed "You can't do shit like that, Dominic."

"You have to calm down before you give yourself a heart attack."

Her mouth falls open and her arms relax beside her. "You'll give damn heart attack with your controlling ways. What if in three months to leave the café and work at a fashion boutique? Will you buy that too

"Yes," I reply honestly.

"Ugh." She throws her arms up in frustration. "Look." She huffs heading over to sit on the sofa. "Can we have a conversation about please?" Rosa gestures to the sofa beside her.

ersation "Sure." I head over with my glass and sit beside her. "Just so you ill guns when it comes to you, you can talk until you have no voice, I'll always what's in your best interest and keep you safe."

en, she "Look," she repeats as she angles her body and places her hands t lencing as if in prayer. "I'm not fragile."

"I never said you were. But you're extremely important to me. I'll be forever protect you."

oy enter "Then teach me how to shoot."

"Absolutely not." I shake my head with finality.

“Ugh.” She throws herself back on the sofa. “I feel like this is a tie and situation.”

“I know you’re safe, so I take that as a win-win.”

“For you.”

“And for you.”

“I feel so restricted.”

“Because I’m protecting you?”

“Yes. No. I don’t know,” she groans.

I lay my now empty glass on the floor and drag Rosa over into my arms. “I haven’t stopped you from doing anything. All I’ve done is made you safe.”

Her brilliant blue eyes stare up at me. “I’m not used to this.”

“What part?” I gently sweep her loose hair from her face and tuck it behind her ear.

“All of it. Since Mom and Dad died it’s always just Eliza and me. Then Adrian came out of nowhere, and marries her and I find myself in love.”

Her eyes widen and she blinks rapidly. “Liking you,” she quickly corrects herself in the smile. My lioness was about to admit to something she’s not ready to

admit. “And you’re you.” She points to me. “And I’m under no illusion. I know, the things you do are on the wrong side of the law. And...” Rosa shakes her head. “And...”

I press a small kiss to her fuckable lips. “You like all of it.”

“I shouldn’t.”

“Why?”

“Because I shouldn’t like the way you’re all possessive and domineering. On one hand I do, but on the other hand, all I want to do is argue with you.”

“I wouldn’t have picked you if you didn’t argue.”

“You’re gonna get sick of me wanting to push your buttons all the time.”



no-win “Nothing my cock in your mouth won’t fix.”

“And then there’s that.” She points to me.

“My cock?”

“Your dirty ways. You have no idea how turned on I am when I see you on your shirt, or when you control me with what you want. It’s like you want me to do the dirtiest things to me. Anything you want, I want. No, not just that. That’s not a strong enough word. I *crave* it, Dominic. I’m desperate to use me in whatever way you want to.”

arms. “I “My woman is a dirty slut, and there’s nothing wrong with that.”  
after.” thighs tighten. I push her hair off her nape and lower my head to sw  
lips against her throat. “I like my woman being a whore for me.”

behind “Jesus,” she murmurs and angles her head to the side so I can hav  
access.

e. Then I grip her thigh, digging my fingertips into her soft skin while open  
..” Her legs. “Your throat is craving my cock jammed deep down it.” Ros  
. I hold back, her eyes darken with dirty greed. “Unzip me.” She doesn’t d  
easily to unzipping my pants and with her warm hand she grabs onto my ha  
n about cock. “These lips,” I say as I run my thumb over her bottom lip. “  
kes her good fucking.” I lace my hand into her hair, and force her head  
“Suck.”

“Yes, sir,” she mumbles and sinks her mouth onto my cock.

With my hand clutching her hair I bob her head while she sucks. I w  
my woman slurps, flicks her tongue and takes me in her mouth. “De  
inating. instruct.

you.” My lioness gags but she takes me deep in her mouth.

I release her hair and snake my hand down into the back of her par  
me.” sticks her butt up, giving me access to her ass and pussy. My finge

with her, but the moment she stops sucking because she's lost in her pleasure, I pull back and smack her butt. "My cum needs to be in your before you can come."

the blood "Sorry," she whimpers then continues to suck me.

I want My woman will come, but not until I do. I remove my hand from her and extend both my arms on the back of the sofa while I watch my girl for you. "On the floor."

She stops sucking and sinks to her knees in front of me. "Like this?"

Rosa's "I want to see your tears as you choke on my cock." Rosa gulps deep my small smile tugs at her lips. I take my phone out of my pocket and take a photo, on her knees with her big blue eyes staring up at me. "Suck."

the better Keeping her eyes on the phone she smirks, wraps her warm hand around my cock and takes it in her mouth.

while taking her I take her photo, her eyes are watering, her lips are perfectly stretched around my cock. There's a string of saliva falling from the corner of her mouth as she gags on my cock.

hardening I wipe at her tears then relax back while taking photos. "Beautiful," I need to lay the phone down and stare at my girl. Her gaze flickers over to the floor then back at me, silently pleading for more. "Such a perfect slut." I pick up the phone again, and begin recording her. "I may even let you watch it while I feel her mouth try to smile, but it's full of my dick.

watch as Rosa closes her eyes, and sucks me until she swallows each and every drop of my cum.

I thought Rose Hopkins was going to be good for now, turns out, she'll be good for much longer.

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## Epilogue

Rose

### One week later

I knock on Eliza's door and wait for a few seconds before I decide to knock it. "Eliza," I say as I walk over to the empty bed.

My heart skips a beat in worry, but the toilet flushes and I sink on to the toilet. Eliza opens the bathroom door and startles. "You scared me," she says, and her hand flies up to her chest.

I take in her appearance and immediately notice she's not wearing pajamas, and her hair is combed and tied back in a ponytail. "Where are you going?" I stand from the bed and walk over to her.

"Down to breakfast."

A massive smile splits my face. Even my cheeks are hurting from smiling. "You're coming down for breakfast?" I ask. "I'm so proud of you."

Eliza moves over to sit on the edge of the bed. "I know we've only been here for however many days, but, I feel safe here. Dominic is kind."

"Yeah, he is," I say as I sit beside her.

She leans her elbows on her knees and angles forward, staring down at the floor. "Do you love him?"

My gut twists as I intake a shallow breath. “I feel conflicted talking about this.”

“Why?” Eliza straightens, and pulls one leg up on the bed as she toward me. “Is it because his brother is my abuser?”

“Essentially, yes,” I say as I mimic her posture. We sit cross-legged one another. “I feel guilty, Eliza.”

“Because you have the good brother, and I got the other one?”

“If it wasn’t for you marrying Adrian, I would’ve never met D because we’ve never been in this world. And here we are, both of u comfortably in Dominic’s house while Adrian is out there plotting w the fuck he’s plotting.” I grab her hands and say, “If you’d tell me w married him, then maybe I can understand your mind better.”

Eliza stiffens and shakes her head. “I thought I loved him,” her an he bed. cold and rehearsed. There’s so much more to this than she’s letting on. s as her

“Who are you trying to protect? He’s gone now.”

“Like you said, he’s out there plotting some evil crap to do to all ing her are you She lowers her gaze for a few seconds. “Dominic is a good man. It’s you love him,” she says. This is her way of attempting to char conversation.

“One day you’ll have to tell me. You can’t keep it a secret forever.” om the ou.” Her eyes well with tears. “Maybe, but today isn’t that day.”

“I wish I knew how to help you. If only Mom and Dad were still her ly been Eliza’s lips press together and she lifts a brow. “Yeah,” she whisp only.” Something tells me this is much bigger than Eliza and Adriar wish I knew what. She wipes at the few tears and straightens. “I’m l n at the We should go down for breakfast.”

“I’m so proud of you.” I stand to my feet and hold my hands out s

to youtug Eliza up off the bed.

“Am I dressed okay?” Eliza straightens her t-shirt, and runs her hands through her hair. “Should I wear something different?”

“Dominic doesn’t care what you wear, Eliza.”

“Are you sure?” How controlling was that fucker? “I know this is the first time I’ve had breakfast with you and Dominic, and whoever else is there.”

“It’s usually just Dominic, Marco and me.”

“I should change.” She steps back in a mini panic attack. “Can I have some makeup please? I need to look good.”

“Stop.” I grab her flailing hands and hold them in mine. “They’re not here, Eliza.” Her body is trembling. “Breathe with me. Deep breath in, hold it, and then take a deep breath and watch as she does. “Big breath out.” Eliza eyes me, not sure what I’m doing. We continue this for another five breaths while I keep her hands in mine. Her shaking eases and she gives me a small smile. “I’m okay?”

“I’m so sorry.”

I bring her in for a hug. “Don’t ever apologize.”

Eliza’s hold on my hands is tight and desperate. Adrian has fucked up a big time. She was never such an emotional mess before him. If Adrian comes back, I’ll fucking kill him myself and not lose a moment of sleep. “I’m okay now.” Eliza pulls back and smiles. “And I’m hungry.” I managed to settle whatever fear took over for those moments. I guess I’m still there, and probably will be for a long time. But at least she’s not hungry. baby steps forward.

“I’m hungry too. Come on.” Linking our fingers together we head downstairs.

I feel Eliza's hesitation as we walk into the dining room. Dominic is  
d down at the head of the table reading from his tablet. Marco is sitting to l

"Morning," I say and bend to give Dominic a kiss.

The moment he sees Eliza and me, he stands and walks over to l  
he first slide her seat out. "Ladies," he says and waits for Eliza to sit.

he has I look to him and raise my brows. "What am I, chopped liver? Yo  
do that for me."

"I was seating Eliza first." He pulls my seat out, and waits until I sit  
borrow tucking mine in. "Good morning, my love." His love? That's a ne

"Alba."

not like "You're looking well, Eliza," Marco says.

th in." I She can't bring herself to look at him. "Thank you," she respon  
mulatessmall voice.

leep her Alba appears with two silver trays. One has hotcakes, the other scr  
: "You eggs and cooked mushrooms. "Coffee?" she offers.

"Yes, please," I say.

"I'll have an orange juice this morning," Dominic says.

Surprised, I look over to him. I've not seen him have anything oth  
l her up coffee or scotch. Marco snickers. "What's going on?" I ask as I eye D  
an ever and Marco.

leep over "May I have a juice too, please?" Eliza asks. "Would you like me  
" She's you in the kitchen?"

the fear "No, dear. You stay here and enjoy your breakfast. Bacon is coming  
; taking a moment."

Eliza lifts her chin and smiles brightly toward Alba. "Thank you." I  
toward my eyes at Dominic, who's completely ignoring me. "May I start, Doi

Eliza asks as she eagerly awaits his approval.

s sitting This breaks my heart. What the fuck did that jerk do to my  
his left. “Absolutely.” I’m going to tear him apart. *Fucker*. Dominic looks to  
same thought must occur to him because he looks like he’s about to o  
Eliza to the table to get to Adrian.

“Thank you,” she meekly replies and reaches for the scrambled eg  
u don’t places some on her plate and looks over to Dominic. “Is this okay?”

Dominic’s jaw tightens, but he quickly relaxes it and smiles to Eliz  
t before whatever you’d like, Eliza. My home is yours.”

w one. “Thank you.”

I want to yell at her to stop thanking everyone, but I suspect thi  
conditioning that fucker beat into her. Even Marco shakes his head.  
ds in a think it’s because of Eliza, more because of the pain and trauma A  
inflicted on her.

ambled “Okay, onto business,” Dominic says.

“Business?” I look over at him.

“Here you go.” Alba appears in the dining room holding a servin  
She places it on the table and hands out everyone’s drink of choic  
ier than bacon,” Alba says. “I forgot it.” She ducks out of the dining roo  
Dominic returns within seconds with a plate piled high with bacon before tak  
serving tray and leaving.

to help “Here.” Dominic opens a calendar. “Pick a date.” He slides it on th  
toward me.

g out in “What for?”

“Pick a date.” He taps the calendar, and I see it’s open to the fo  
narrow month.

minic?” “Are we going on vacation or something?”

“You could call it that.”



sister? Marco snickers. “What’s happening?”

me, the “Pick a damn date.”

vertun “For what?” I lift my hands in frustration.

“For our wedding.”

gs. She I stare at Dominic and shake my head. “Whatever.” I push the c  
aside, disregarding his ludicrous statement as I reach for the bacon.

za. “Eat “Pick it, or I do.” He slaps a box on top of the calendar. “What day?  
I look around the room, waiting for them all to start laughing. M  
chuckling, Eliza has her chin down as she nibbles on her food, and E  
s is this relaxed, sitting back in his chair, casually scrolling his tablet. “Is thi  
I don’t blame ass proposal bullshit?”

Adrian’s “Don’t be ridiculous, Rosa.”

“You’re asking me to marry you?”

“Again, don’t be ridiculous.”

“What is this?”

ing tray. “It’s not a question.” He flicks his gaze to the box. “Open it.”

a. “The I lift the box and unwrap and open it. The massive single dian  
m, and overwhelmingly beautiful. “This looks like an engagement ring.”

ing the “It is,” he confirms.

“I’m so confused. You want me to pick a date for our wedding, but  
ie tablet not asking me to marry you.”

“Pick a damn date, or I will.” He looks over the calendar and pla  
finger on the first Saturday of the month. “That’ll do.” He sits back,  
llowing juice and takes a sip. I hit the bottom of the glass, spilling the conter  
his chin and onto his suit. He laughs as he places the glass down, ta  
napkin and wipes away the drops of juice. Marco says nothing as he

Benjamin out of his pocket and slides it over to Dominic. “I knew choose violence over just accepting your fate.” The bastards made a be

I look to Marco who’s refusing to meet my eyes, then to Eliza smiling but not saying anything, then to Dominic who picks his fuckin alendarup like he’s not just dropped a massive bombshell on me, and c peruses it. “I’m not picking a date.”

” “Then the Saturday I’ve chosen will do.”

Marco is “I’m busy, washing my hair,” I say.

Dominic “Fine. Sunday, then.”

is some “Shaving my legs.”

Dominic looks over the tablet to me and arches a brow. I cross my front of my chest and do the same. Bring it, buddy. “Rosa,” he warns deliciously dangerous tone that sends a shiver to my very core.

“Dominic,” I say trying to hold on to my strength. I will *not* all dominance to reduce me to a wanton tart, desperate for his cock.

He lowers the tablet while keeping his hard eyes locked on mine. H nond isup the box, removes the ring, and gestures for my left hand with a sm of his fingers. He slides the ring on my finger and winks at me as the of his mouth tugs into a smirk.

: you’re *Fuck*. That wink has done precisely what I was trying to stop. *Bast* knows exactly what he’s doing.

ices his “Pick the fucking date,” he commands as he softly runs his thumb c lifts hisknuckles.

it down I snatch my hand back and glance at the ring on the sly. It fits snu kes hislooks perfect on my hand, like it was made especially for me. K takes aDominic, it probably was. “Fine,” I snap as if it’s a massive inconven

7 you'dfor me. I look at the calendar and point to the Saturday he already  
st. "There. Done."

l who's Dominic looks at the date and nods. "About fucking time." He pus  
g tablechair back, stands and lifts me out of my chair. "Please excuse us, n  
asuallyneeds to be shown that what I say, goes." He tosses me over his shoul  
spans my ass as we head out of the dining room.

"I'm not your wife yet," I argue as he carries me upstairs. I'm n  
upset by the way he's throwing me around. If anything, it's mak  
hornier.

He spans me again as he enters his bedroom, walking over to his l  
arms inthrows me on it. He shrugs out of his orange juice-covered suit jacke  
s with aon my elbows to watch him strip. "Shut the fuck up and get naked."

Yes, sir.

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for me. I look at the calendar and point to the Saturday he already chose.  
“There. Done.”

Dominic looks at the date and nods. “About fucking time.” He pushes his chair back, stands and lifts me out of my chair. “Please excuse us, my wife needs to be shown that what I say, goes.” He tosses me over his shoulder and spanks my ass as we head out of the dining room.

“I’m not your wife yet,” I argue as he carries me upstairs. I’m not even upset by the way he’s throwing me around. If anything, it’s making me hornier.

He spanks me again as he enters his bedroom, walking over to his bed and throws me on it. He shrugs out of his orange juice-covered suit jacket I lean on my elbows to watch him strip. “Shut the fuck up and get naked.”

Yes, sir.

## Book Two

### Prologue

#### **The Don**

#### **Eliza and Ruben's story.**

#### **Ruben**

The Fallen MC's sergeant at arms stares at me stoically. Other than jaw and a snarl, he hasn't responded to a single thing Dominic and I have done to him.

"Where is he?" I ask in a low voice.

"Fuck you," he responds.

I look to Dominic and cock a brow. Dominic shakes his head and turns over to the cabinet. He opens it and instantly reaches for the brass knuckles. He slides them over his hands and walks back to the sergeant. "It would be in your best interest to tell us where Adrian is."

The sergeant is on his knees with his arms outstretched and secured by chains. He looks at Dominic and snickers. "That shit don't scare me."

Dominic lays two hard punches into him and steps back. "You want to talk?" Dominic asks and flicks the blood off the knuckle-dusters.

The sergeant spits a tooth out and shakes his head. “My crew is going to tear you apart. Piece by fucking piece.” His lip curls up into a snarl.

This guy is loyal and if he wasn't a dirty fucking biker, I'd be hiring him to be part of my organization. I stand back and cross my arms in front of my chest. Dominic straightens and cracks his neck. “I can do this for hours.” He smashes his fists into the guy's face, pounding with the knuckle-dusters. His next attacks are fast and unexpected, like a viper's strike.

We've been at it for hours. If I was going to get anything from this guy, I would've gotten it already. “He's done.”

Dominic turns to look at me. A fine spray of blood has settled across my nephew's face. He gives me a nod of understanding before sliding the dusters off his hands. “That's it? That's the best you've got? Fucking pussies.” The sergeant gurgles as blood drips from his mouth, nose and swollen eyes.

I have a tight

Dominic drops the dusters, takes his gun from where it was tucked in the back of his pants, and shoots him twice in the head. Dominic returns to where it was and turns toward me. “I'd not speak out of turn, Uncle. I wanted to take him further.”

I walk

“He wasn't going to give up anything about your brother.”

My knuckles

“He's not my brother,” Dominic replies with disgust. “He lost that fight.” He wipes the back of his hand across his face. “Marco.”

I'd be in

Marco isn't too far from wherever Dominic is, which gives me confidence to know he has such a loyal soldier and friend. Marco looks to the sergeant and shakes his head. He clicks his tongue to the roof of his mouth. “Any good?”

I'm tired by

sure?”

“Nothing,” Dominic replies.

“Fucker.” Marco stands back and tilts his head from side to side. He stares at the corpse in my shed. “I'll get Frank.”

Once Marco leaves, I clap a hand to Dominic's shoulder. “Come

ma riphas made cannoli. If we don't eat them she'll be upset," I say of my old cook. "Besides, it's best you wash the blood off your hands and get him to before you go home to Rose." We head out of the shed and make our way toward the house.

"If I left the blood on it would make Rosa quite happy," Dominic says with a wide, proud smile.

"Come." As we enter my house, Dominic breaks away for the washroom, and I walk toward my office. "Maria," I call when I see she's not in the kitchen.

I hear her footsteps along the marble floors. "Si," she says and enters the office.

"Two coffees, and bring some of the cannoli you've made."

Her eyes widen as does her smile. "*Si, signore.*" She backs away from the door with a small head nod. "Mr. Sacco," she says as she passes Dominic. "Hello, Maria," I hear him say pleasantly. He appears at my doorway, but he knocks once.

"Come in." I gesture for him to enter and sit on the sofa opposite to where I'm sitting. The blood on Dominic's clothes is quite obvious, though his hands and face have been washed. "How are the wedding plans?" I care less about the wedding, but this is a gateway for my other questions. I adjust my posture, being careful to make Dominic believe this is a pleasant conversation.

"Rosa is over it, and she doesn't even want a church wedding, but for her it's important to the family."

I scrub my hand across my chin. "Good. Keep her in line."

"*Signore,*" Maria announces at the worst possible time.

"Come in, Maria." She enters carrying a silver tray and places it

devoted coffee table between the two opposing sofas. She places a coffee in front of me, then Dominic, then plonks the plate stacked with cannoli between us. “Thank you.” She smiles toward me and leaves. “Your Rose isn’t keeping the church wedding?”

“She isn’t, but she said she’ll do it if it’s what I want.”

“She’s a good girl, Dominic. Truthfully, I wasn’t sure how she and Adrian would do considering they’re outsiders.” Dominic lifts his coffee and takes a sip. “How is Eliza?” Adrian may be my nephew by blood, but with the money he’s done, he’s now number one on the list of people I need to kill. Especially for the vile way he treated Eliza.

He reclines in the sofa and crosses his legs. Dominic lowers the coffee to balance it on his knee. “She’s a wreck.” There’s an intense pounding in my ears. “She asked me to do something for her.”

“Which is?”

“She’s asked me not to give her back to Adrian.”

My throat dries at the thought of her going back to him. “That’s not something I want to see happen.”

“That’s not even the worst of it.” My teeth grind as I stare at Dominic. “She asked me to kill her rather than give her back, and she wanted my promise not to say anything to my Rosa.” He lifts his coffee and takes a friendly sip.

An unnatural silence blankets the room. There’s only one thing coming through my thoughts. I need to kill that fucker. Slice his throat and watch his blood spill. “Over my dead fucking body will any more harm come to Eliza.” I finally break the silence.

“Rosa despises him and has asked to be the one to kill him.”

“No,” I say. “She’s not to be anywhere near us when that happens.”



front of Dominic nods slowly. "I told her." He leans forward and takes a cannoli from the saucer from his cup as a plate to catch the flaky casing. "She's on a mission to teach her to use a gun."

"Absolutely not." I shake my head with finality.

"That's exactly the same thing I said."

Eliza "She's bloodthirsty," I say with a smile.

smirks. "Only for Adrian's blood." He bites and chews the cannoli. "She and I are things couldn't be any more different, but Rosa is loyal to a fault."

Eliza "Eliza's not like Rose?"

"Eliza has been conditioned to hate herself. Rose is a tornado of love and hate. She's my cupher sister." He shakes his head. "Eliza is still asking me if the food on my plate is too much." My hands clench into fists. "Rosa doesn't want to leave for our honeymoon because she's afraid of leaving Eliza back home alone. She's demanded we have to take her with us." Dominic isn't impressed with either option, nor am I.

Eliza "Bring the girls here, let them both see the house and hopefully Eliza will feel comfortable enough to stay with me while you and Rose enjoy your honeymoon."

Eliza "Uncle, I mean no disrespect, but Rosa..." He pauses and shakes his head. "She's fiercely protective of Eliza."

"They'll come here, we'll have lunch and they'll both see Eliza. There's nothing to fear when she's with me and under my protection." Eliza understands this isn't open for negotiations.

Eliza, "Of course," Dominic agrees. "I'll bring the girls tomorrow."

"Good." I lean forward and take a cannoli. "Now, give me the number for the brothels."

Eliza will stay with me while they're on their honeymoon. And I will

annoli, that no harm will come to that girl. She's been through enough with  
e wants Once I find him, I'll kill him and she can begin to heal.

Adrian and his crew held a lot of secrets, some of which are begin  
come to light. But the secrets I want to know the most about, those  
the driving factor for me needing to find him, are what he did to Eliza.

For that he needs to die.

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Adrian and his crew held a lot of secrets, some of which are beginning to come to light. But the secrets I want to know the most about, those that are the driving factor for me needing to find him, are what he did to Eliza.

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